

Introduction to the Open Space and Recreation Element

Most natural and manmade features such as wetlands, water bodies, open grassland, and forests can be enjoyed as open space. Together with the built environment of the stadium, ball fields, courts, golf courses, ice rinks and other recreation facilities, Cranston has the resources that contribute to the overall quality of life for its residents and visitors.

Though eastern Cranston is intensely developed and urbanized, it has important recreation areas and valuable water bodies such as the Narragansett Bay and the Pawtuxet River system. Western Cranston is characterized by large undeveloped tracts of open space and farmland, ponds, rivers and small streams, with low density residential developments. The City has been successful in obtaining significant open space in Western Cranston as well as establishing bicycle routes and paths, as well as the Historic Scenic Farm Loop (see Figure 7.4). However, there is a need to provide neighborhood recreational sites at the residential level. The City needs to develop a policy as to how it will provide said facilities as residential development occurs.

Key Challenges

Specific issues that need to be addressed, which also coincides with goals for the Land Use and Natural Resources elements, include:

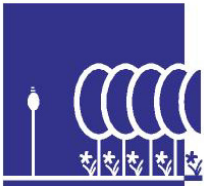
- The need to manage residential growth to accommodate recreational and open space uses in western Cranston;
- The need to improve recreational facilities throughout the City to meet projected population growth and distribution;
- The need to acquire, protect, and manage open land in western Cranston;

- The need to create multiple access points to City shorelines including Narragansett Bay, the Pocasset and Pawtuxet rivers, and the City's several urban ponds;
- Development pressures on vacant land in western Cranston that may preclude open space acquisition goals.

Key Strategies

Key recommendations and conclusions include:

- Establishing partnerships with non-profit groups to ensure land can continue to be acquired and protected;
- Modifying zoning regulations that to incorporate the latest tools and techniques to protect and manage open space (such as Conservation Development and Transfer of Development Rights);
- Obtaining additional open space for both active and passive recreational uses;
- Supporting existing programs to ensure open space and recreation needs are met now and for future generations;
- Ensuring that adequate funds are available to maintain open space areas and recreational facilities;
- Reestablishing community garden program in both eastern and western Cranston where appropriate.



Part I. Summary and Accomplishments of the 1992 Plan

Introduction

The Open Space and Recreation element of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan focused on identifying and adding open space and recreational areas to the existing resources in the City. This section summarizes the issues and accomplishments of the 1992 Plan.

1992 Open Space and Recreation Conditions

The City, at the time of the 1992 Plan, had approximately 1,907 acres of land designated for open space and recreational uses. These areas included private, state, and city-owned properties and ranged in size and use from small play areas to golf courses and marinas.

Potential Open Space of the 1992 Plan

The 1992 Plan provided a methodology to identify and map existing open space and a set of physical, environmental, and cultural characteristics that supported this identification. This information was overlaid on a map to establish primary and secondary open space areas. The following table lists the set of primary potential open space areas.

An enhanced value of open space as a public amenity was identified as an important component of these areas when they are linked or contiguous. These linkages such as a system of trails, paths, stream belts, or other corridors or “greenways” greatly enhance and support their use. Several greenways were identified in the 1992 Plan.

River and Brook Corridors

Smaller rivers and brooks in Cranston, which provide natural habitat and some recreational uses, should be protected through land use controls such as buffer zones and management practices such as debris removal.

Bellefont Pond Area	Pawtuxet River Corridor
Burlingame Road/Hope Road	Pippin Orchard Road/Scituate Avenue
Furnace Hill Brook	Pocasset River Corridor
Meshanticut Brook	

Table 7-1 Primary Potential Open Space Areas in 1992 Plan
Source: Cranston Comprehensive Plan, 1992.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads, such as Seven Mile Road and Laten Knight Road, offer visual continuity between open space sites. They should be designated as scenic roads to acknowledge their picturesque qualities and provide a visual link with Cranston’s rich agricultural heritage.

Waterfront Access

The 1992 Plan reported that the City has limited access to its shoreline. In additions its ponds are underutilized due to both a small number of access points and the poor water quality. The Plan proposed to increase indirect and direct access to both the ponds and the tidal waters of Narragansett Bay by increasing views and formal recognition of access points. The following table identifies eight proposed access points.

