

# Agawam

## Open Space & Recreation Plan

Public Hearing  
September 12, 2019

# WHY DO AN OSRP?

- State mandated planning document updated on a 5-year cycle
- Assesses where you are, where you would like to go, and how you might get there
- Planning now to protect important open space and recreational facilities can greatly enhance the attractiveness of your community and encourage compatible growth in the future
- Enables coordination within Agawam and beyond to meet common goals
- Documenting needs and goals can support grant applications
  - Self-Help
  - Urban Self-Help
  - Land and Water Conservation Funds
  - Many more

# PROCESS

- ✓ Mayor appoints Opens Space and Recreation Plan Advisory Committee. They review the previous Plan and determine what recommended actions have been achieved, partially achieved, or never initiated
- ✓ Survey provides a foundation for the Town-wide Visioning Session
- ✓ Town Visioning Session with “breakout sessions” for the development of the goals upon which the updated OSRP is based
- ✓ Draft to be reviewed by the Committee
- ☐ Public Hearing for the plan (Today!)

# PARKS & REC. MASTER PLAN


- Created in 2018
- Provided in-depth information on community needs
- Heavily influences parks and recreation portion of OSRP



# SURVEY RESPONSES

2019


- Ran from 2/27/2019 to 3/30/2019
- 176 respondents
- 93% think parks and recreation facilities are important to quality of life
- 89% think programming and events are important to quality of life
- 95% support investment in parks and recreation



Town of Agawam Open Space & Recreation Plan Survey

The Town of Agawam is updating its Open Space and Recreation Plan to guide the management of its open space, natural resources and recreation areas through 2024. This effort builds on the recent [Agawam Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#). Your input is essential as the Town develops a vision for Open Space and Recreation, and prioritizes future investments. Please complete the following 5-minute survey and share it with your friends and neighbors.

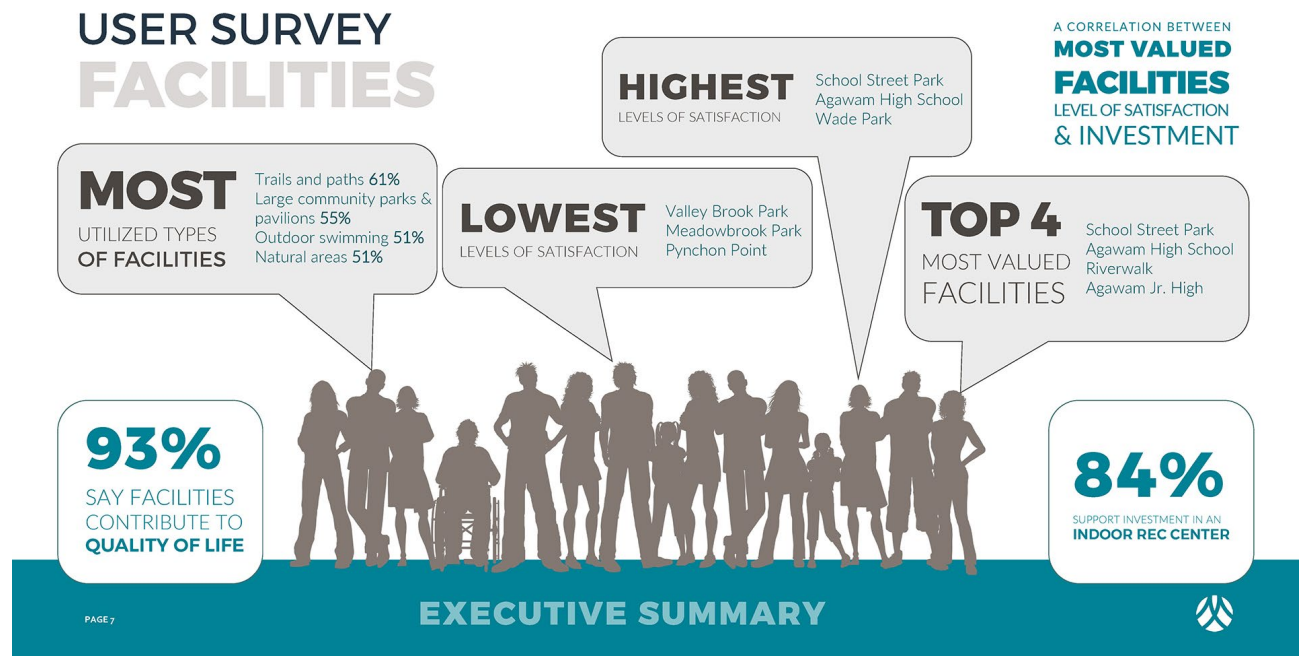
A public workshop and further information regarding the Plan update will be coming later this spring.

