



# Building a Resilient Future

## An Open Space Plan

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH • 2020







# THANK YOU

The Portsmouth Open Space Plan could not have been accomplished without the time and energy contributed by the Open Space Plan Subcommittee, and every member of the public that attended meetings and provided input during the planning process.

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# Introduction

Portsmouth is fortunate to have wonderful parks and open spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy. These properties provide opportunities for recreation, access to trail networks and the shore, and important ecosystem services such as habitat and storm protection. However, only 15% of this open space is permanently protected as conservation land. This means that over time what we perceive as Portsmouth's open space network, and the natural resources it contains, may be fragmented or developed. This has potential to disrupt the natural resource network and degrade the green infrastructure that supports the resilience and quality of life that Portsmouth enjoys.





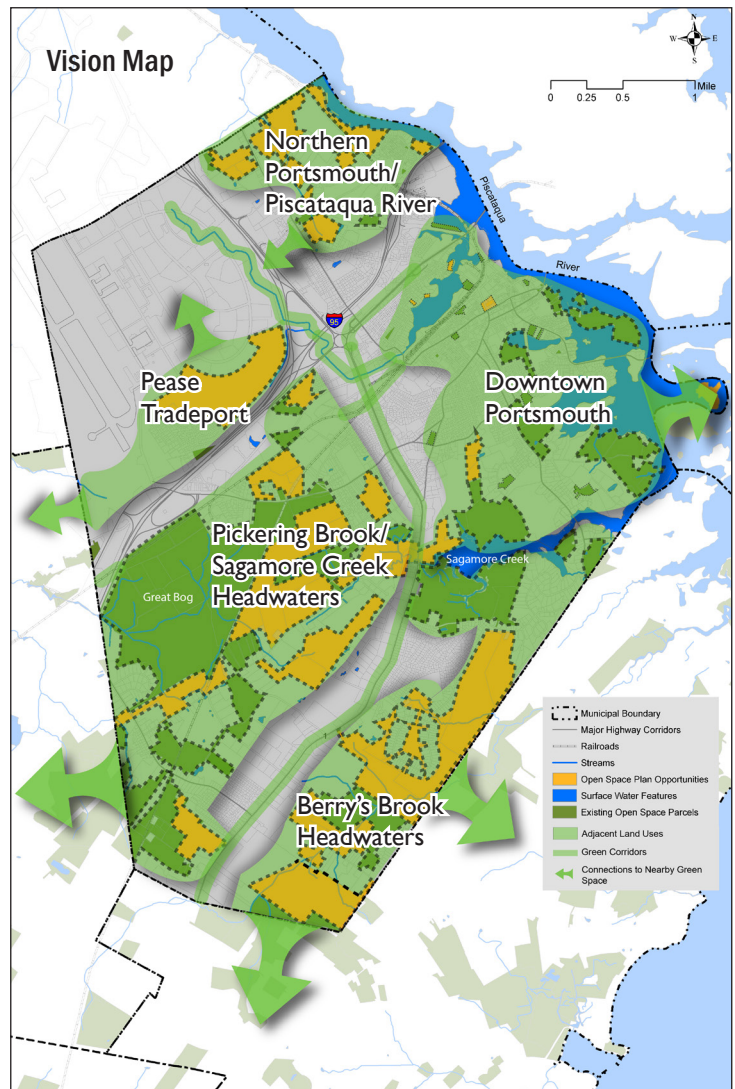
The purpose of this project is to develop a cohesive, comprehensive plan for the protection of open spaces and the natural resources they contain. This effort was informed by prior plans and studies developed by the City and conservation organizations, as well as direct feedback from the public. The result is an exciting Vision of Portsmouth's future open space network that includes protected corridors of conservation land for all. Once implemented, more than 25% of the City could be preserved in some manner. Along with the suggested improvements, this will ensure improved access to natural areas and better wayfinding within these open spaces. This plan also calls for a tripling of dedicated trail miles within the City over time, some of which are already in place.

**“Just as a healthy community provides places for people to live and work, a healthy community also provides places for people to get outdoors, enjoy clean water and air, and live vibrantly. That’s green infrastructure.”**

*Lawrence Selzer, President/CEO of the Conservation Fund*

The Vision Map on the right highlights specific areas (shown in light green) of the City's open space network that have their own set of distinctive qualities and characteristics. Dark green parcels represent existing open spaces and orange parcels represent key open space opportunities for acquisition, conservation easements, and/or improvements. This map shows how the City's identified open space opportunities will help create a more contiguous, connected, and equitable green infrastructure network throughout the City. These opportunities, combined with green street initiatives and sustainable site development initiatives, will greatly improve Portsmouth's resilience into the future.

As Portsmouth works towards implementing its open space vision, the community will realize the added benefit of the many retained and restored ecosystem services. These benefits include critical habitat for wildlife, places for recreation and public gathering, food and energy production, clean air and water, and flood control and storm protection. While all of these services contribute to the community's character and resilience, they also provide opportunities to engage with a broader group of stakeholders during the implementation of this Plan.





# What is Open Space?

Open space is often referred to as the “green” or “living” infrastructure of a municipality, playing an important role in enhancing quality of life for residents, protecting the community’s natural assets, and determining the character and accessibility of the environment.

Additionally, this high-quality and interconnected green infrastructure offers tremendous potential to help the City of Portsmouth increase its resilience related to climate change, food security, and the health of its ecosystems and residents. Open space can be undeveloped or lightly developed land and recreation areas owned publicly or privately.



# An open space network includes:



**NATURAL AREAS**



**BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE**



**PARKS AND RECREATION**



**WORKING LANDSCAPES**



**URBAN GREEN SPACE**



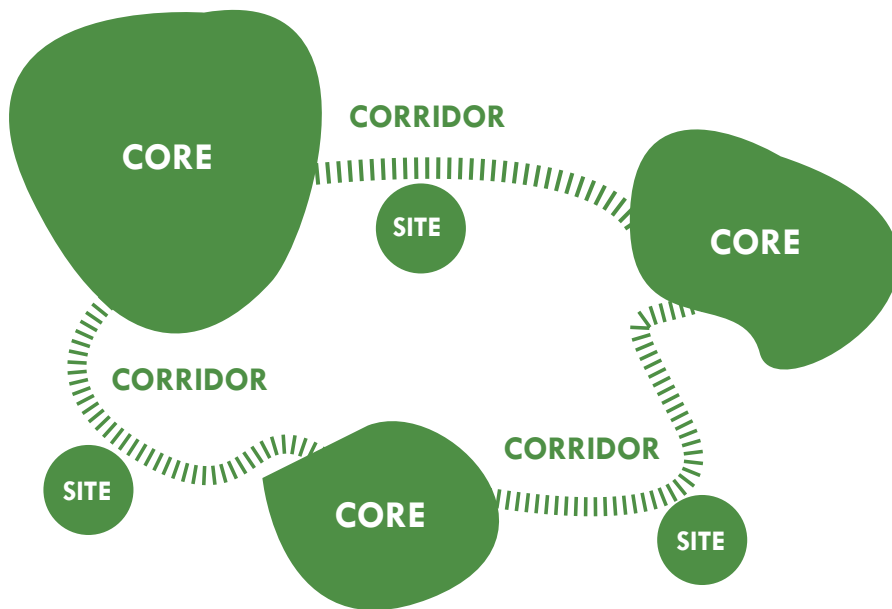


# What is Green Infrastructure?

Green infrastructure can be thought of as a City’s “living” **infrastructure**, providing a community with a network of natural resources and their associated ecological, social, and economic benefits. It can be represented by the smallest urban pocket park and also by large unfragmented conservation areas; from a street tree to a forest. Although the term has been popularized to classify ecological-based stormwater management solutions, policymakers and planners throughout the country are recognizing that using the term more broadly provides additional benefits to the community as a whole. Green infrastructure, from small to large scale, has the potential to exceed the sum of its parts when incorporated into a contiguous network throughout the City, producing positive impacts related to quality of life, human and ecosystem health, community resiliency, and habitat connectivity for all species. This network can be created through land protection initiatives, stewardship of public and private lands, and appropriate land use regulations that promote green infrastructure as part of site development and improvements.

The graphic above depicts the primary architecture of an interconnected system of green infrastructure. **GREEN CORE AREAS** are typically large, unfragmented open spaces that are critical for providing space for plants and wildlife and provide outdoor recreation and environmental education

### Components of a City-Wide Green Infrastructure System



value. They provide and protect critical ecosystem functions such as water quality protection, climate change resilience, and wildlife habitat. **GREEN CORRIDORS** are linear features of the green infrastructure system that serve to connect core areas and sites. Many follow roadways, trails, and waterways. Typically, they help connect otherwise isolated plant and wildlife populations, thus positively impacting the larger ecosystem. They also serve as important connectors for humans to utilize between their homes, surrounding open spaces, and places of work. **GREEN SITES** refer to smaller tracts of land throughout the City that provide an opportunity to incorporate green infrastructure. Developed tracts may include commercial properties, schools, and residential developments, while undeveloped tracts may include parks and cemeteries. The following page shows photographic examples of what these three scales of green architectures may look like.



# Components of a City-Wide Green Infrastructure System: Examples







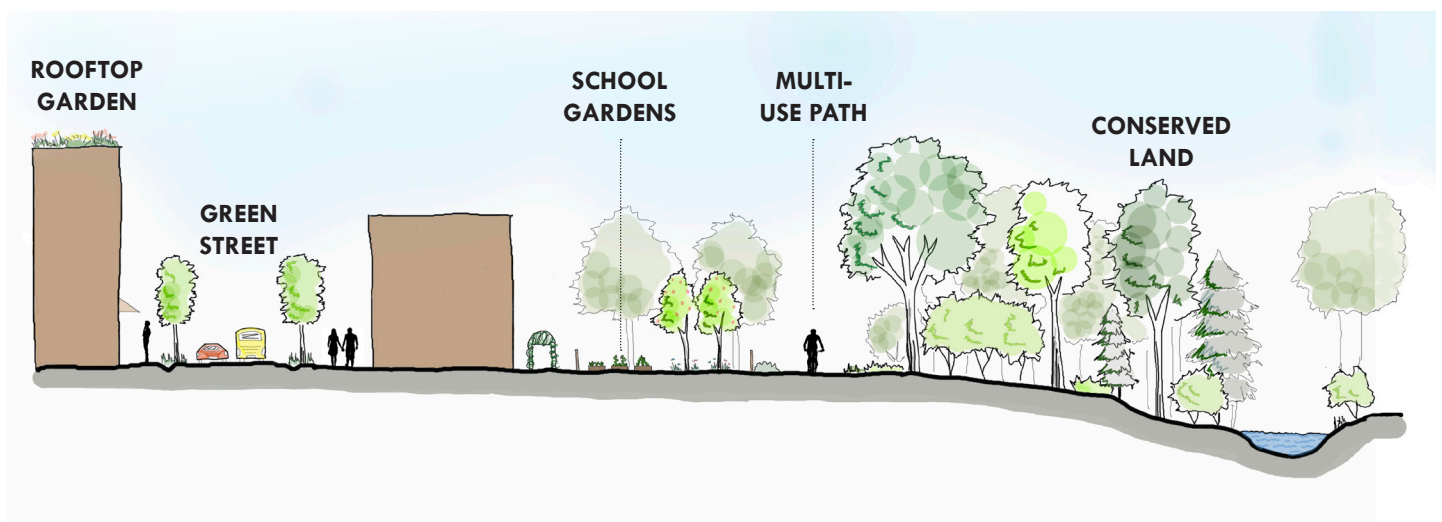
## Connectivity and Scale

Open space types are not mutually exclusive and, in some cases, may be represented on a single site. For Portsmouth to create a complete network of open spaces, the City will need to connect different types and scales of open spaces throughout the community.

As the image below illustrates, this can be visualized and implemented as a transect of connected open spaces that include the smallest urban green spaces in the Downtown connected to large open lands on the outskirts of Portsmouth and into neighboring communities. Each of the parcels adds to Portsmouth's network of green or living infrastructure, and connectivity between these parcels make the City more resilient.

The expansion, connection, and stewardship of Portsmouth's open space network, envisioned as the supportive green infrastructure, provides opportunities to weave in goals related to passive and active recreation, environmental education, economic activity, environmental protection, and regeneration of natural functions. The resulting open space network that has been envisioned for Portsmouth has the potential to deliver all of these ecosystem services and functions for the benefit of residents and visitors through all stages of life.

### A Transect of Connected Open Spaces





# Green Infrastructure Benefits

Portsmouth's Open Space network is composed of publicly and privately owned parcels that contain important natural resources. The values this network delivers can be measured through the variety of benefits it provides.

## ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS

- Improves air quality
- Reduces the urban heat island effect
- Mitigates climate change through carbon sequestration
- Reduces flooding, filters stormwater, and protects water quality
- Provides habitat and biodiversity
- Protects valuable soil resources

## SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Provides opportunities for recreation and play
- Improves the health of residents and visitors by increasing access to physical activity, providing space for food production, filtering air pollution, and moderating temperature
- Improves psychological well-being by connecting people to nature and green space and providing noise reduction benefits
- Enhances sense of community and social fabric - open spaces can foster social interaction and create places for neighbors to gather and connect

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Increases nearby property values and, subsequently, tax revenue
- Contributes to the City's tourism industry by expanding outdoor recreation opportunities and offering diverse ways to enjoy Portsmouth
- Improves the overall attractiveness and livability of the City for both existing and prospective residents



# A Vision for Portsmouth's Open Space Network

Portsmouth's open space planning initiative provided an opportunity to create a clear vision of the City's open space network. This vision reinforces the Master Plan while incorporating additional site and resource analysis, and the public feedback received throughout the planning process. To realize this vision, the City set out to create an Open Space Plan aimed at improving public access to, increasing use and stewardship of, and improving connectivity between open spaces City-wide.