Arnold Avenue	Printworks Pond
Blackamore Pond	Randall’s Pond
Norwood Avenue	Sheldon Street
Ocean Avenue	Spectacle Pond

Table 7-2 Proposed Access Areas of the 1992 Plan
Source: Cranston Comprehensive Plan, 1992.

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Conserving Farmlands

Western Cranston has prime farmland that is under substantial residential development pressure. Preservation techniques used to preserve land has been mainly through financial and not regulatory means. The 1992 Plan suggested that the concept of permitting clustered residential development would work better than very large lot zoning as a method to retain prime farmlands.

Recreational Standards and Needs

The 1992 Plan proposed new standards for recreation that refined the definitions of parks and playfields, and revised the size ranges and services areas of the various types of facilities. It also addressed the existing recreational needs based on population, which resulted in the need for additional acres for community playfields and major community parks.

Future Recreational Needs

Future recreational needs were identified for western Cranston due to the anticipated growth in this part of the City. Undeveloped rural, areas have been converted to residential development, and therefore creating a need for public open space and recreation facilities. The plan suggested the need for one playground an acre in size based on projected population growth by 2010.

Opportunities for Recreation

The 1992 Plan documented the need for additional facilities due to insufficient and outdated facilities, heavy use, and limited number of indoor facilities. New and expanded facilities were identified at eight city or state-owned recreation sites (see Table 7-3).

Brayton Field	Fay Field
Calise Field	Glen Hills Elementary School
Curran State Park	Mayfield Avenue
Doric Avenue Playfield	Stone Hill Elementary School

Table 7-3 Recreation Sites That Need Additional Facilities

Source: Cranston Comprehensive Plan, 1992.

Changes to the Plan since 1992

The Cranston City Council approved the following changes to the 1992 Comprehensive Plan.

- The City Council amended the Comprehensive Plan to recognize the “cornfields” as a site independent of the Boys Training School Redevelopment (Chapel View).
- The “cornfields” was designated as an area which would allow “limited economic opportunities” focusing on recreation [The “cornfields” were subsequently developed into a golf complex].



City soccer field



Marker at Itri Memorial Square in Knightsville

1992 Plan Actions and Accomplishments

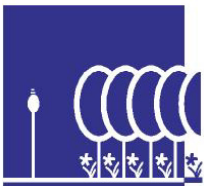
Table 7-4 summarizes the Open Space and Recreation Actions from the 1992 Comprehensive Plan and identifies which of these have been accomplished.

Table 7-4 Accomplishments of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan

Action	1992 Actions	Accomplishments and Changes
Capital Improvements		
OS-1	Acquire key potential open space parcels.	The city acquired several large tracts of land in western Cranston totaling over 300 acres from 2002-2004. They are designated for passive recreation uses, habitat protection, and future community needs.
OS-2	Develop a community park.	The City developed the Briggs Farm Recreational Site in the 1990s. Phase III was completed in 2007.
OS-3	Develop a community recreation center.	An indoor youth center was constructed in collaboration with the Cranston YMCA.
OS-4	Develop additional recreational facilities.	Briggs Farm Recreational Field was created to support field games. There were many recreational facility improvements to elementary schools. The Cranston Bike Path and the Cross City Bicycle Corridor were constructed.
Improvements to Existing Facilities		
OS-5	Continue to upgrade and expand recreational opportunities at existing sites to serve all segments of the population.	This action is ongoing.
OS-6	Improve existing public access to the waterfront.	The sidewalk and boat ramp at Still House Cove were reconstructed in 2004.
OS-7	Transfer selected school recreation sites to Recreation Department jurisdiction, as appropriate.	School recreation sites at Park View, Stadium, Western Hills, and Bain are under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Department.
Administrative and Management Actions		
OS-8	Use a variety of methods to protect Cranston's open space.	The City has made substantial progress in a number of methods to protect open space including out-right acquisition, development rights acquisition, farm, forest, and open space taxation, and donations through subdivision development.
OS-9	Designate and protect scenic roads in Cranston.	The Historic Scenic Farm Route in western Cranston was designated by City Council resolution. The City is currently participating in a statewide effort to identify scenic roads throughout the City. This should include methods of protection.
OS-10	Provide adequate funding for maintenance and improvements of City-owned recreational facilities.	Maintenance of recreational facilities is ongoing. User fees are used minimally. Leagues do participate in maintenance and have funded such improvements as storage buildings, irrigation systems, and similar facilities.
OS-11	Negotiate with the State of Rhode Island to improve recreational opportunities at State-owned sites.	Negotiations are ongoing.

