

Why Open Space Matters

Community investment in land conservation goes beyond protecting scenic views. Open spaces, recreational lands, forests, and farmland provide many other benefits, such as:

- **Drinking Water Protection & Flood Control**
- **Climate Change Mitigation** (Carbon Sequestration and Sea Level Rise Buffers)
- **Positive Effect on Local Economy & Property Values**
- **Human Health Benefits**- clean air & water, local food, & a more physically active lifestyle

Open Space also offsets the high cost of residential development. In a 2013 study* The Trust for Public Land concluded that, on average, \$1 invested in land conservation in Massachusetts yields \$4 in economic value of protected lands. This information is supported by a study conducted by American Farmlands Trust**

How Are Properties Chosen for Protection?

In 2000 the Open Space Committee, with input from residents and relevant Town Departments, Boards and Committees, reviewed the natural resources of properties town-wide and developed a list of priority parcels identified for protection. This list is reviewed periodically by the OSC. Additions or other changes to the list must be approved by Town Meeting.

*The Return on Investment in Parks & Open Space in Massachusetts

**Cost of Community Services Study Fact Sheet www.farmlandinfo.org

Open Space Program Public Access Properties

- Dow Brook Conservation Area
- Turkey Hill Conservation Area
- Strawberry Hill
- Clark Pond Overlook
- Shady Creek Conservation Area
- Nichols Field
- Linebrook Woods
- Maplecroft Trail

To learn more about the above properties or the Open Space Program please contact us at:

Department of Planning & Development
Open Space Program

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Visit us on the web:
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TOWN OF IPSWICH OPEN SPACE PROGRAM

Dedicated to protecting open space in Ipswich



Dow Brook Conservation Area– 326 High Street



Department of Planning and
Development



Nichols Field– 60 Labor in Vain Road

History of The Program

In the spring of 2000, the Ipswich Town Meeting authorized a \$10 million Open Space Bond for the protection of land for open space, water supply protection, and recreation. In 2011 an additional \$5 million was authorized for the same purposes, as well as for costs related to developing athletic fields on open space properties.

The Open Space Bond Program has permanently protected 763 acres of land through 13 successful projects as of May 2015. The cost of protecting this land has been matched dollar for dollar by outside funding sources.

After the Bond Program was established, the Town hired a Program Manager to oversee acquisitions, and later hired an Open Space Administrator to coordinate the stewardship of the Town's open space assets. Both positions are funded through income that does not rely on local tax revenue.

Open Space Acquisitions

Open space acquisitions and land protection are achieved through a variety of methods, including proactive outreach to owners of properties with conservation and/or recreation interests, responding to opportunities presented by landowners, and crafting land protection alternatives to proposed development projects.

Process of Acquiring Open Space

- Open Space Program Manager reviews feasibility of a prospective project with the Open Space Committee, Board of Selectmen, and relevant Town departments
- Negotiations with landowner
- Funding secured for an acquisition through the Open Space Bond and outside grants
- Town Meeting approval required if project exceeds \$500,000



Strawberry Hill– 56 Jeffreys Neck Road

Open Space Stewardship

The stewardship of open space properties varies depending on (1) whether the land is protected by Town fee ownership or through a Conservation Restriction,(2) whether natural resource protection, recreation, and/or agriculture are the objectives for protection, and (3) which Town entity has care, custody, and control of the property.

Utilizing a combination of staff, volunteers, and outside contractors, the Open Space Administrator oversees property stewardship on twenty properties subject to Conservation Restrictions, and seven Town- owned Open Space properties with public access.

Conservation Restrictions (CRs)

CRs are legal agreements between a landowner and the Town which allow a property to continue to be privately owned, but places permanent limitations on development and on certain uses of the property. Stewardship of CRs requires periodic property monitoring to ensure the agreements are being upheld.

Town-owned Open Space

The stewardship of Town-owned open space encompasses the management and maintenance of each unique property, which includes finding a balance between natural resource protection and public access needs.

Ipswich residents are encouraged to use the open space properties listed in this brochure. This land is intended for your use. If you encounter problems or issues, or would like to volunteer, contact the Open Space Administrator. Be our eyes and ears, and help take care of these precious resources.