## Other goals include:

- Improving management of open lands using sustainable stewardship practices
- Identifying future connections between open spaces, neighborhoods, and areas of employment that also integrate pedestrian and bicycle access
- Increasing the open space network while addressing resiliency (climate, urban heat island effect, storms, food security, etc.)

The map on the following page depicts a conceptual vision for an interconnected open space network throughout the City that's created by strategically conserving key parcels and improving existing open spaces. Five key areas were identified that have specific characteristics and considerations for open space protection.

## Open Space Vision

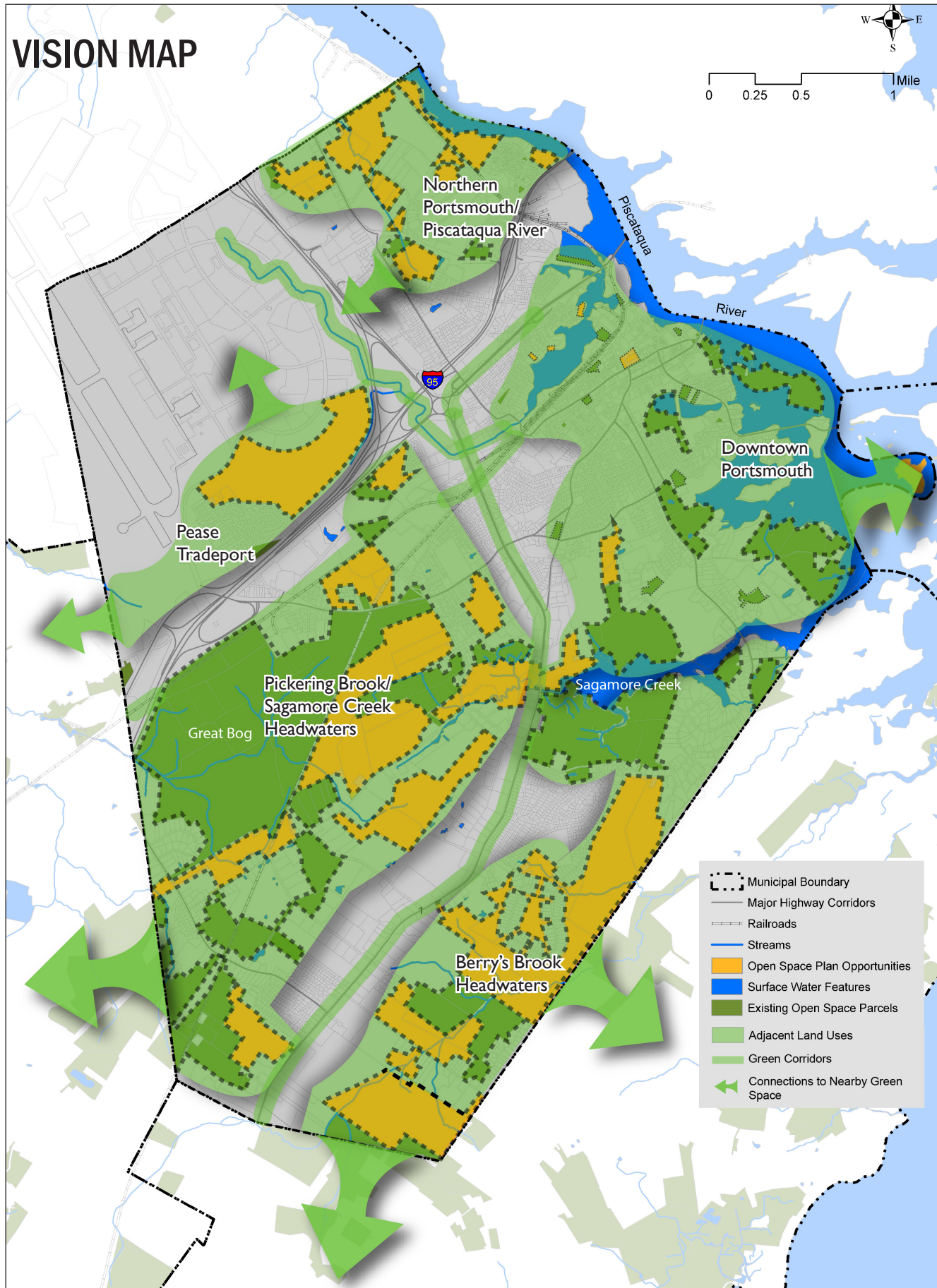
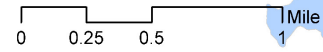
Portsmouth's Open Space network provides a wide range of active and passive recreational opportunities, as well as protecting valuable wetlands and wildlife. By 2025, residents will have access to neighborhood and regional parks and playgrounds within walking and biking distance.

An extensive trail network will provide off-road connections throughout the City, increasing access to other neighborhoods and services. Regional greenways, bikeways and hiking trails will connect Portsmouth to other communities on the Seacoast and beyond.

Public lookouts and boat launches along the Piscataqua River, Sagamore Creek, North and South Mill Ponds, and other waterbodies will provide both physical and visual access to the water. Valuable open spaces will be preserved and acquired in order to protect water quality, provide wildlife habitat and corridors, and many other ecosystem services while making the City more resilient to the impacts of climate change.



# VISION MAP

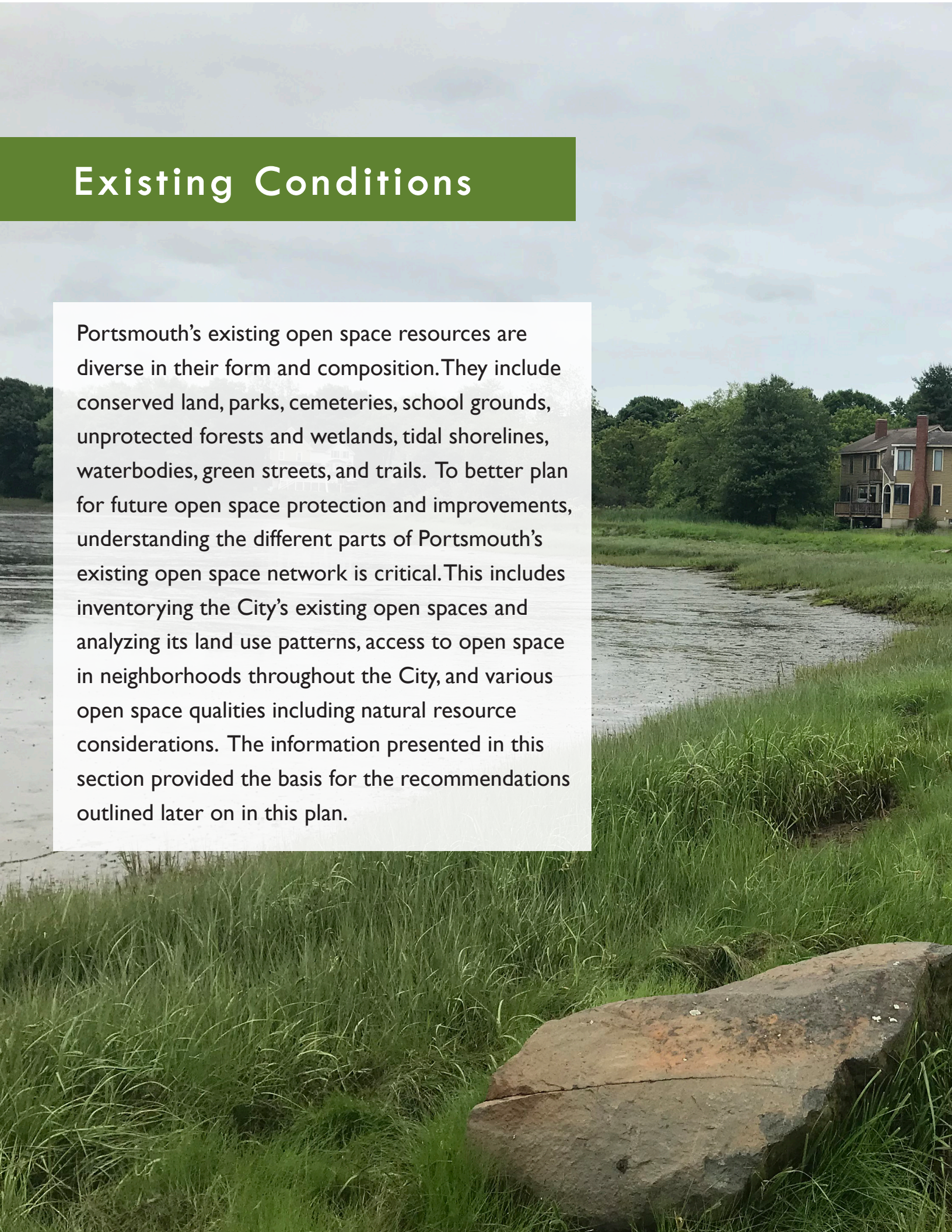


- Municipal Boundary
- Major Highway Corridors
- Railroads
- Streams
- Open Space Plan Opportunities
- Surface Water Features
- Existing Open Space Parcels
- Adjacent Land Uses
- Green Corridors
- Connections to Nearby Green Space



# Existing Conditions

Portsmouth's existing open space resources are diverse in their form and composition. They include conserved land, parks, cemeteries, school grounds, unprotected forests and wetlands, tidal shorelines, waterbodies, green streets, and trails. To better plan for future open space protection and improvements, understanding the different parts of Portsmouth's existing open space network is critical. This includes inventorying the City's existing open spaces and analyzing its land use patterns, access to open space in neighborhoods throughout the City, and various open space qualities including natural resource considerations. The information presented in this section provided the basis for the recommendations outlined later on in this plan.





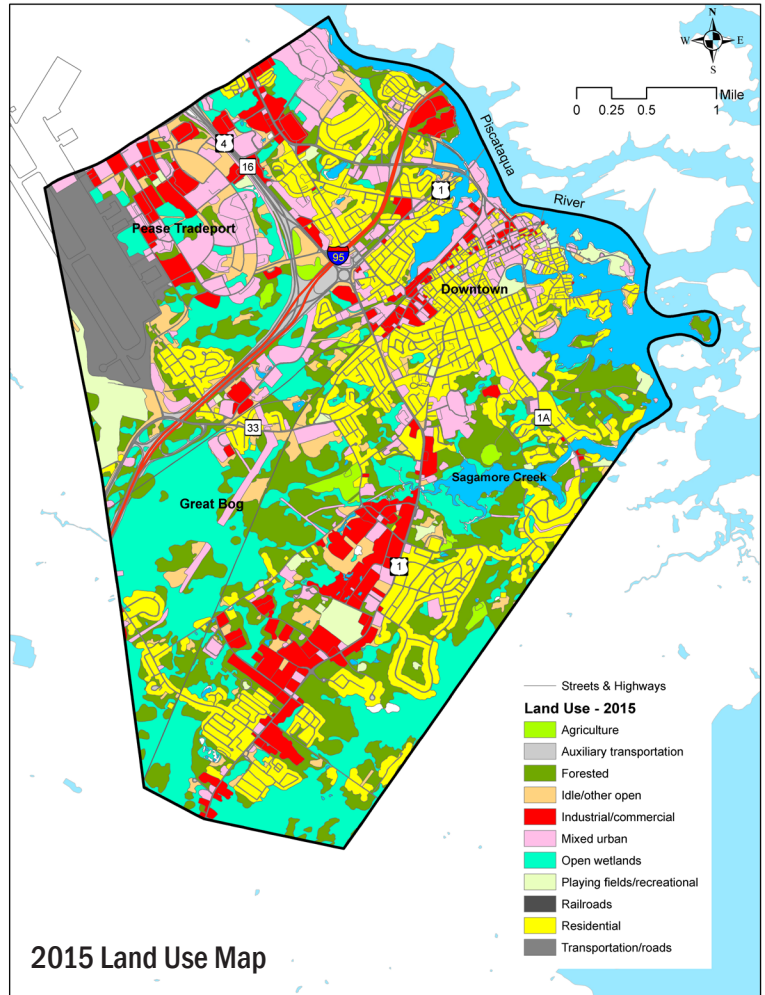
# Land Use

Portsmouth's land area consists of 9,975 acres excluding water bodies. In the Seacoast region, this puts Portsmouth in the mid-range for size compared to the land area of other nearby towns. However, with an estimated 2017 population of nearly 22,000, and a population density of about 1,400 persons per square mile, Portsmouth is the most densely settled municipality in Rockingham County.

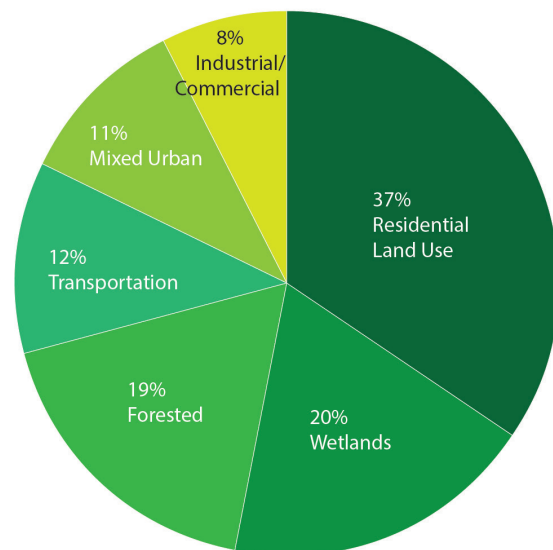
## Key Findings

- Portsmouth is presently 55% developed, with about 19% of its area in forests (including urban tree cover) and 20% in open wetlands.
- 37% of the developed land area is residential land use
- 8% is industrial/commercial, 11% is mixed urban, and 12% is utilized for various types of transportation, including the air field at the Pease Tradeport.
- Developed land is concentrated in the northern half of the City and along Route 1 in the southern half.
- Wetlands and forested land area comprise the majority of remaining open space in Portsmouth.