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Actions Requiring Further Study		
OS-12	Investigate creation of bike paths in conjunction with scenic roads.	Bike routes were designated along two scenic roads: the Historic Scenic Farm Route in western Cranston and Narragansett Boulevard in eastern Cranston.
OS-13	After-school recreation programs.	This action was partially accomplished due to the recently constructed youth center in collaboration with the YMCA and the School Department.
OS-14	Investigate improving water quality and access to Cranston's ponds to increase recreational and natural resource value.	Pond monitoring has been taking place at Fenner and Blackamore ponds. Fuss & O'Neil is conducting a storm drain study. Potential storm drain outfall improvements may improve water quality further, which could make this a viable policy to continue. Although there was a pond study in 1999-2000, no action has occurred since.
OS-15	Investigate adoption of River Corridor Overlay District	This action was not accomplished.
OS-16	Revitalize the Land Trust	The Land Trust was revitalized. It was the lead advocate in acquiring the Knight Farm, Ringrose Farm and the development rights for Cloverdale Farm, the Good Earth Farm properties. In collaboration with the City Planning Department, they developed the Historic Scenic Farm Route.



PART II - Current Conditions and Issues

Introduction

This section provides information about Cranston's current open space and recreational resources. The goal is to identify the types and amounts of open space in Cranston, support management of existing properties, and meet current and future recreational needs of the residents of Cranston.

This element has been prepared utilizing data from several sources including the city's Geographic Information System (GIS), city officials and staff, and from site visits.

Obtaining an Open Space System

Open space is not just a collection of parks and playgrounds that serve the local population. Open space also refers to the corridors that link and connect these areas to create a natural continuous path or "greenway".

These greenways have many benefits to the users. They provide:

- a much larger system to use than a collection of individual recreational areas,
- an increase in access points.

Although not all areas are physically connected, there are many paths and routes, such as the Cranston Bicycle Network, that help the users get from one place to another with signs, landmarks, and maps.

Open Space and Recreational Areas

There are over 565 acres of dedicated recreation sites, including community parks, playfields, and schools, in Cranston according to the City's GIS data base (see Map 7-1). Most of these sites are east of I-295 - only three are in western Cranston.

They include schools, playfields, state parks, and similar related recreational areas. Many are for single use such as playgrounds and several are multi-use, such as Briggs Farm, and include jogging tracks, ball fields, and other areas for organized sports and recreational activities.

The relatively small population in western Cranston has not yet created a large demand for additional recreation sites. However, citywide sports participation is reportedly increasing; with demands for active field sports, such as baseball, soccer, and lacrosse; creating increased scheduling and field maintenance demands. This need could be alleviated with the creation of additional field areas in the central and western areas of the City.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has been the most widely cited authority on parks and recreation area standards. According to NRPA standards, a local open space system should include about 8 acres of active recreation space per 1,000 people. According to these figures, Cranston should have about 640 acres, based on a population of 80,000 residents, as compared to the 565 acres already dedicated.

Cranston Bicycle Network

In 2001, the City of Cranston, in partnership with several bicycle and recreational groups and the RIDOT, established a bicycle route that crosses the City in an east-west direction. The Cranston Bicycle Network, initially called the Cross City Bicycle Corridor, was designed for recreational riders and uses side streets to avoid Park Avenue on the east to west route.

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Aerial View Curran State Park

Recent Open Space and Recreation Projects and Programs

The route travels across Cranston in basically two east-west routes that connect and loop in several points (see Map 7-2). It also connects riders to other parts of the State's bicycle routes. Signs identifying "Cranston Bicycle Network" are displayed along its entire route.