\* 1. Where do you live in Agawam ? (Reference Letters on Geographic Areas Map below) 

- A. Feeding Hills / Johnson Corner Area
- B. Springfield Street / Mill Street Area
- C. North Agawam / Obrien's Corner Area
- D. Suffield Corner Area
- E. Hubbard Corner / Shea Corner Area
- F. City Center Area

# NEEDS IDENTIFIED IN SURVEY

- Promote & enhance existing recreational open space
- Improve:
  - Pynchon Point
  - Shea Field
  - Borgatti Field
  - River Access
  - Adult Recreation
- Create:
  - Indoor Town Owned Recreation Center







# COMMUNITY VISION

2019 DRAFT Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals:

*Agawam is a place of tradition and opportunity. Agawam's agricultural fields, historic homes, and village centers hold reminders of the community's rich past. Provin Mountain, the Connecticut and Westfield Rivers, streams, and wetlands impart a sense of quiet open space that residents find so appealing. In keeping with this tradition and the essential role open space serves, the overall vision for this Plan is to use zoning and acquisition to protect properties of environmental concern, as well as to maintain and improve existing resources while preserving Agawam's high quality of life and the character of the Town.*

# GOALS

**1) Develop an open space system that provides benefits throughout the town for all age groups and through all seasons.**

**2) Ensure that the public can access open spaces and recreation areas, consistent with their intended uses.**

**3) Preserve natural resources, habitat systems, wetlands, and farmland.**

**4) Provide adequate recreational facilities to serve a variety of needs for all citizens of Agawam.**

# GOAL 1: DEVELOP AN OPEN SPACE SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES BENEFITS THROUGHOUT THE TOWN FOR ALL AGE GROUPS AND THROUGH ALL SEASONS.

<b>1.1 Acquire, preserve and/or protect parcels, which are in underserved areas, are contiguous with existing habitat, or are important to natural resource conservation or recreation.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1.1.1	Create a permanent Open Space Committee to oversee acquisition and management of existing and future resources.	CPA, Conservation Commission, Planning Dept.	Town Budget, CPA	S
1.1.2	Create an up-to-date comprehensive plan that involves intensive public outreach in the vein of the Town's 1993 "Coming Together for Consensus" report.	Planning Dept.	Town Budget, Grants, PVPC	M
1.1.3	Identify tax title properties contiguous with existing open space and consider taking possession.	Mayor & Town Council, Planning Dept., Assessor, Future Open Space Committee	Town Budget	O
1.1.4	Explore the potential to create a trail connecting Robinson Park, the Junior High School, and Tuckahoe Turf Farm.	DPW, Parks & Rec., School Dept., Planning Dept.	Town Budget	L
<b>1.2 Implement and continue to regularly update the Open Space and Recreation Plan.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1.2.1	Review implementation efforts with Town Departments, Boards, and Commissions at least annually.	Planning Dept.	Town Budget	O
1.2.2	Revise the community survey for 2024 OSRP update and seek greater community engagement.	Planning Dept.	CPA	O
<b>1.3 Identify lots that may have ecological or recreational value.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1.3.1	Work with Assessor to identify vacant and sub-prime building lots. Analyze them relative to natural resources and recreational assets mapping to identify key gaps.	Planning Dept., Assessor	Town Budget	S
1.3.2	Seek input from the community on strategic lots through future outreach efforts.	Planning Dept.	Town Budget	L

# GOAL 2: ENSURE THAT THE PUBLIC CAN ACCESS OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION AREAS, CONSISTENT WITH THEIR INTENDED USES.

2.1	<b>Publicize and inform residents about existing open space and recreation areas; where they are, when they are open, and what they offer.</b>			
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
2.1.1	Create a communication strategy of digital and print informational materials to advertise local recreation and open space resources, and promote regional/national resources, such as the New England Trail.	Parks & Rec.	CPA	S
2.1.2	Create "page(s)" on Channel 15 for public recreation and open space amenities.	Parks & Rec.	CPA	S
2.1.3	Assign a person to keep the Parks & Recreation website updated with current information.	Parks & Rec., IT	CPA	S
2.1.4	Consider expanding public hours for the Agawam High School Track.	School Dept., Parks & Rec.	Town Budget	S
2.2	<b>Work to provide all residents access to open space or recreation facilities within a 5-minute drive from their home.</b>			
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
2.2.1	Encourage the inclusion of recreation infrastructure as a part of the Tuckahoe Master Plan.	Tuckahoe Master Plan Committee	Town Budget	O
	See 1.3.1			

# GOAL 2: ENSURE THAT THE PUBLIC CAN ACCESS OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION AREAS, CONSISTENT WITH THEIR INTENDED USES.