The pie chart to the right shows the breakdown of land use by type.



**Land Use Types**





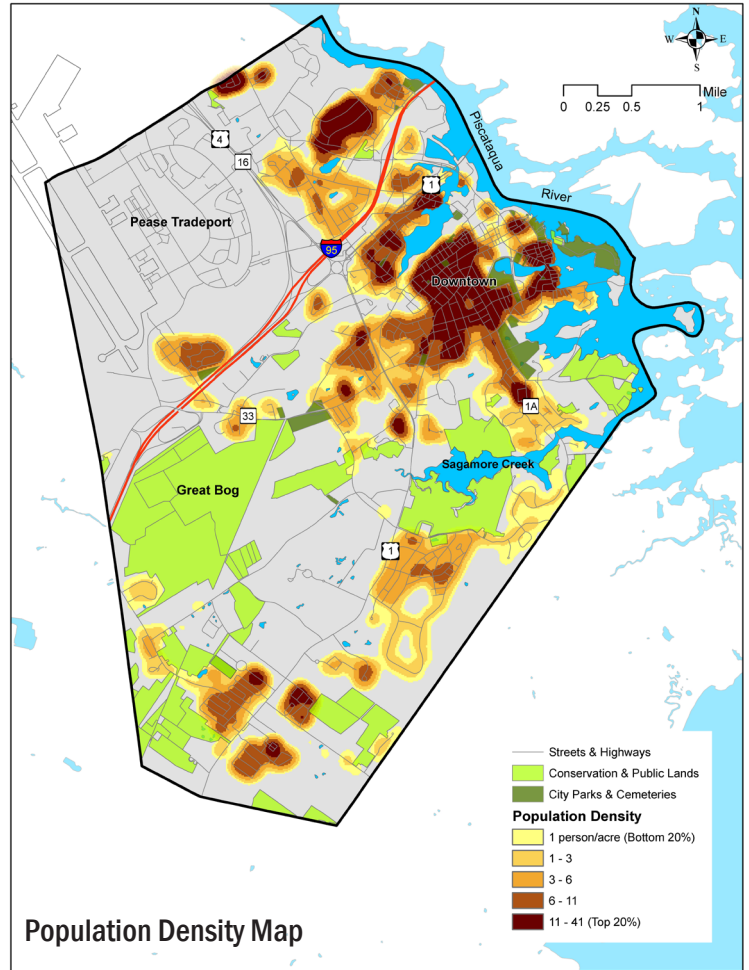
# Population Density

Everyone, regardless of where they live, their income, or their ability, deserves access to a great park, trails, or other open space resource. Intentionally increasing investment in parks and open space throughout the City and especially in neighborhoods that do not have access to open space currently is a high priority of this Plan.

To better understand the current equity of public access to open spaces in Portsmouth, an analysis was conducted to estimate the range of population density across Portsmouth (see map right). Darker colors on the map indicate areas with higher population density. Medium color tones show where lower-density, single family detached housing has been built.

## Key Findings

- The northern half of the City is densely developed reflecting the urban downtown area, which has been seeing increasing development of multi-family residential buildings (apartments, condominiums, etc.).
- Higher population density in the southern half of the City are due to concentrations of multi-family developments built in the 1970s and 1980s.
- Many of the City’s open spaces (conserved land, parks, cemeteries) are located away from locations where more people live, often more than walking distance. Exceptions include Piscataqua River parks (such as Hislop and Prescott Park) City-owned land north of Sagamore Creek, and the Urban Forestry Center tract south of Sagamore Creek.



Above: The downtown core is the densest area of the City, as indicated by the level of development shown above.





# Natural Resource Considerations

After gathering and reviewing the natural resources in Portsmouth, augmented by a study of the City's natural resources in 2010, a variety of natural resource features was selected for further study as they affect the potential for open space protection. These include:

- **WATERSHEDS AND STREAM CORRIDORS**
- **WETLANDS**
- **WATER SUPPLY PROTECTION AREAS**
- **WILDLIFE HABITAT & HABITAT TYPES**
- **PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL SOILS**

Tidal shoreline and marine features are addressed elsewhere in this plan under Water Access and Trails.

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## Watersheds & Stream Corridors

Portsmouth's streams provide habitat opportunities and linear corridors through the City for wildlife and humans. When considering the land areas that drain to these water bodies, we look at their watersheds to better understand this relationship. The four major watersheds in Portsmouth are:

### PISCATAQUA RIVER WATERSHED

Drainage to the Piscataqua River (northern half of the City); this watershed covers more than 60% of the City and involves a mix of manmade stormwater infrastructure and natural overland drainage including Sagamore Creek and Hodgson Brook;

### PICKERING BROOK WATERSHED

Pickering Brook draining the Great Bog wetlands complex to Great Bay through the town of Greenland (20% of the City);

### BERRY'S BROOK WATERSHED

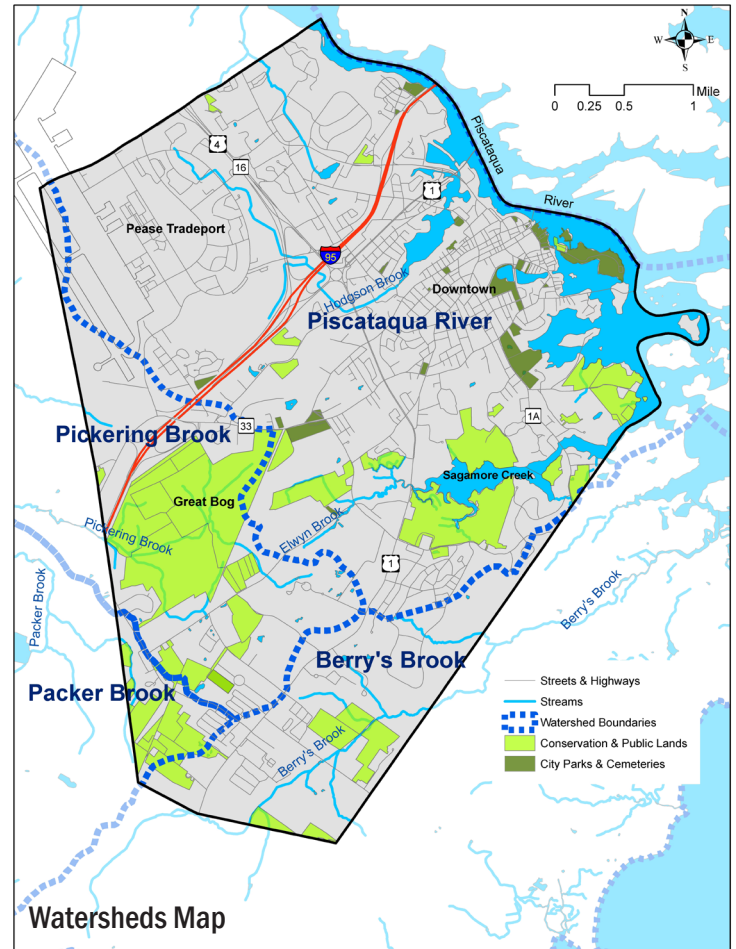
Berry's Brook draining extensive wetlands eastward through the town of Rye to the Little Harbor and Ordiorne Point area (14% of the City); and,

### PACKER BROOK WATERSHED

A small portion of Packer Brook in the southern part of the City draining west through Greenland to Great Bay (3% of City land area).

### Key Findings

- Pickering Brook and Packer Brook, along with the associated wetlands complexes, are very important to maintaining water quality and ecological functions in Great Bay, a little more than one mile to the west of Portsmouth.
- Berry's Brook has similar importance as it drains to the Seavey Creek Estuary in Rye and joins the mouth of the Piscataqua River and the Atlantic Ocean.
- Sagamore Creek is an ecologically significant estuary adjacent to the more urbanized portion of the City; while impacted by urban drainage, this area is also critical to maintaining water quality and habitat functions in the tidal area leading to the Piscataqua River.
- All watercourses contain quality wildlife habitat and also function independently as corridors facilitating wildlife movement.



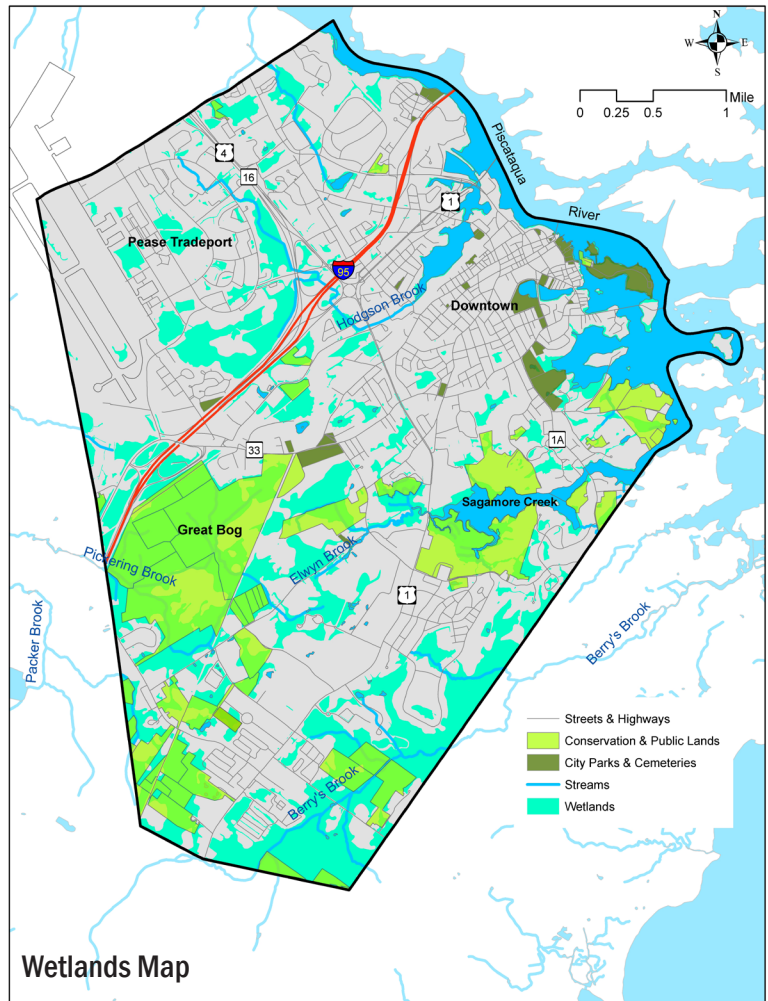


## Wetlands

A total of 3,500 acres, or 33% of the City land area is comprised of wetlands. The map to the right shows the distribution of wetland ecosystems throughout the City. Wetlands provide many ecosystem services, including floodwater storage and natural filtration of sediments and contaminants, and are home to multiple habitat types critical to a range of wildlife species.

### Key Findings

- The majority of Portsmouth's wetlands are located in the southern half of the City, but important and unique wetlands also exist in the tidal zones along the Piscataqua River, on islands in the river, and along Sagamore Creek.
- Currently, 45% of these wetlands are forested, 22% are palustrine (marshes), and 22% are marine wetlands (tidal).
- The remaining wetlands types include small occurrences of scrub/shrub wetlands, bog formations, and ponds embedded within the larger wetlands, as well as a small number of man-made wetlands in the form of ditches and detention ponds.
- The range of marine wetlands found in Portsmouth are rare in New Hampshire, which only has 17 miles of saltwater shoreline. These include salt marsh habitats, mud flats, eel grass flats, and other habitats with linkages to brackish and saltwater ecologies.
- With nearly half of the City's wetlands forested, these areas also provide ecosystem benefits such as oxygen production, cleaning of polluted air, and temperature regulations for the community.
- Although wetlands provide significant ecosystem services, their potential for recreation uses are limited due to constant or periodic standing water.
- Development activity in the southern half of the City has primarily followed the high ground along Route 1, but has crowded the wetlands margins in many locations.
- The little open space left around Pease Tradeport in the northwestern part of the City is almost entirely wetland ecosystems.



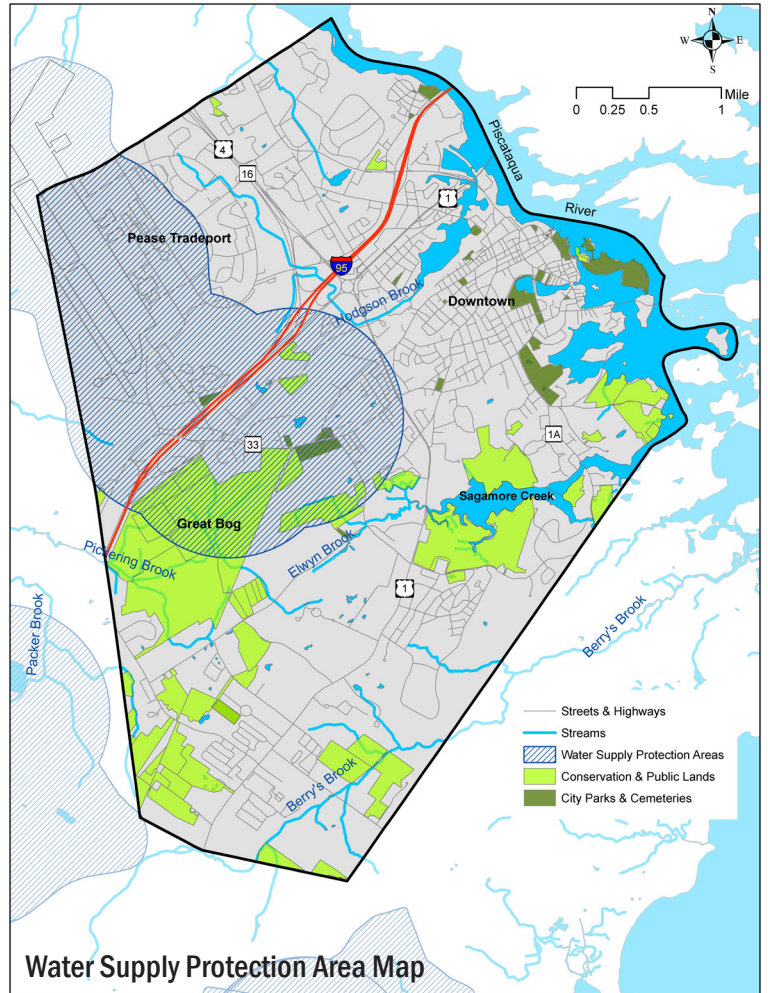


## Water Supply Protection Areas

Groundwater is a critical natural resource for Portsmouth. The aquifers that constitute this groundwater resource are an important source of drinking water in addition to being an integral part of the hydrologic cycle. This water supply resource is also connected to the network of surface waters in the community, and as a result is extremely important for fish, wildlife, and recreation.