This route essentially links many other areas in Cranston that allow users to enjoy a wide range of recreational opportunities throughout Cranston and beyond. There are many state and local parks, scenic routes such as the Historic Scenic Farm Route, State designated bike lanes on Narragansett Boulevard and Scituate Avenue, State greenways, and other similar sites and places to visit along and near this route

Future Bicycle Paths

Several bicycle paths are either being planned or designed as part of the Cranston Bicycle Network. They include the Pontiac Secondary Bike Path and the South Elmwood Spur Bicycle Path.

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Cranston Historic Scenic Farm Route

Residents and visitors now have the opportunity to travel a new designated route (established in 2004) that features active farms and farm stands along the rural roads of western Cranston. The Historic Scenic Farm Route was established to support the common goals of agricultural preservation, scenic vistas, preservation of open space, retention of the rural landscape, and support the local economy of existing and potential agri-tourism businesses.

This Route travels along several roads including Seven Mile Road and Laten Knight Road (see Figure 7-4). It also links to other open space and recreational areas including Curran State Park and the western routes of the Cranston Bicycle Network.

Recent Acquisitions

As noted in the Natural Resources Element, the City acquired 16 parcels and over 350 acres of land that has been dedicated as open space in western Cranston. Most of the parcels are either farmed or forested. In addition, a parcel at the end of Park View Boulevard was purchased in eastern Cranston.

Waterfront Access

Cranston has a diverse waterfront with many natural features including inland rivers and tidal waters with direct access to Narragansett Bay. This section of the Plan identifies existing waterfront resources and potential opportunities to access them now and in the future so that the community can benefit from their uses and continued enjoyment.

Existing Coastal Access Points and Rights-of-Ways

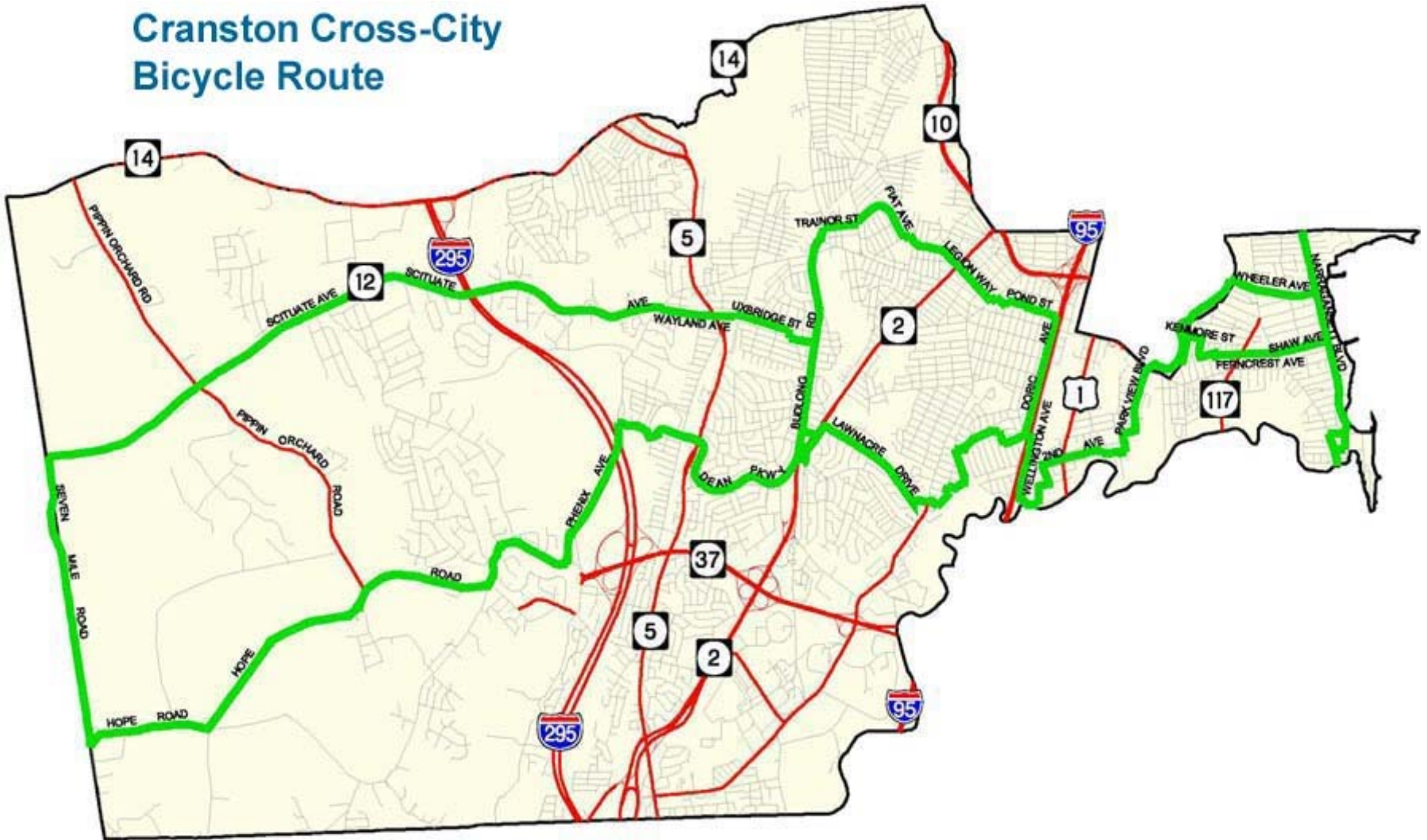
The Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC) has the legal authority to designate public right-of-ways (ROWs) to the tidal waters of Rhode Island. The status of ROWs is updated through a process of