2.3	<b>Support and encourage infrastructure which provides safe, active, and environmentally friendly access to Parks and Recreation amenities.</b>			
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
2.3.1	Study the safety and availability of bike and pedestrian infrastructure conditions throughout town.	Engineering, DPW	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Federal	L
2.3.2	Identify funding sources for sidewalk construction.	Engineering, DPW	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Federal	O
2.3.3	Create designs for sidewalks on Adams Street and busy cut-throughs like Barry Street.	Engineering, DPW	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Federal	L
2.3.4	Encourage that a Complete Streets policy be included in the subdivision regulations.	Planning Dept., DPW, Engineering	Town	O/S
2.3.5	Encourage town planning for bike lanes on all major roads.	Planning Dept., DPW, Engineering	Town	O/S
2.3.6	Encourage the use of utility easements for paths/bike lanes as appropriate.	DPW	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Federal	O
2.3.7	Implement complete streets policy in public and private projects.	Planning Dept., DPW, Engineer	Town	O

# GOAL 3: PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES, HABITAT SYSTEMS, WETLANDS, AND FARMLAND.

3.1 Reassess land use regulations to encourage the preservation of open space and natural resources, and the creation of healthy communities.				
	Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Opportunities	Timeline
3.1.1	Send a recommendation to Town Council to engage in a comprehensive zoning revision in order to include low-impact development principals and sustainable development practices.	Zoning Review Committee, Planning Dept.	Town Budget	S/O
3.2.1	Support town's and Conservation Commission's efforts to pass a municipal wetlands ordinance.	Conservation Commission, Planning Dept., Mayor & Town Council	Town Budget	O
3.2 Promote farmland protection and agricultural uses.				
	Actions	Responsible Party	Funding Opportunities	Timeline
3.2.1	Start an active Agricultural Commission and fill all the positions.	Mayor & Town Council	Town Budget	S
3.2.2	Create an inventory of farmland using information from the Assessor.	Planning Dept., Assessor	Town Budget	S
3.2.3	Reach out to all current farm owners and operators to promote APRs and discuss legacy planning.	Planning Dept., Future Agricultural Commission	Town Budget	S/O
3.2.4	Purchase farmland or work with a nonprofit to do so and encourage active farming uses in perpetuity.	Mayor, Planning Dept., American Farmland Trust	APR, MA Department of Agricultural Resources	O/L

# GOAL 3: PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES, HABITAT SYSTEMS, WETLANDS, AND FARMLAND.

<b>3.3 Encourage donation of land.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3.3.1	Educate tax title property owners about the option to donate land.	Assessor	Town Budget	O
3.3.2	Regularly educate and update Town Council on open space objectives and make recommendations regarding potential land donations.	Conservation Commission	Town Budget	O
3.3.2	Foster the creation of a non-profit local land trust that can hold and acquire conservation easements and open space lands in order to have a nimble partner in open space protection efforts.			
<b>3.4 Educate the community about land management techniques, low impact development, and water resource protection.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3.4.1	Create an education campaign regarding land management techniques, low-impact development, and water resource protection through the collaboration of multiple town boards and commissions and nonprofit partners.	Mayor, Town Depts., Nonprofits	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Non-profit	M/O
<b>3.5 Increase protections for ecologically sensitive areas.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3.5.1	Pursue designation of ecologically sensitive land as a sanctuary for wildlife.	Future Open Space Commission	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Federal	L/O

# GOAL 4: PROVIDE ADEQUATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO SERVE A VARIETY OF NEEDS FOR ALL CITIZENS OF AGAWAM.