### Key Findings:

- Conserving land above Portsmouth’s aquifers and around surface water resources such as wetlands, rivers, and streams will help to protect these water resources from the pressures of development and conflicting land uses. Such action ensures that water resources will continue to be available long into the future. This is especially important in Portsmouth because some of the City’s drinking water is already being sourced from outside of the community.
- In Portsmouth, the biggest area of concern for the protection of groundwater resources is a large area that straddles Interstate 95 and includes Pease Tradeport. Given the threats to water quality in this area of the community land conservation efforts related to water quality protection should be prioritized.





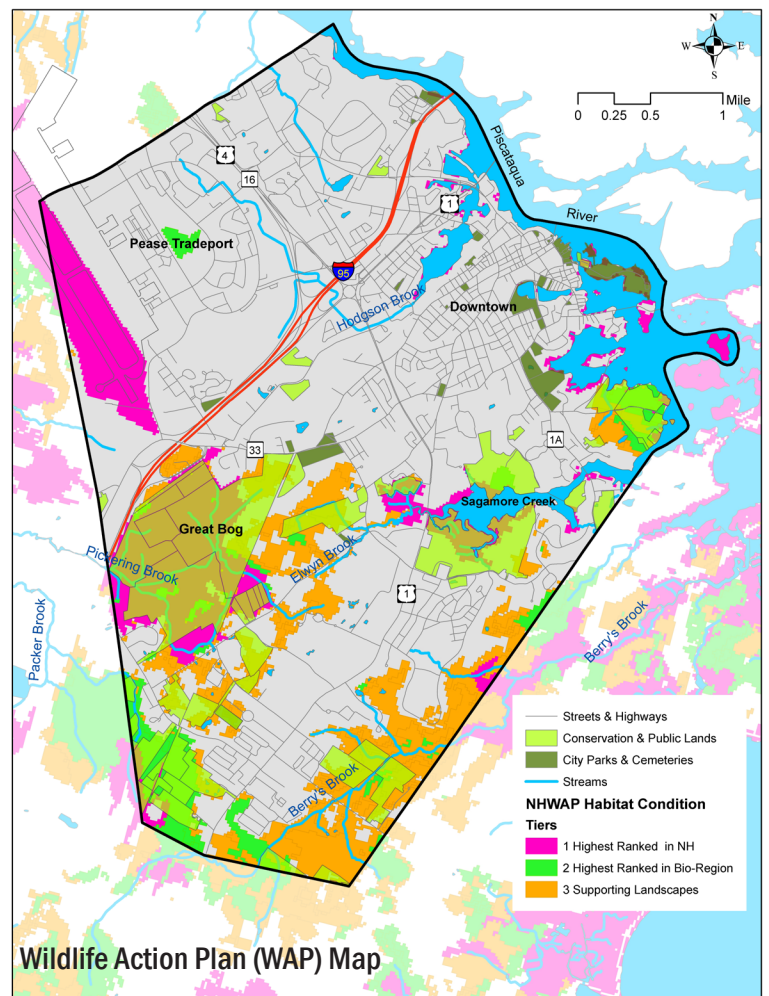
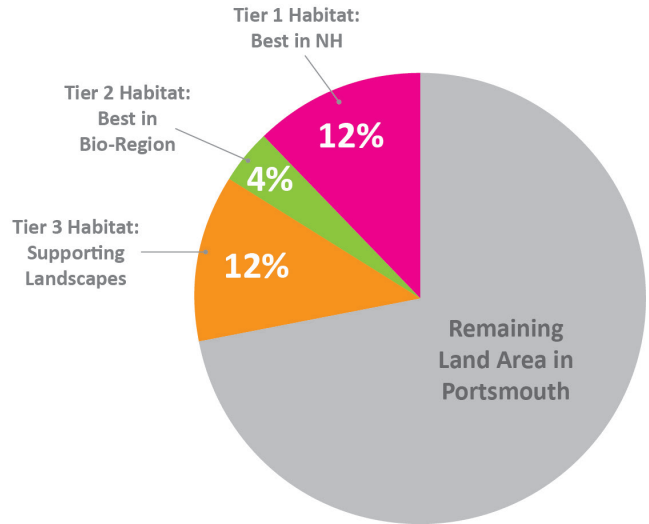
## Wildlife Habitat

As urbanized and densely populated as Portsmouth is today, there remain areas of important wildlife habitat. The NH Wildlife Action Plan (NHWAP), last revised in 2015, provides data on both habitat condition and habitat type. By understanding the location, type, and size of wildlife habitat in Portsmouth, the City can make informed decisions on how to best protect remaining resources.

The map on the right displays NHWAP data. The pink color indicates Tier 1 habitat that is “best in NH” for its type; the bright green color indicates Tier 2 as “best in bio-region”. The orange color represents Tier 3 supporting landscapes intended as a buffer to protect the integrity of Tiers 1 and 2, but also important wildlife habitat. While much of Portsmouth is not rated for high quality habitat, several areas do stand out.

### Key Findings:

- The Tier 1 area adjacent to the Pease Tradeport is important bird nesting habitat.
- The Tier 1 lands associated with the wetlands complex in the west-central part of Portsmouth reflects the quality of these extensive forested wetlands.
- Similarly, the Tier 2 classification in the southwest corner of the City (Packer Brook/Packer Bog) is also high-quality habitat. The large Tier 3 supporting landscape in the southeastern portion of the City represents the Berry’s Brook wetland ecosystems.
- Small but important occurrences of Tiers 1 and 2 are also found along Sagamore Creek, the offshore islands within Portsmouth’s jurisdiction, and along the Piscataqua River shoreline.



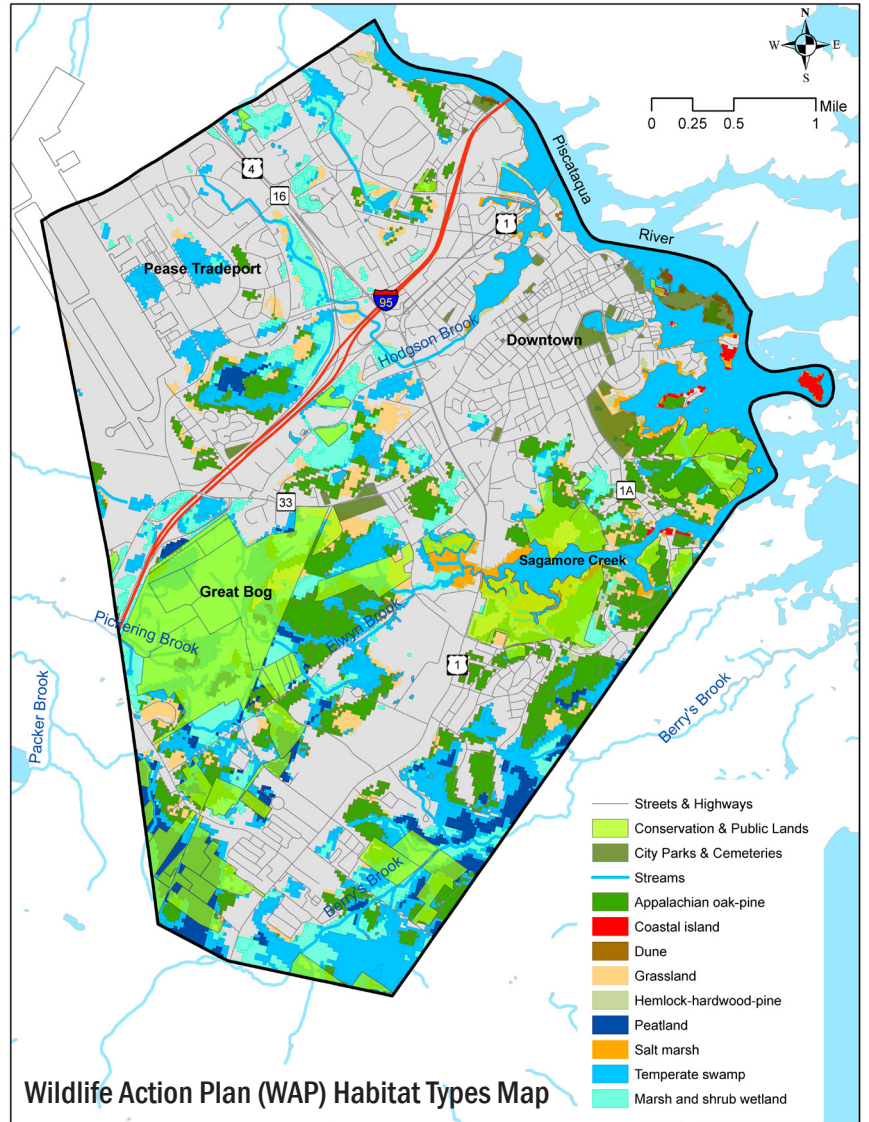


## Habitat Types

**Nine distinct habitat types are mapped in the NHWAP within Portsmouth. Each NHWAP habitat type has its own plant and animal communities.**

### Key Findings:

- The Habitat Type Map to the right illustrates the grouping of freshwater wetlands habitats in the southern half of the City, especially in the Great Bog area and the Berry's Brook drainage. These marine habitats are typically small occurrences located along Sagamore Creek and the Little Harbor area. These habitat types are uncommon in NH, and unique to the Seacoast Region.
- Forested habitats (Appalachian Oak Pine and Hemlock-Hardwood-Pine) total a little more than 1,300 acres, and tend to be found across the central part of the City, not including urban tree cover such as street trees and park plantings.
- Freshwater wetland habitats total about 2,640 acres, or 27% of City land area; marine habitats (coastal islands, dunes, salt marsh) add another 252 acres.



Above: The Urban Forestry Center's appalachia oak-pine forest scattered with an understory of herbaceous species like white wood aster, as shown above.

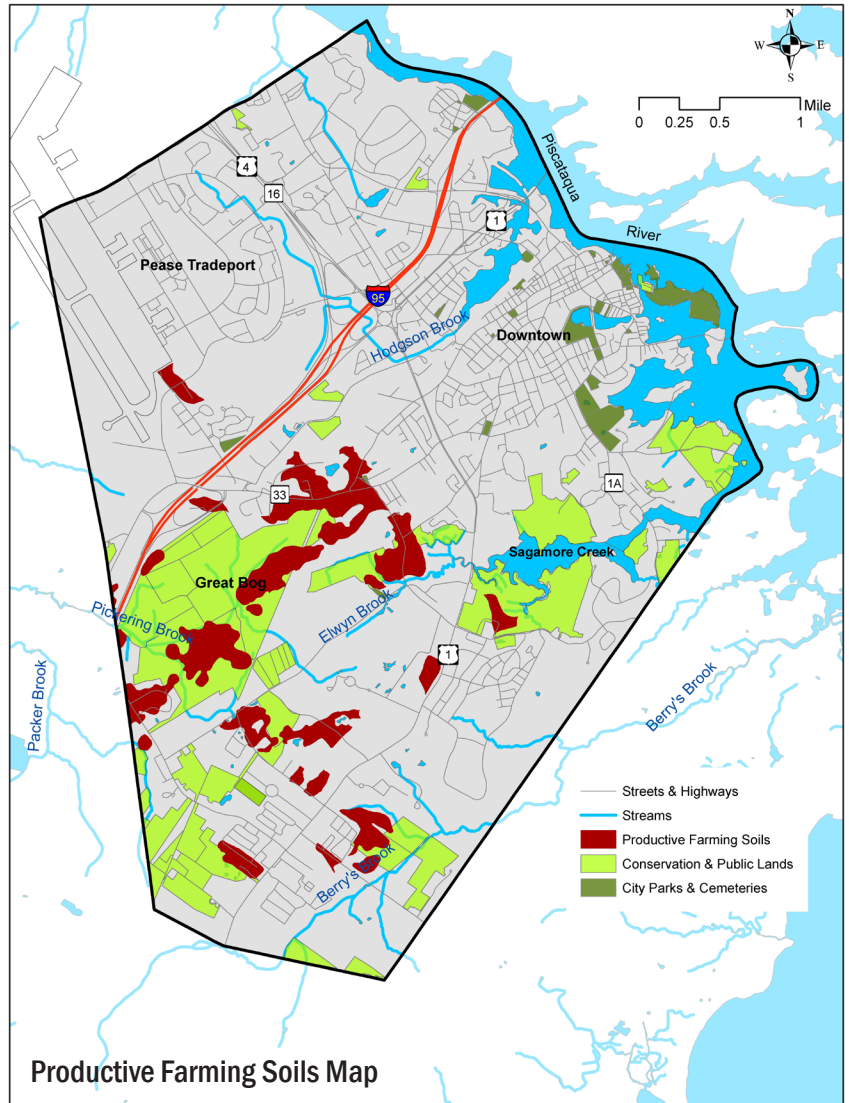


## Productive Farming Soils

While active agriculture has nearly disappeared from existence in Portsmouth with continuing development over the past few decades, there is growing interest in community gardens and local food production in Portsmouth. From a community resilience perspective this indicates a need to protect the best agricultural soils for the future.