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Map 7-1 Existing Open Space Parcels

Cranston Cross-City Bicycle Route



Map 7-2 Cranston Bicycle Network
Source: RI DOT web site, www.dot.ri.us, 2004.

discovery and designation. It should be noted, however, that CRMC designation does not determine its ownership, only its use.

The CRMC designated three public ROWs in Cranston (see Table 7-5). Three other sites were evaluated by CRMC, but they did not meet their designation criteria. Furthermore, these were the only sites identified as “public” in the 1992 Plan, and CRMC has not designated any more public sites since that time.

Although CRMC only designates official ROWs to the tidal areas of Rhode Island communities, there may be other locations to tidal and non-tidal shorelines that provide public access. In fact, RI Sea Grant identified five locations as public access locations (Table 7.7).

Aborn Street, south side
Aborn Street, westerly side
Seaview Avenue, west side

Table 7-5 Designated Public ROWs in Cranston (2004)

Source: Designation of Public Right-of-Ways to the Tidal Areas of the State, 2002-2003, CRMC web site, www.crmc.ri, October 2004.

Aborn Street Boat Ramp	Seaview Park
Arnold Avenue	Still House Cove
Ocean Avenue	

Table 7-6 Public Access Sites Designated by RI Sea Grant, 2004

Source: RI Sea Grant, 2004

The 1992 Plan proposed eight public ROWs that are either informal access points, on either publicly owned land or private vacant land (see Table 7-7). The City should continue to pursue making them accessible to the public.

Arnold Avenue	Printworks Pond
Blackamore Pond	Randall’s Pond
Norwood Avenue	Sheldon Street
Ocean Avenue	Spectacle Pond

7-7 Proposed Access Areas of the 1992 Plan

Source: Cranston Comprehensive Plan, 1992

In 2005, the City spent over \$600,000 restoring Stillhouse Cove and improving access to this important public coastal property. The project included erosion control along the bank, new storm drain

systems, restoration of a salt marsh, a new sidewalk, and landscaping improvements.

Pawtuxet River Use and Access

The Pawtuxet River provides excellent opportunities for the public to access its waters and shores. As water quality in the Pawtuxet River improves, there is an increasing demand for greater use and access, especially access points for canoeists and kayakers. There is already an extensive informal trail network established along the Pawtuxet, which is maintained by the Friends of the Pawtuxet. In addition, the State recently donated approximately 50 acres along the Pawtuxet to the Pawtuxet River Authority in the vicinity of Howard Industrial Park.

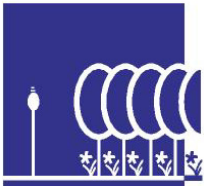
Potential Access Improvements

The Pawtuxet River Watershed Council has worked with many of the communities along the River to increase river activities through land acquisitions, grants, trail improvements, and public and private partnerships. The City of Cranston is planning for a public access point on the River near the industrial park off of Wellington Avenue. Nearby, the City of Warwick included an improved small boat ramp in Belmont Park as part of its Norwood Neighborhood Master Plan. Other potential river access points include sites at Howard Industrial Park and Fay Field.

