

Section 8: Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives were developed after reviewing previous plans and studies, meeting with several City Departments including the DPW, Water Department, and the Board of Health, gathering input from the online community survey, and incorporating feedback from the community forums. The Goals and Objectives are summarized below and detailed further in Section 9.

Definitions:

Open Space and Recreation Land refers to conservation land, forested land, agricultural land, parks, fields and playgrounds and amenities such as green buffers and landings. Land that is undeveloped or vacant is considered open space and to have conservation or recreation potential. Open space varies by ownership, level of protection, and use.

Recreational uses further define open space into two categories:

- **Open Space and Recreation Land for passive recreation** requires minimal facilities and less maintenance to serve users that have a lower environmental impact, or no public use at all. This land can be conserved land left in its natural state and prioritized for its plant or animal habitats, water supply protection, and other natural, historical, or cultural features. It can also be land that is managed for passive use; including trails, vista points, and forests.
- **Open Space and Recreation Land for active recreation** requires specialized facilities and high maintenance support to serve users engaged in structured activities. These users are playing team sports on fields or courts, using playgrounds, and gathering for entertainment or cultural events. This land can be recreational facilities and equipment found on school properties or community parks. It can also be golf courses, public landings and marinas, and beaches.

In addition, activities such as bicycling, running, walking, and other forms of self-propelled transportation are within the scope of this plan. These forms of recreation do not necessarily occur within open space and recreation lands. Therefore, this plan includes some recommendations relative to the roads, lanes, and sidewalks of the City.

- **A Public Way** is any street or highway that is open to the public and is controlled and maintained by some level of Government.

Summary of Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Develop and direct a program of strategic preservation of Open Space and Recreation Lands using the inventory produced for this plan.

- **Objective 1A:** Focus land conservation efforts in areas identified as containing valuable natural resources including priority wildlife habitat, watershed lands that supply Gloucester's drinking water, areas with large contiguous blocks of undeveloped open space and critical areas of environmental and climate resiliency concern.
- **Objective 1B:** Continue to refine and improve the open space inventory by identifying and reconciling and the following parcel types:
 - 1Bi. Parcels of unknown ownership identity
 - 1Bii. Parcels in City ownership with conservation restrictions
 - 1Biii. Parcels in City ownership to place into conservation restrictions, merge parcels for survey purposes
 - 1Biv. Parcels defined as *Land of Low Value* (marsh lands)
 - 1Bv. Parcels in private ownership
- **Objective 1C:** Monitor the open space and recreation land inventory and improve analysis tools to treat the database as a 'living record' of the current status of available and conserved land in Gloucester.
- **Objective 1D:** Promote and support the acquisition and permanent protection via conservation restriction of the following parcel types:
 - 1Di. Land for conservation purposes (e.g., wildlife habitat and water supply protection)
 - 1Dii. Land for parks and facilities in areas that lack parkland
 - 1Diii. Land and easement ROW access to the Commonwealth tidelands (public landings)
 - 1Div. Lands for protection of areas from flooding, storm surge and sea level rise

Goal 2: Improve management and stewardship of Gloucester's Open Space including conservation lands, trails, forests, and vista points.

- **Objective 2A:** Increase operational and capital budgets for more personnel to focus on the City's Open Space system. Implement an annual reporting and reconciliation mechanism into the City's annual budget cycle to outline short term and long term maintenance needs.
- **Objective 2B:** Develop and implement Land Management Plans for priority parcel clusters to guide protection and management of Gloucester's Open Space. These priority plans should inform the needs of other similar areas.
- **Objective 2C:** Promote responsible and careful use of Open Space by expanding awareness of stewardship needs through public outreach and education.

- **Objective 2D:** Develop partnerships with local organizations and institutions to support the City’s management needs.

Goal 3: Maintain, enhance, and expand Gloucester’s Recreation Lands including parks, playgrounds, athletic facilities, beaches, and public landings.

- **Objective 3A:** Establish a Parks and Recreation Division within the Department of Community Development to support the organization and development of associated programming.
- **Objective 3B:** Conduct a 10-year Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan for all Gloucester athletic fields, courts, and playgrounds to determine facilities maintenance and programming management needs.
- **Objective 3C:** Develop Beach Maintenance and Management Plans to assess capital improvement needs and routine maintenance protocols to enhance and protect all Gloucester beaches.
- **Objective 3D:** Evaluate and improve existing Gloucester public landings to serve and promote boating, recreational aquatics, and fishing.
- **Objective 3E:** Manage programming and supervision of Recreation Lands through the City website using new and existing service portals while prioritizing Gloucester resident’s access.

Goal 4: Protect and Improve Gateways to and Create Strategic Connections between Open Space and Recreation Areas.

- **Objective 4A:** Promote cycling, walking and other forms of self-propelled travel throughout the City by improving multimodal connections and wayfinding to provide safe travel.
- **Objective 4B:** Improve parking by identifying and enumerating suitable parking at entrances to popular Open Space and Recreation Areas.
- **Objective 4C:** Improve ADA Accessibility at all Gloucester Open Space and Recreation Areas, to the extent feasible.
- **Objective 4D:** Identify Green Linkages in the City Center and School Zones.

Goal 5: Plan for and incorporate the concerns of Climate Change and Resiliency in all policies and operations programs related to Open Space and Recreation Areas.

- **Objective 5A:** Advocate for an increase operational and capital budgets for personnel to focus on the City’s climate change vulnerability concerns. Implement an annual reporting and reconciliation mechanism into the City’s annual budget cycle to outline short term and long-term opportunities to become more resilient as a municipality.

- **Objective 5B:** Advocate for the development and implementation of Emergency Management Communications Plans for City Departments to use during natural disaster events.
- **Objective 5C:** Advocate for the development and implementation of a Forestry Management Plan to minimize the risk of forest fire in City forests.
- **Objective 5D:** Advocate for the development and implementation of the recommendations set forth in the City’s updated Municipal Harbor Plan to redevelop a sustainable Gloucester Harbor.
- **Objective 5E:** Advocate for the investment in resilient design projects to protect the Wastewater Treatment Facility from the effects of flooding, storm surge, and sea level rise.
- **Objective 5F:** Advocate for the development and implementation of a Wildlife and Vegetation Management Program for Watershed Lands and Water Department Facilities.
- **Objective 5G:** Advocate for an update to the existing Surface Water Protection Plan to increase water storage capacity in all existing City Reservoirs.
- **Objective 5H:** Advocate for an update to the existing Watershed Management Plan to include an expansion of the Watershed Protection Overlay District.
- **Objective 5I:** Advocate for an update to the existing Floodplain Ordinance to identify areas of current and projected flood risk according to the FEMA geospatial database reports.
- **Objective 5J:** Advocate for an update to the existing Wetlands Ordinance to increase protections for wetlands, natural resource areas and buffer zones.