### Key Findings:

- Agricultural soils are rare and scattered in NH, accounting for only 6.5% of the state's land base.
- Approximately 25% of the most productive farming soils in NH are found in Strafford and Rockingham Counties, close to the Seacoast.
- Portsmouth has about 520 acres of these soils, or 5% of the City land area. Currently, 192 acres (37%) of these soils are forested, and another 194 acres (37%) are already developed for urban land uses and transportation.
- Only 4% of Portsmouth's farming soils are in any sort of agricultural use, primarily for hay crops.
- The majority of the undeveloped soils are located along Peverly Hill Road and to the south on forested "islands" in the vicinity of Great Bog. Small occurrences are also found at the Urban Forestry Center and adjacent to the Pannaway Neighborhood near the Pease Tradeport.



Above: The Urban Forestry Center has a demonstration garden and composting system for educational purposes.





## Existing Open Space Resources

Portsmouth's existing open space network includes several types of resources:

- **PARKS** are identified open spaces in the more developed areas of the community
- **CEMETERIES** in a range of sizes provide open space benefits to local residents and wildlife
- **SCHOOL PROPERTIES** with amenities ranging from active recreation open space to natural areas with little or no development
- **TIDAL SHORELINES AND WATER ACCESS POINTS** for various types of boating, fishing, and other uses
- **MUNICIPALLY-OWNED, UNDEVELOPED PROPERTIES** that permit access and would benefit from infrastructure improvements
- **CONSERVATION LAND** that is open to public access
- **TRAIL SYSTEMS** that are both formally and informally maintained



## Parks

There are 28 tracts of land in the City devoted to public parks, playgrounds, and recreation fields, totaling about 90 acres.

### Size

Portsmouth's parks range in size from ~1/10 of an acre (pocket parks, small memorial green spaces) to 35 acres in the case of Pierce Island Park. The average park size is 3.5 acres.

### Distribution

Parks are generally distributed across the northern half of the City. These parks are typically located in the urban downtown area and along the Piscataqua River shoreline.

### Character and Amenities

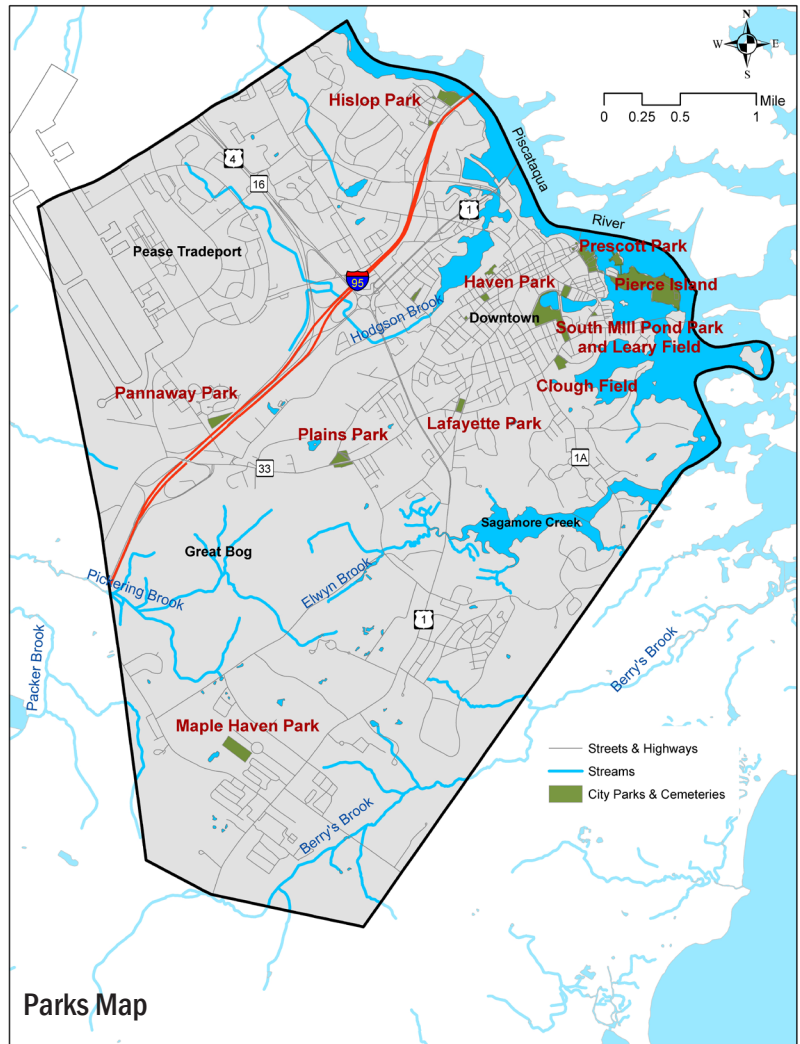
Some parks are older and semi-formal in character (Goodwin Park, Aldrich Park). Others provide venues for recreational field activities (Alumni Field, Leary Field, Clough Field, Hislop Field, Plains Field). There are at least nine parks with a playground focus, some updated more recently. Portsmouth's parks have few natural or wilder areas.

### Water Access

Prescott Park and the Pierce Island Park/Four Tree Island tracts are key park open spaces located in the downtown area along the Piscataqua River. Together with the park land in the Atlantic Heights neighborhood in the northwestern quarter of the City, these parks provide more than two miles of direct access to the river and tidal shoreline.

### Expanding Parks

All park tracts are constrained in terms of future expansion due to being located in the most densely built-up area of Portsmouth. The potential for new urban parks is also limited due to a lack of available open space that could be acquired by the City. However, options do exist in the case of the North Mill Pond lineal park, and the Vaughn/Worth/Bridge revitalization currently being planned and implemented. There is also an opportunity for the City to partner with School Departments to improve school grounds to serve as public parks for the wider public.





## Cemeteries

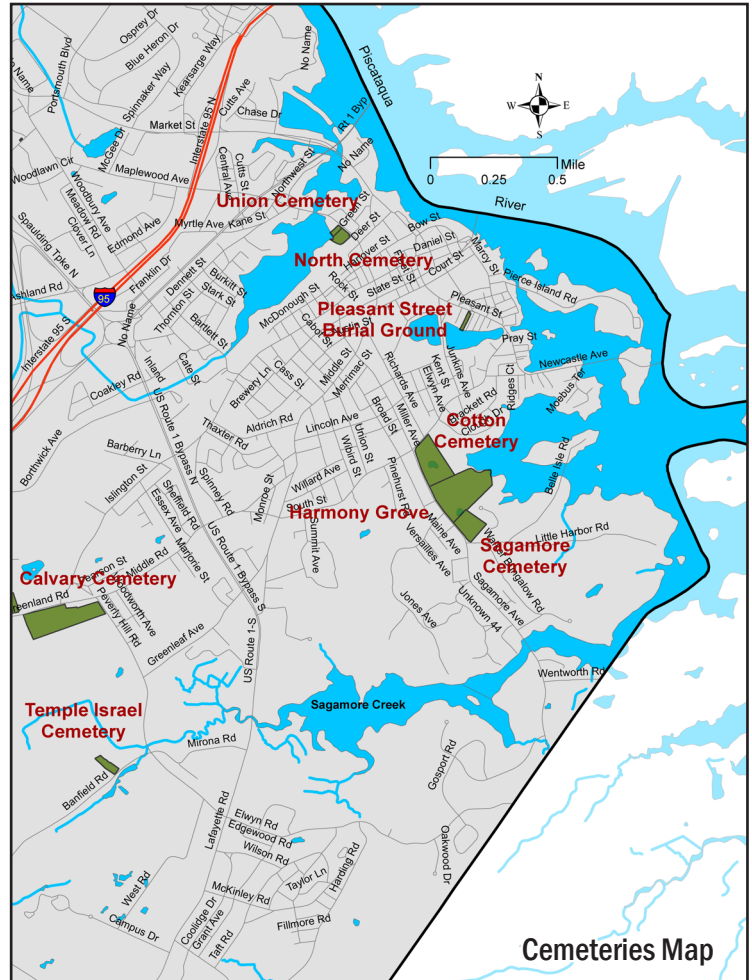
There are 12 tracts of land in Portsmouth devoted to cemeteries, totaling about 58 acres.

### Size and Location

These tracts range in size from .5 acre to 34 acres (Harmony Grove/Cotton Cemetery/Sagamore Cemetery). Portsmouth's cemeteries are located in the northern part of the City.

### Character and Amenities

Some of the cemeteries are very old, dating back to the 1600's, and are important historic features in the downtown area. The Harmony Grove/Cotton/Sagamore cemetery complex includes extensive green space and plantings, providing a pleasant location for walking. This cemetery also provides some tidal shorefront views and exposure to the water. Other cemeteries such as the Calvary Cemetery on Middle Road are less accessible, but do provide some open space amenity and passive recreation opportunity. Especially in the downtown area of Portsmouth, these cemeteries provide an important adjunct open space in concert with the park system.



Above: Harmony Grove Cemetery



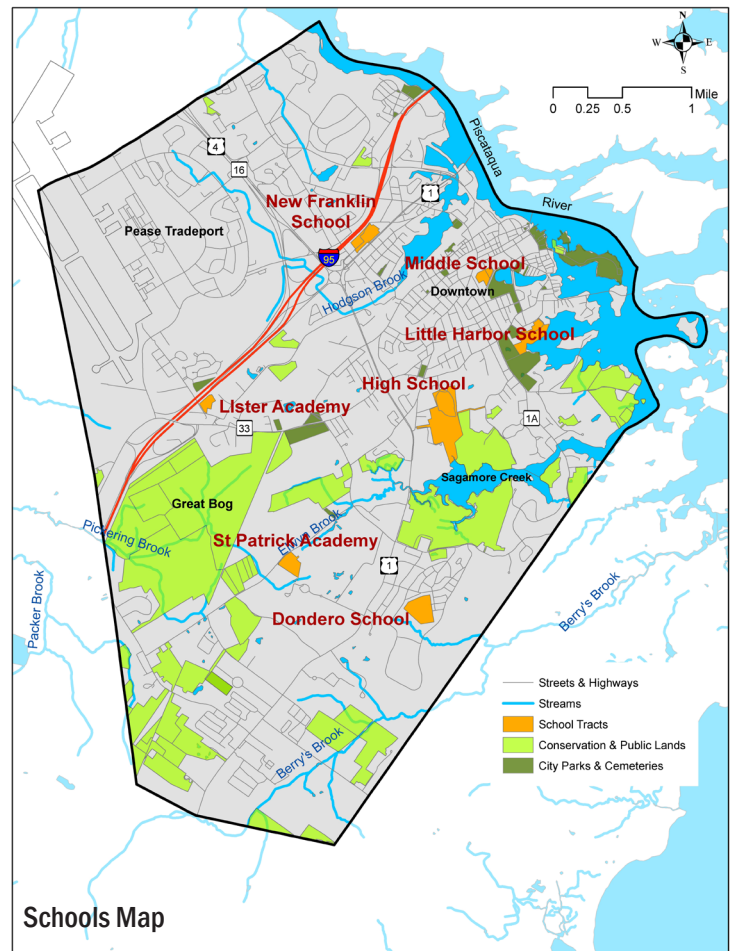
## Schools

**Portsmouth has 6 schools in its school district.**

Five of the City's schools are located in the northern half of the City and east of the I-95 corridor. The sixth school – Dondero Elementary is located in the middle of the Elwyn Park residential neighborhood south of the Urban Forestry Center and Sagamore Creek. Site-specific information for each school is as follows:

- **Portsmouth High School** occupies a 55-acre tract and is immediately adjacent to the City's Sagamore Creek Lands and other City-owned open space parcels.
- **Dondero Elementary School** is located on a 19-acre tract which includes outdoor educational and creative play facilities on the half of the tract that is not developed.
- **Little Harbor School** is located on 18 acres along a tidal shoreline (~1,500 feet) and adjacent to a small wetland.
- **Portsmouth Middle School** is located on a 6-acre tract in the downtown area but adjacent to the Alumni Field/Leary Field and South Mill Pond Park complex and tidal wetlands.
- **New Franklin School** occupies a 12-acre tract adjacent to I-95 in a mixed urban neighborhood with outdoor recreational space and some natural spaces (ex: existing nature trail on campus).
- **Lister Academy** is located on a 5-acre tract, adjacent to I-95, and has very little natural outdoor space.
- **St. Patrick Academy** is a 10.75-acre tract on Banfield Road located nearby Great Bog. The school, which is privately owned, borders forestland and Pickering Brook to the southeast.

Access to natural open space near schools provides a valuable opportunity for outdoor environmental education. Lister Academy and the New Franklin School are located in mixed urban neighborhoods, with no significant natural open space within a quarter mile walk from the schools. The Middle School is similarly constrained onsite, but is adjacent to the open spaces around the South Mill Pond, which include areas for both active and passive recreation. Little Harbor School has a unique location on an estuary, with a small wetland onsite. The High School is home to extensive recreational and sports field facilities which dominate the site, but the school is also immediately adjacent to the City's 78-acre wooded Sagamore Creek Land. All schools have the potential for structured educational activities on site or on nearby open space parcels.





## Conserved Land

There is a total of 1,469 acres of conserved land in the City in 59 distinct tracts; this amounts to about 15% of the total land area of Portsmouth. 679 acres of that total (46% of all conserved land) are City-owned.