Pocket Parks

Opportunities for open space in Cranston should include small park areas as well as larger, formalized recreation sites. Pocket parks and vest pocket parks could provide areas for local residents and workers to enjoy a small place to walk or sit.

Pocket parks are generally located in dense, urbanized locations on lots that are too small to develop, on street corners, or in locations that have similar characteristics suitable for a small park setting. Many pocket parks are also located on small, urban lots that have been neglected or abandoned. These small urban areas are usually landscaped with plantings, paths, and benches, and should include public art and visual references to the local neighborhood and provide opportunities for community gardens.



PART III - Strategies and Actions

The purpose of the Open Space and Recreation element is to ensure that the needs of Cranston’s residents and other users of open space areas and recreational sites and facilities are met now and in the future. Additionally, the City needs to establish other measures to protect habitats, to comply with land use regulations, to accommodate projected growth, and to ensure that additional lands are acquired and managed.

This section explains each of the actions necessary to resolve the previously identified open space issues and to support the goals and vision of this Plan. A summary of the proposed actions, time frames, and responsibilities for the Open Space and Recreation element is provided at the end of this section.

Open space needs to be acquired, protected, and managed in a variety of ways through capital improvements, maintenance, funding, administrative, management actions, and through additional studies. Each of these topics provides description of the actions for this element.

Capital Improvements

To ensure that open space needs are adequately met in the future and to improve access opportunities and recreation resources, the City will have to target specific open space properties for acquisition. The strategy for new open space acquisitions will be based on a priority of the following actions:

Programs to Enhance the Historic Scenic Farm Route

The recent creation of the Historic Scenic Farm Route has set the stage for increased awareness and protection of the agricultural and undeveloped properties in western Cranston. The City should continue to work with the West Bay Land Trust, RIDEM, and other organizations to promote the benefits of acquiring and protecting land along and encompassed by this route, or nearby, at a regional scale.

This will help support acquisition and management of additional properties. Furthermore, a Historic Farm Route zoning district should be adopted by the City Council to protect the remaining area farms.

Acquisition of Land Along the Rivers

Acquisition of land along the rivers would ensure that these valuable resources remain accessible to all users and are protected from runoff and other non-point and point source pollution. The action would work in conjunction with the proposed River Corridor Overlay District, which would ensure that lands not acquired remain protected by the district requirements. Very scenic areas exist along the City’s urban rivers and ponds, yet are not easily accessed by most City residents.

Improved Public Access to the Shoreline

Cranston’s greatest natural assets: the Pocasset and Pawtuxet Rivers and Narragansett Bay, need additional public access. Residents should have the opportunity to enjoy these assets with additional access points as well as with lateral access or paths along them. The City should improve public access through acquisitions, easements, and similar methods that support their use.

Expanded Greenways and Blueways

Cranston has numerous **greenways** (land corridors) and **blueways** (river corridors) that are part of larger systems such as the RI Greenway or the Pawtuxet River. The City should expand and add links to these designated recreational sites and paths with other recreational resources. This action will essentially “open the recreational door” to and between the different types of recreational destinations.

New Pocket Parks in the Urban Neighborhoods

Pocket parks are small landscaped areas in dense urban blocks that allow local residents, and workers to obtain relief from the urban environment. New pocket parks should be developed and managed

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with neighborhood and business participation and should reflect the character of the area and residents.

Community Gardens

Community gardens provide excellent opportunities for residents to cultivate and enjoy their own fresh produce. When properly maintained, they have the ability to enhance the aesthetic character of the surrounding neighborhood. Efforts should be made by the City to prioritize the limited funding opportunities to acquire appropriate land of various sizes in the urban sections of the City to achieve this goal. Small parcels should be targeted in developed neighborhoods for small scale gardens, and larger parcels of City-owned open space land in the western section of the City should be divided into garden plots and made available for Cranston residents. City owned parcels along Scituate Avenue and Hope Road provide a perfect opportunity for this initiative.

Improvements to Existing Facilities

Expansion of Recreational Opportunities

Opportunities for the users of recreational sites and facilities should be upgraded and expanded to serve all segments of the population. Although this action was in the previous Plan, recreation programs and activities continually change and should match the current activities and needs of the users.