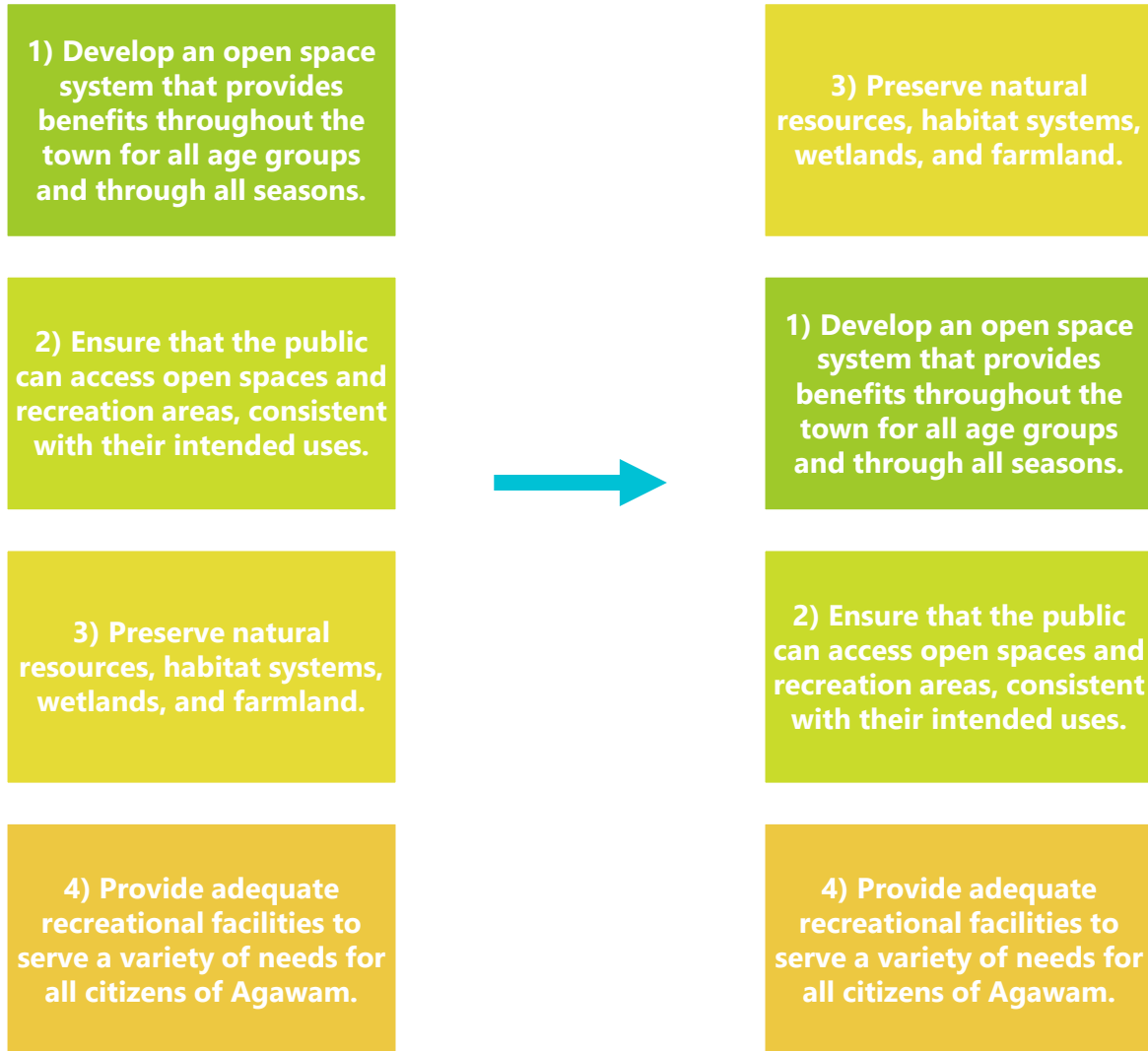
<b>4.1 Develop, manage, and maintain town-owned active and passive recreational facilities and land, striving for geographic balance.</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
4.1.1	Implement recommendations from the 2018 Parks & Recreation Master Plan.	Parks & Rec., DPW	Grants, Town Budget	O
4.1.2	Explore potential to build community gardens in interested neighborhoods.	Community groups, Planning Dept.	Town Budget	O
4.1.3	Create a Trail System Master Plan for Valleybrook Park.	Parks & Rec., DPW, Planning Dept.	Town Budget	M
4.1.4	Renovate Meadowbrook Park and update equipment.	Parks & Rec., DPW	Town Budget	M
4.1.5	Create river access for small motorized boats.	Parks & Rec., DPW	Town Budget	M
4.1.6	Budget to ensure maintenance of existing parks and new facilities.	Parks & Rec., DPW, Mayor	Town Budget	O
4.1.7	Collaborate with Town Council and Mayor to identify other potential municipal funding sources to address open space and recreation needs.	Mayor, Town Council, Conservation Commission, Future Open Space Commission	Town Budget	O
<b>4.2 Seek ADA compliance for all recreational facilities</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
4.2.1	Follow the recommendations of the ADA self-evaluation to bring all town-owned facilities into compliance.	DPW	Town Budget, Commonwealth, Federal	L
4.2.2	Require universal design to be included in all future public or private recreation facilities.	DPW, Planning Dept.	Town Budget	S
<b>4.3 Work to better integrate recreational opportunities for seniors in Town</b>				
	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Funding Opportunities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
4.3.1	Begin a discussion with stakeholders to address the recreational needs of seniors.	Parks & Rec., Council on Aging, Senior Center	Town Budget	S/O

# DISCUSSION POINTS

- Should we add an “immediate” timeframe – less than 1 year?
- Should we add new actions? Under what objective?  
Timeframe?
  - Implementation of Outdoor Classroom
  - Implementation of Tuckahoe Master Plan
  - Memorial Field Improvements

# DISCUSSION POINTS

Should we reorder the goals?



# NEXT STEPS

- Draft will be posted online
- Feedback can be sent to Pam Kerr until October 13<sup>th</sup>
- Comments will be integrated into the final document
- Final document will be submitted to the Commonwealth