### Stipulations

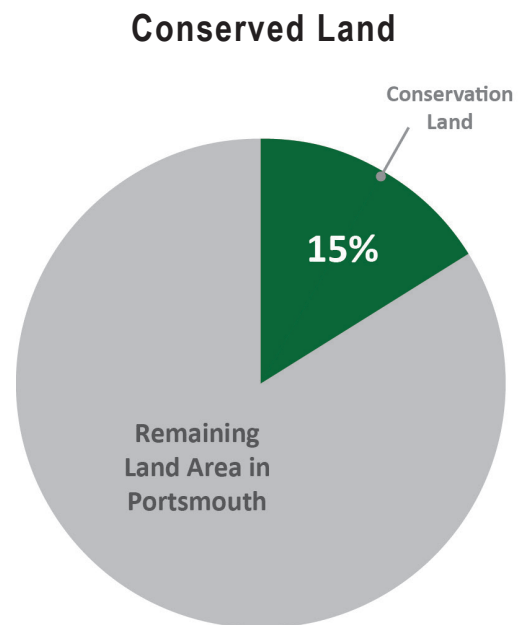
Existing conserved land is protected permanently from future development by legal means, including conservation easements or deed restrictions. Some conserved land is held in fee-ownership by agencies and organizations whose mission is to preserve land in its natural state, or for specific purposes such as agriculture. Generally, but not always, this protected land is accessible to the public; restrictions on existing conserved land in Portsmouth has been researched, and is discussed at the end of this section.

### Ownership

The NH Department of Resources Economic Development (DRED) owns three tracts in the City, including the Urban Forestry Center (165 acres) on the south side of Sagamore Creek, the Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site (26 acres) on Little Harbor, and the Portsmouth Fishing Pier (3 acres) on the Piscataqua River and adjacent to the City's Four Tree Island/Pierce Island parks. The NH Fish and Game Department owns the 263 acre Great Bog Wildlife Management Area in the southern part of the City, comprising about 20% of all conserved land.

Private land trusts own or hold conservation restrictions on another 20% of the conserved land, including:

- Southeast Land Trust: Great Bog Conservation Easement on 193 acres adjoining the NHFG Great Bog WMA (the Forest Society holds a secondary executive interest on this property); a conservation easement on the City's Maxam tract near the southern City boundary; and a 16-acre fee ownership parcel on the City's southern border;
- Society for the Protection of NH Forests: Creek Farm tracts totaling a little more than 35 acres at the mouth of Sagamore Creek estuary into Little Harbor;
- The Nature Conservancy: one 26-acre tract of the Packer Bog complex of conserved lands in Greenland and Rye is located near the southern border of the City.

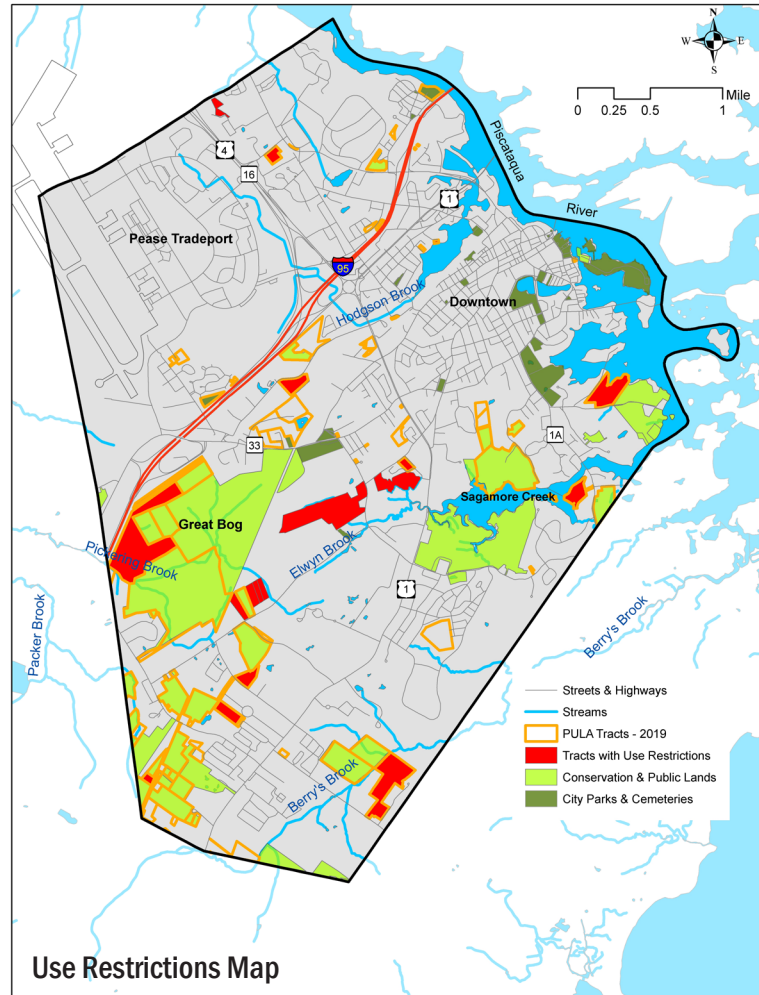




## Use Restrictions

All relevant documentation related to conserved land use restrictions (deed restrictions, conservation easement agreements, personal communication with agents) has been conducted with the assistance of City staff. Two observations may be drawn from that analysis:

- The majority of conserved lands have little in the way of specific restriction of public use; and
- The older the date of transaction providing the legal protection to the property, the more general the description of use intent and/or restriction. For example, many properties are conveyed “for good conservation practices” or “for conservation purposes” with no detailed guidance on how the land is to be managed.



It should be noted that due to the general nature of most of the use-related language in the conserved land documentation, questions of interpretation remain. For example, the wording “no buildings”; does this mean no constructed amenities such as boardwalks, entry kiosks, bridges, etc. are allowed, or is the intent to limit construction of enclosed facilities such as shelters, educational buildings, and so forth. These vagaries will need to be taken up on a case-by-case basis if and when a specific property is being actively considered for improvements to increase public access. Prior to initiating construction or active management, it is recommended that the City meet with the holder of any restrictions. This will provide an opportunity to understand the limitations of potential uses and activities on the subject parcel.



## City-Owned Land

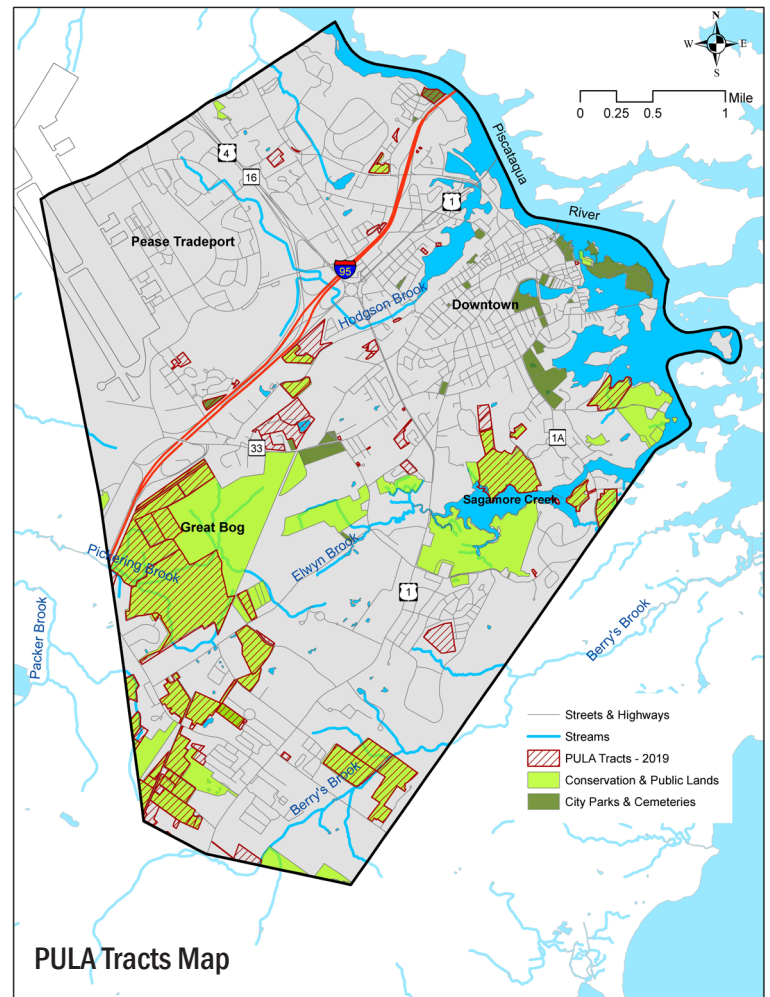
Portsmouth owns and therefore controls 1,226 acres of land, with the majority of the larger tracts grouped in the southern half of the City; this amounts to about 12% of the City's land area.

### Size

Many of the City-owned tracts are quite small. 77 of these parcels are less than one-half acre in size and are typically sites for pump stations, small parking lots, and other urban land uses. However, some of the tracts are significant in size, with 27 tracts greater than 10 acres and ranging up to 193 acres on the Great Bog tract, which Southeast Land Trust (SELT) holds a conservation easement on.

### Public Undeveloped Land Assessment (PULA)

In 2010, Portsmouth engaged an environmental consultant to conduct baseline natural resource inventories on 91 of the municipally owned tracts, based on a selection by the Portsmouth Conservation Commission and Planning Board. The purpose of this Public Undeveloped Land Assessment (PULA) was to provide the information necessary for long-term land management decisions. In 2017, three additional City-owned parcels were similarly evaluated, bringing the total to 94 tracts, and 928 acres of land. This information has been compiled into an extensive reference dataset commonly known as the PULA.



All of these properties are undeveloped at present, but some are likely prospects for protected open space resources in Portsmouth. The PULA Tracts Map shows the location of the PULA properties. The PULA baseline inventory assessed a range of factors, including presence of wildlife corridors, invasive species, access (parking and foot), presence of historical features, rare plants and animals, dumping issues, water craft access, non-point source discharge site (storm drainage), and potential for wetlands restoration.



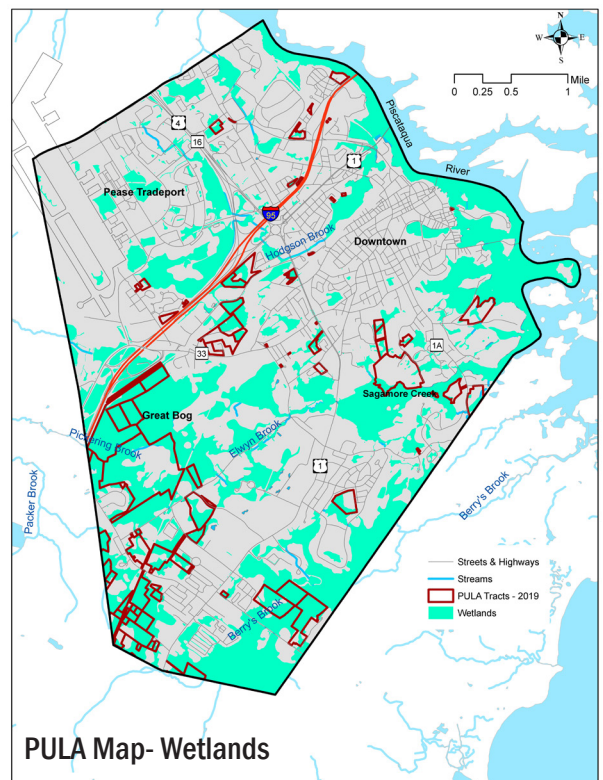
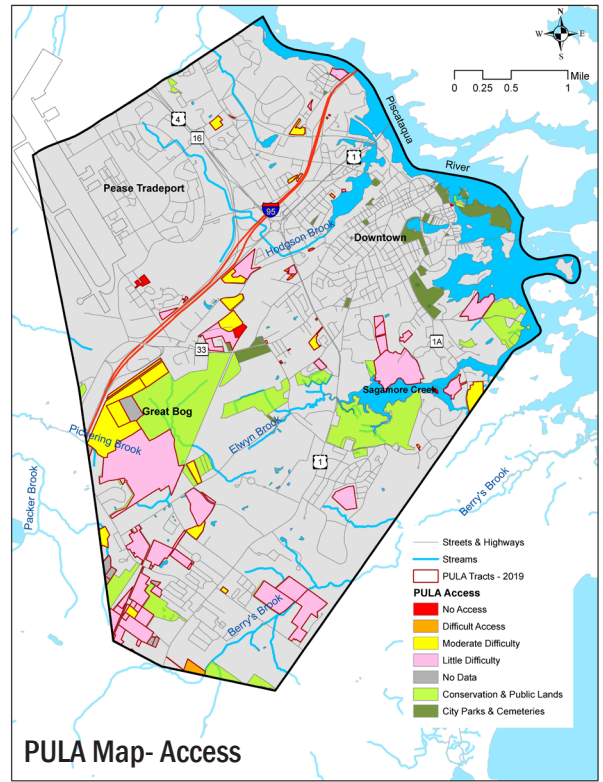
Accessibility to PULA tracts has been summarized as follows, working from the range of comments in the field notes:

- 7 tracts have no access; they are fenced or impossible to access directly
- 11 tracts have difficult access; they are mostly wetland or adjacent to busy highways with no parking potential
- 23 tracts have moderate access; the majority of the property is wetland, no trails present
- 40 tracts have no access issues; they are located near or adjacent to a street, parking may exist or may need to be developed off-street; trails may be present on the tracts
- 9 tracts are not yet evaluated

The access map shows the current evaluation of PULA tract access. It should be noted that the completion of the Hampton Branch multi-use trail will provide upgraded access to some significant PULA parcels in the southern part of the City.

Additional notes in the PULA field data also provide a sense of how wetlands dominate most of the PULA properties. 64% of the total PULA land area is wetlands, mostly forested wetlands and the PULA inventory indicated access and use issues in those areas. Some PULA tracts are almost entirely wetland. However, wetlands mapping in Portsmouth reveals upland forested “islands” within the larger wetland complexes.

These islands may offer unique recreational opportunities for trails and nature experiences, if access across wetland areas can be provided. These islands are also mentioned in the PULA field data as having forest management potential for their ecological and/or timber value. The PULA Wetlands Map shows the City wetlands mapping in relation to the PULA tracts. Note the extensive wetlands in the southwest and southeast quarters of the City, and the forested island in the Great Bog tract. Currently, 85% of PULA land is currently conserved by fee ownership or conservation easement. The PULA report also mentions several tracts of land that are not currently protected from development, but are recommended for conservation.