Improvements to Recreational Facilities

The Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining all parks and recreational sites except those on school properties. Recreation facilities need to be constantly maintained and periodically upgraded to provide the greatest opportunities for their users and ensure they do not fall into disrepair and unsafe conditions, especially where they are frequently used. The Briggs Field Recreational Facility, (Senator John Chaffee Complex), recently underwent a major expansion, which included new soccer/lacrosse fields, tennis courts, T-ball fields, and an expanded walking track.

Improved ADA Access to Recreational Facilities

The City must comply with ADA regulations to make new or altered recreational facilities accessible, and it should be proactively improving existing sites to ensure that people with disabilities have adequate and safe access to all sites. People of all ages, especially the very young

and old, should have access to recreation sites. Some actions, such as additional rest rooms, may be cost prohibitive, but should be pursued. Other actions may require thoughtful management and planning such as better informative and directive signs.

Administrative and Management Actions

Coordination between City departments and extensive staff resources will be needed to implement the following actions:

Continued Acquisition of Open Space

The City has been very successful in establishing partnerships with local and regional non-profit groups to acquire and manage open space. The City should continue these partnerships with a particular focus on properties that link areas and uses such as the Historic Scenic Farm Route, the Cranston Bicycle Network, and the riverfronts.

New River Corridor Overlay District

Improved public access to land and water along the City's major rivers including the Pawtuxet and Pocasset is needed, while maintaining protection of the river environment. The City should adopt a River Corridor Overlay District to meet this need by creating linear buffers and increasing public access points along these rivers. The overlay district proposed in the previous Plan specified land use restrictions to protect water quality and scenic amenities along the rivers.

Expanded Cranston Bicycle Network

The City has been extremely successful with the creation of the Cross-City Bicycle route. The City should continue to invest in this recreational amenity and expand and improve its functionality and quality by creating links to other local and regional bicycle networks, recreational sites, and attractions such as RI Greenway and the South Elmwood Spur Bicycle Path. In addition, a dedicated East/West City Bicycle path should be constructed that utilizes the Providence Water Supply Board's aquifer right-of-way. This path could potentially run from the Scituate boarder, intersecting the Cranston Bike Path and terminating at Budlong Road. There is also potential for the adjacent Town of Scituate to extend this path into their municipality.

New Zoning to Support Conservation of Open Space

A key method to minimize the loss of open space in residential areas is to cluster the homes in a subdivision. With clustering, the housing units are closer together and more land remains open than if the lots were designed as a traditional subdivision. Clustering would leave more of the larger tracts in their natural state, provide potential walking paths, and could be combined with open space in adjacent subdivisions to create even larger natural tracts.

The City should consider stronger zoning tools that would require preservation of land in the future to actively preserve the area's agricultural history.

The City should adopt and encourage use of zoning regulations such as Conservation Residential Design or open space design to ensure that residential development maximizes the amount of preserved open space without reducing the number of homes built. In fact, the City should consider providing greater flexibility, when truly exemplary designs are proposed.

Expanded After-school Recreation Programs

The growing needs of our youth can be met by expanding after school recreation programs. This action, which was in the previous Plan, supports continuing the coordination between youth and school organizations, such as the YMCA, school department, and the recreation department.

Protection of Scenic Roads in Western Cranston

Many roads and the views along them in western Cranston are considered to have exceptional scenic qualities. To ensure they remain scenic, the City should protect them with a three-step process:

- Designate scenic areas;
- Establish awareness of this resource and create signage;
- Adopt requirements and guidelines that focus on protection of the viewshed and enhancement of the trees and vegetation along the road edges.

Actions Requiring Further Study

Improved Water Quality in Cranston's Ponds

Recreational opportunities in Cranston's ponds are negatively impacted by development around the ponds, runoff, misuse, and natural flooding hazards. Many ponds in Cranston need to be periodically checked for water quality to insure the health and safety of the people that use them.

Although some ponds have been monitored, in particular Fenner and Blackamore ponds, a more comprehensive check and management plan should be implemented to ensure the health of these natural systems is maintained or improved. Appropriate City departments, such as the Conservation Commission and Recreation Department, can support studies and investigations of the health of the City's ponds that will lead to improved water quality and access.

Open Space and Recreation Action Program

Table 7-8 Summary of the Proposed Actions and Responsibilities for this Plan

	Action	Responsibility
Capital Improvements		
OS-1	<p>Continue to acquire key potential open space parcels. Potential parcels are identified in the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Acquisition should be reserved for important parcels that cannot be protected by other means.</p> <p>Acquisition Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land along inland and coastal water bodies and waterways to ensure access to and protection of these natural resources. • Land which has scenic beauty or vistas. • Land within the Scituate Reservoir watershed • Land which is important from a historical or cultural standpoint • Land which create or expands connection for open space corridors • Land for City parks and recreation • Land which is environmentally sensitive (i.e. wetlands) 	<p>City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department</p>
OS-2	Develop programs to enhance the Historic Scenic Farm Route (HSFR), and promote it on a regional basis.	<p>Recreation Department Planning Department Conservation Commission</p>
OS-3	Identify other scenic routes that are similar to the HSFR.	<p>Conservation Commission Planning Department</p>
OS-4	Improve existing public access to the waterfront	<p>Recreation Department Planning Department</p>
OS-5	Expand greenways and watercourses that link other recreational resources.	<p>Recreation Department Planning Department</p>
OS-6	Acquire or improve public lands for pocket parks for all ages in Cranston’s urban neighborhoods.	<p>City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department DPW</p>
OS-7	<p>Employ a variety of tools to preserve environmentally sensitive land and open space and improve public recreation Tools such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fee simple acquisition • Conservation easements • Purchase of development rights • Transfer of development rights • Tax incentive programs • Land donations 	<p>City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department</p>

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Improvements to Existing Facilities		
OS-8	Continue to upgrade and expand recreational opportunities at existing sites to serve all segments of the population.	City Council Planning Department Recreation Department
OS-9	Ensure that recreational facilities allow access to people of all ages and are American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.	City Council Recreation Department Building and Zoning
OS-10	Continue to improve existing access to the waterfront: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory all points of public ownership and access • Improve access to riverfronts • Improve access to Narragansett Bay. 	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department
OS-11	Transfer school recreation sites to the Recreation Department jurisdiction, as appropriate.	City Council Recreation Department School Department
Administrative and Management Actions		
OS-12	Continue to promote acquisition and management of open space through partnerships with local and regional non-profit agencies such as the West Bay Land Trust	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department
OS-13	Adopt a River Corridor and Pond Access Overlay District that creates linear buffers and public access points along the major rivers and to the largest ponds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give priority to protecting and improving the urbanized river corridors. • Include controls within the subdivision regulations to protect and enhance water resources. 	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department
OS-14	Continue to invest in the Cranston Bicycle Network to expand and improve its functionality and quality. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider establishing an East/West Bike Path utilizing the Providence Water Supply Board's aquifer right-of-way. <p><i>Related Action: LU-31, C-15</i></p>	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department
OS-15	Adopt and encourage use of subdivision and zoning regulations that support “conservation subdivision design” as a standard for conservation of open space in residential developments. <p><i>Related Action: LU-1</i></p>	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission
OS-16	After School Recreation Programs: Coordinate actions between the YMCA, Recreation Department, and School Department to provide expanded after school programs to meet growing needs.	School Department Recreation Department
OS-17	Partner with local and regional non-profits to obtain and manage open space.	Recreation Department Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission

7. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

OS-17	Partner with local and regional non-profits to obtain and manage open space.	Recreation Department Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission
OS-18	Designate and protect scenic roads. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify scenic roads and establish standards for their protection. 	Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission
OS-19	Provide adequate funding to maintain and improve City recreation facilities and sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore user fees and other revenue generating measures • Encourage the common user groups to participate in the field maintenance 	City Council Recreation Department
OS-20	Continue to seek State improvements at State-owned recreation facilities and sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to encourage State improvements • Where appropriate, seek transfer to City control if it improves maintenance 	Planning Department Recreation Department
Actions Requiring Further Study		
OS-21	Investigate improving access to and water quality in Cranston ponds to increase recreational and natural resource value.	Planning Department Conservation Commission Recreation Department
OS-22	Reestablish Community Garden Programs in both eastern and western Cranston where appropriate.	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Conservation Commission