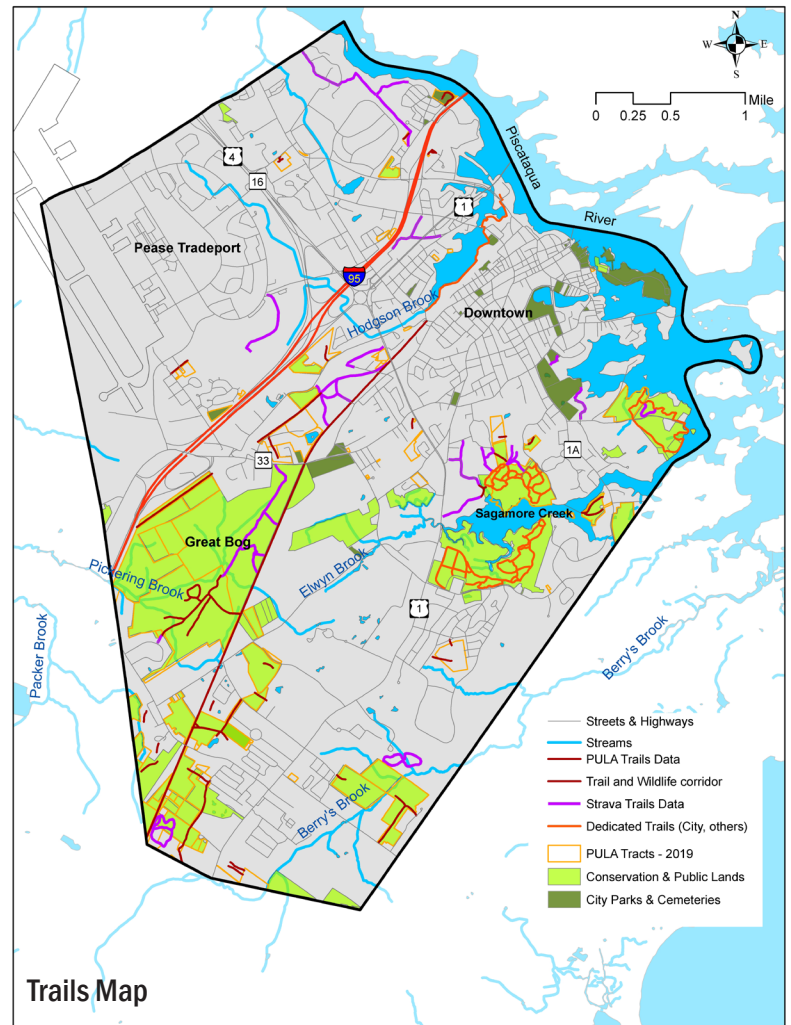




## Trails

While a comprehensive trail inventory was not completed for this Plan, data from the GRANIT database and the City databases identified approximately 7 miles of public trails:

- 2.3 miles of complex, inter-looping trails in the Sagamore Creek Land managed by the City.
- 3.5 miles of trail loops at the Urban Forestry Center maintained by the State of NH.
- 1.5 miles of trail known at the Little Harbor Loop Trail, managed by the NH Forest Society.
- The planned North Mill Pond Trail will provide another 1.2 miles of trail along the tidal shorefront extending from Bartlett Street to Maplewood Avenue.
- The future off-road portion of the NH Seacoast Greenway in Portsmouth along the former Hampton Branch rail-line will add another 3.6 miles of trail to the total network City-wide. The PULA baseline inventory also identified several informally used trails on various parcels in the southern part of the City. Most are simply trail segments found while doing field work, but some indicate more complex informal trail systems, as in the City's Great Bog tract. More trails likely exist and are not mapped yet.



Above: Creek Farm's water access point.



## User Generated Data

### What is Strava?

Strava is a database that provides spatial information to athletes to aid in personal training and performance enhancement. Data is gathered from personal GPS-related hardware carried by an athlete, but aggregated data is pooled in an application known as the Strava Global Heat Map which shows all uploaded athlete data, typically for a year's duration. This data can be segregated into bicycle routes, pedestrian/runner routes, water routes (primarily rowing or kayak use) and winter activities such as XC skiing or snowshoeing.

The “heat” concept appears in the mapping increased intensity of color over the same routes; this can mean many individual athletes submitting data, or a few athletes with multiple uploads of their training routes. A sample of these can be seen in the screenshots included on the next page.

### What does this data tell us?

The value of this data is that it reveals travel pathways not apparent in other data, e.g., City or State trails databases. As is often the case, the Strava data shows “bootleg” trails and unofficial pathways that have been discovered by athletes and incorporated into their training regimes as they explore Portsmouth’s open spaces. As such, Strava provides an important additional database for discovering opportunities to expand existing trails systems. It should be noted that not all submissions to Strava flow from performance-seeking athletes; some pathways simply reflect the activities of regular exercise walkers. This information can also assist in revealing how different open space parcels are being accessed and used.

### Key Findings:

- The largest concentration of pathways in the heat map are found on City walkways along streets, mostly in the low-density residential developments in the southern part of the City. There is also intensive use of the Little Harbor Loop trail, trails on the Sagamore Creek land, and at the Urban Forestry Center.
- Biking routes appear to outclass walking/running routes by a large margin as well, as shown in the two screenshots taken from the Strava heat map. The color gradient from red to orange to yellow to white indicates the relative numbers of pathways recorded.
- Some paths are used by both bicyclists and pedestrians, as indicated on the abandoned Hampton Branch rail line.
- Some intensive use of land along the Rye and Portsmouth border by off-road bicyclists was noted in the Strava data. This was also documented in the PULA baseline inventory in 2010.
- The Strava data adds about 9 miles of trails to the City database beyond the dedicated trails noted earlier in this section, and it is important to note that these additional trails are somewhat duplicative of trails mapped during the PULA project.
- People are also using the transmission line right-of-way and trails complex on the City’s Great Bog tract in the southern part of the City.
- There are “bootleg” trails west of the Sagamore Creek Land which are likely due in part to the high school being located immediately to the west.



The maps below show walking, running, and biking routes recorded on Strava. Thicker, lighter lines indicate higher number of trips, while thinner, darker lines mean less-used routes.





## Water Access & Trails

The City has limited freshwater lakes or ponds, but does enjoy more than 22 miles of tidal shoreline, including the Piscataqua River shore, the various tidal basins and inlets such as Sagamore Creek, and the offshore islands. Much of the river frontage is developed and public access is limited.

### Existing Access Points

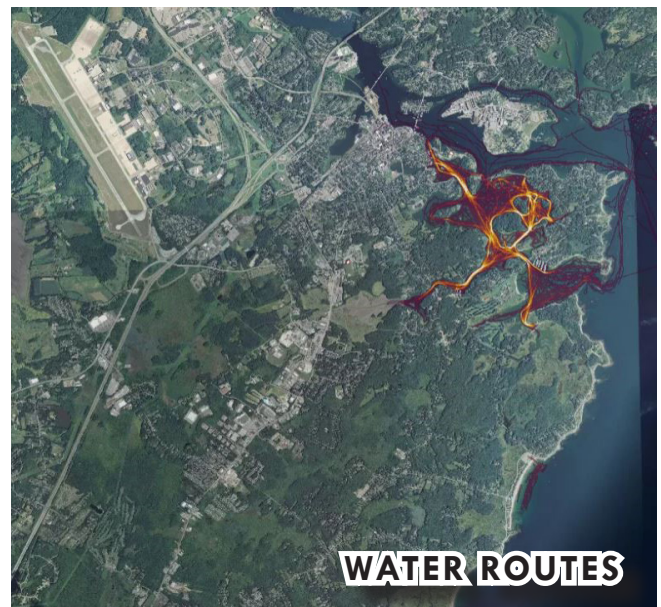
Though access is limited in general, there are 8 public access points where boaters can launch into the river or estuaries, and the Four Tree Island and Pierce Island Park complex provides about two miles of tidal shoreline. The Prescott Park complex has about a half mile of shoreline frontage, and the Atlantic Heights Park in the northern part of the City has about 850' of shoreline on the river. Other shoreline access is provided by the Wentworth Coolidge Mansion historic site (1,520') and the Forest Society's Creek Farm with nearly a half mile of shoreline, including tiny Goose Island. The City of Portsmouth also has a policy in place that will ensure all "Paper Streets"(public rights-of-way), leading to the shore will be retained for public access.

### Portsmouth's Islands

Often overlooked as part of the City of Portsmouth are its offshore islands: Four Tree Island, Pierce Island, Belle or Lady Isle, Pest Island and the Frame Point island chain leading to Newcastle. Four Tree and Pierce Islands are City-owned and function as multi-use public parks. The other islands are privately owned with several residences, except for Pest Island which is undeveloped and in current use assessment. The City also owns a small island in the middle of Sagamore Creek. While landing on these islands is not welcomed by the owners, they do offer unique and varied tidal shoreline features that can be appreciated from on the water.

### User Data

Strava data includes a water-related component that is comprised primarily of athlete-generated routes used by kayakers, rowers, paddle board enthusiasts, and other visitors to the water. The data shows rather intensive use of the Little Harbor area of Portsmouth, with looping routes around the islands, and penetrations into the estuaries to the limit of high tides. There is significant activity along Little Harbor, which is shared by Portsmouth, Newcastle and Rye. Again, the darker red color indicates lighter or less frequent use while the lighter colors show the heavier use areas. People are also paddling near the Sagamore Creek Estuary, and the route west of Pierce Island. Recreational use of the tidal waters is concentrated in the more sheltered bays, inlets and passages. Far less use is made of the Piscataqua River, probably due to the stronger river and tidal currents.







## Relationship to Regional Conservation Initiatives

Several regional conservation plans exist that have informed the Portsmouth Open Space Plan. These plans, identified on the following pages, are mainly concerned with maintaining natural land cover and wildlife habitats in key locations specifically by means of permanent protection of land from future development. The Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership (GBRPP) is primarily focused on landscape-scale conservation initiatives in the coastal region of southeast NH. The Southeast Land Trust prioritizes conserving regionally significant farmland, land for water protection, and large tracts containing important ecosystems. The Connect the Coast initiative explores ways to improve continuity between open space tracts and wildlife habitat in the Seacoast region. It's important to note when planning for recreation facilities and improvements that there are certain locations where any development in the form of trails and supporting facilities (parking, informational kiosks, etc.) will be inappropriate due to sensitive habitat, unique plant communities, and other natural features.



## Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership

The Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership (GBRPP) is a collaboration of nine conservation organizations in the coastal region that promotes landscape-scale land conservation and stewardship. Since 1994, the GBRPP has operated as a collaborative to promote shared conservation goals and implement conservation programs. The GBRPP's primary role is as a convener of organizations to support the permanent protection and ongoing stewardship of the region's significant habitat areas and conservation lands, with a special focus on the estuarine resources surrounding Great Bay, just to the west of Portsmouth.

The Partnership's comprehensive approach to conservation is guided by landscape scale conservation planning. This collaborative, science-based process furthers the understanding of ecosystem and water quality health, and informs the Partnership's land protection, management and stewardship activities.

Portsmouth's Great Bog wetlands complex and the Pickering Brook Watershed with its headwaters in Portsmouth has been a principle focus of the GBRPP land protection efforts. As noted in earlier sections of this Plan, water quality in Great Bay via Pickering Brook is of concern.



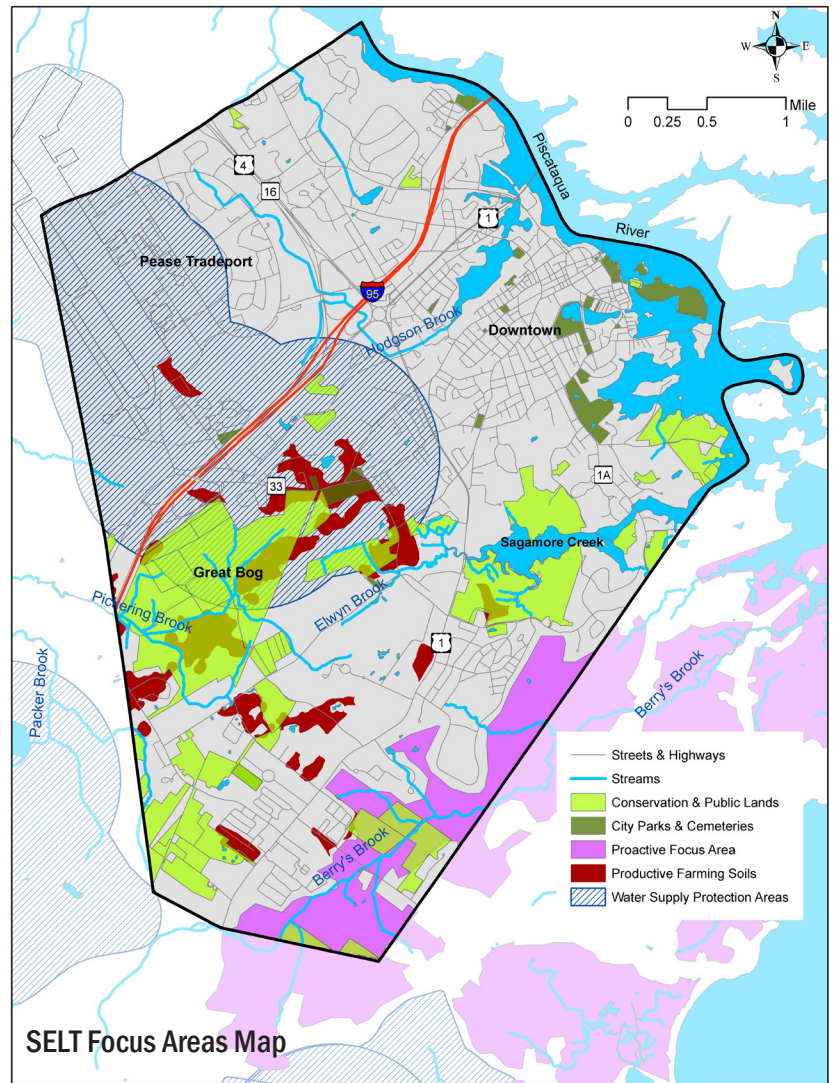


## Southeast Land Trust (SELT)

The Southeast Land Trust (SELT) is a private, regional land conservation organization with a multi-track focus on protecting strategic lands as follows:

- Living landscapes - large blocks of undeveloped land essential for ecological functioning, wildlife habitat, and remote recreation)
- Farmland for the future - conserving working farms and productive farmland
- Clean drinking water - protecting current and future municipal water supplies

To these ends, SELT has delineated specific focus areas aimed at these themes in the Seacoast Region, as shown on the SELT Focus Areas Map. The pink areas labeled proactive focus areas correspond to the large blocks of undeveloped lands targeted in the living landscapes category above. These areas are derived from core focus areas found in the 2006 Coastal Plan for NH prepared by The Nature Conservancy. Prime agricultural soils in this map are a proxy for farmland for the future since no working farms exist at present in the City. The clean drinking water aspect of the SELT Strategic Plan is represented by NH DES drinking water protection areas shown in blue.



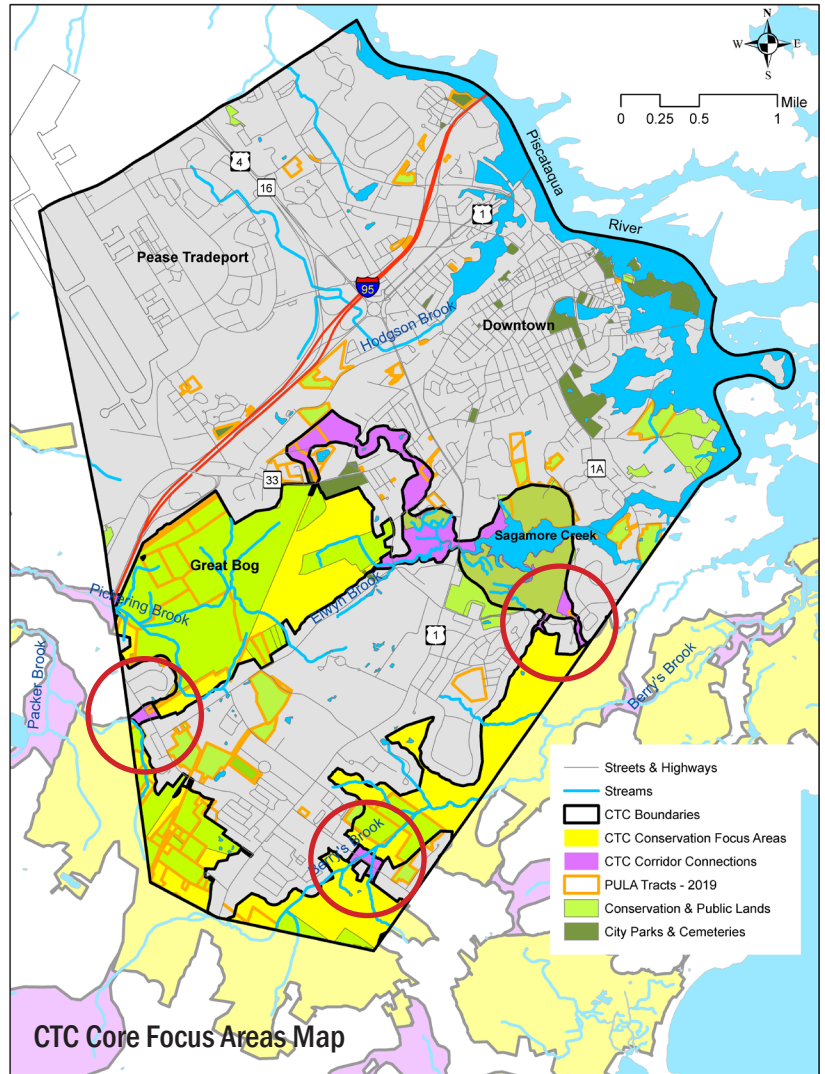
Above: SELT protects landscapes like the one showed above that provide wildlife habitat and other ecosystem services.



## Connect the Coast

Recently, the NH Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has engaged in a study of coastal NH that adds an important connectivity aspect to the 2006 Coast Conservation Plan. It also modifies the 2006 core conservation focus areas somewhat. The 2019 technical report on the Connect the Coast (CTC) study was used to inform the planning of Portsmouth's future open space network.

The CTC Core Focus Areas Map shows the core focus areas and critical connectivity corridors that link upland habitats to the coastal and estuarine resources mainly via undeveloped land along streams. Much of the core focus area within the City limits is already conserved, but large areas along Banfield Road and Peverly Hill Road are not protected. Most of the core focus area along the boundary with Rye and centering on Berry's Brook include extensive unprotected wetlands. The connectivity corridors (purple) are the most critical natural resource features in the CTC plan. Note the purple corridor following the Sagamore Creek drainage, as well as three smaller corridors highlighted with red circles. These smaller corridors are highly constricted by developed land, but small undeveloped parcels remain along Berry's Brook and in the connection between Packer Bog in Greenland and Great Bog in the City.



Above: Sagamore Creek





# Outreach & Engagement

To ensure that the Open Space Plan reflected the goals and priorities of the City's residents and visitors, the City and its consulting team developed a diverse community engagement plan using a variety of outreach mechanisms. These included:

- Two Community Forums
- An Interactive Table at Piscataqua Riverfest
- An Interactive Online Map
- An Online Feedback Form

The results from these engagement activities have informed the Plan and the identified implementation actions.



# What We Heard

Three clear themes emerged from the public feedback. These themes were then used to inform the recommendations of this Plan.

## ACCESS & AMENITIES

Public access and safe biking and walking infrastructure is needed to and within open spaces. Open space should also be equitable in terms of accessibility throughout the City. This is a high priority to the public and should be considered when planning for Portsmouth's open space network. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, such as crosswalks and bike lanes, were suggested at various streets or intersections to improve the safety of walking and biking to an open space. Community members also said amenities were important for improving open spaces including seating, lighting, designated pathways, vegetation, more coordinated parking, wayfinding, signage, covered gathering spaces, and restrooms.



## STEWARDSHIP & MANAGEMENT

According to the public, protecting the ecological integrity of open space in the City should be emphasized in management guidelines. Permanent protection of existing open spaces and continued exploration of new open space opportunities should also be prioritized.



## RECREATION & PROGRAMMING

Open space resources in Portsmouth should provide high quality active and passive recreation facilities, flex space for diverse programming, access to the water, and connections to trails and nearby destinations. Some respondents indicated that they would like to see additional activities and programming (such as environmental education and live music) at various open spaces. The monitoring and management of specific activities, such as dog walking, were noted as well.



The complete record of the feedback received from the outreach and engagement phase of this project has been included in the Appendix. The document is titled “Community Engagement Report”.



# Implementation

By understanding what open spaces exist within the City, the many resources and benefits these properties provide, and the improvements residents would like to see over time, the community can now work towards implementing this vision. The existing and future identified open spaces presented in this plan will serve as Portsmouth's green infrastructure network providing ecological and social benefits such as clean air and water, habitat, food production, storm protection, wellness and recreation, carbon sequestration, and many other benefits. This network varies from small urban parks to the large unfragmented conservation parcels. Wherever possible, these parcels will be connected by greenway corridors that will ensure connectivity, access to natural areas for all wildlife, and recreational opportunities for residents in all stages of their lives.





# General Recommendations

As Portsmouth works to protect and improve the open space network, the following recommendations should be pursued:

1. Identify opportunities to partner with landowners and regional conservation organizations (such as Southeast Land Trust and the Society for the Protection of NH Forests) to increase the percent of protected open space.
2. Update land use regulations to support the Open Space Plan by requiring developers to provide community space in an effort to encourage the design and construction of green spaces that integrate multiple functions (such as gathering areas, shade, stormwater management, habitat, etc.).
3. Review and strengthen the City's existing green infrastructure requirements in Site Plan Review to ensure that new development efforts contribute to the network of "Living Infrastructure" in Portsmouth. These regulations should emphasize connections to nearby green spaces and deliver as many ecological, social, and economic benefits as possible through integrated design to support the City-wide open space network.
4. Complete an evaluation of the City's parks and playgrounds so the existing conditions are documented. Use this evaluation to then inform and guide the scheduling, design, and upgrading of facilities.
5. Consider a management structure that can oversee all of the parks and playgrounds in the City of Portsmouth.
6. Implement branding and wayfinding for open space parcels City-wide and coordinate online resources and publicity of this network.
7. Planning Department Staff will make periodic updates to this document to ensure it remains a resource for implementation.

This implementation chapter includes a comprehensive analysis of open space protection opportunities in the City and high priority open space improvements. Additionally, a series of site-level improvement strategies are outlined in the following section and should be considered when planning for individual open space parcels.

## Conservation Funding

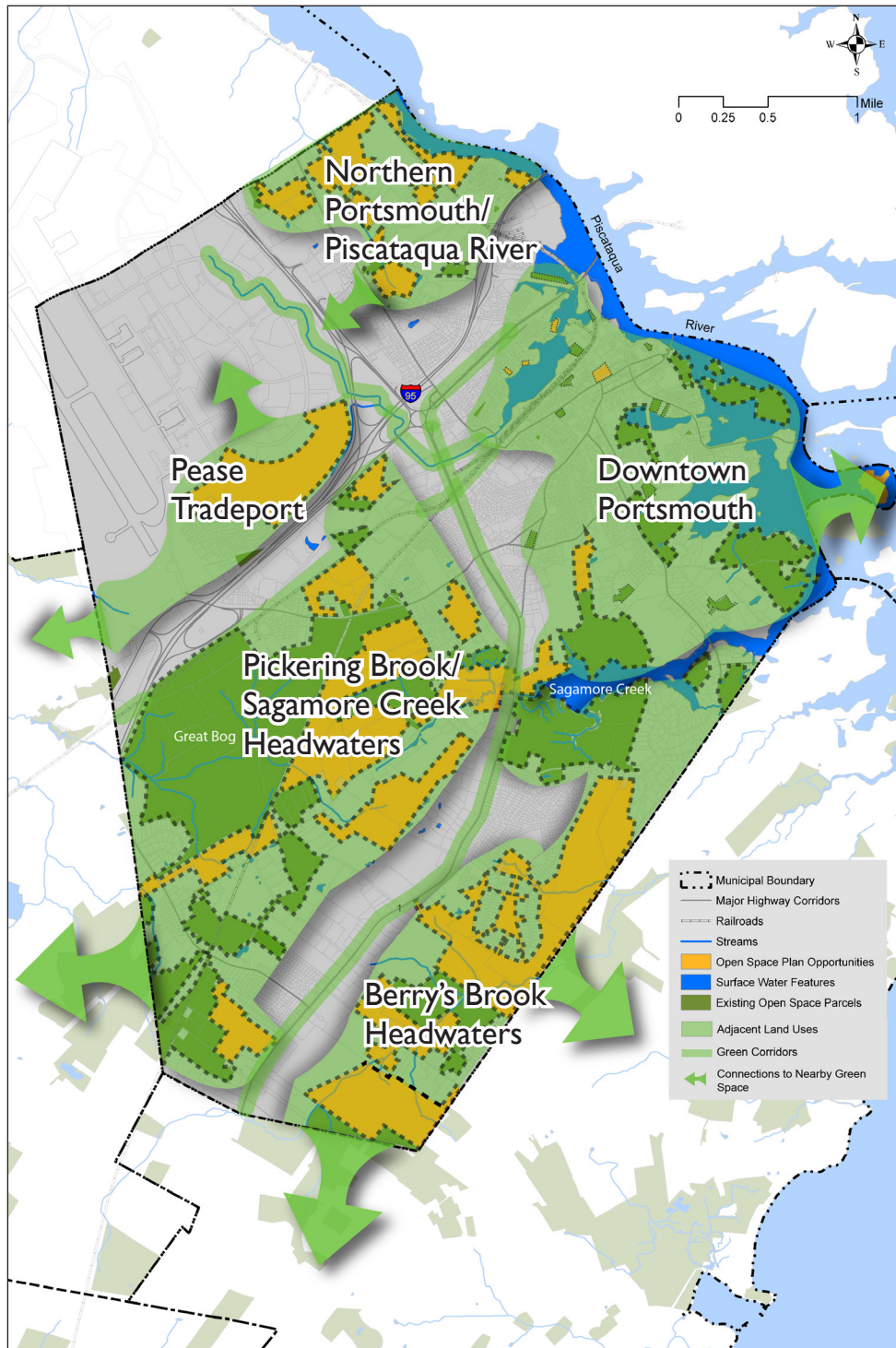
One mechanism the City has to fund its open space protection opportunities is the ability to access money from its conservation fund to finance land acquisition projects. The Conservation Commission is empowered by RSA 79 A:25 to recommend to the City Council acquisition of conservation properties using funds from the Conservation Fund. This fund is held by the City and is made up of 100% of the Current Use penalty money the City collects when a property goes out of Current Use.

## Responsible Parties

For land acquisitions that are not solely for conservation purposes, acquisitions may be initiated by the Department of Public Works (DPW) or other City departments with final say and approval made by the City Council. Some properties that have been identified for conservation uses may be acquired by donation from a developer as part of a development project. If a development proposal comes forth for a property listed in the matrix, the City is encouraged to work with the developer to prioritize setting aside part of the parcel through a conservation easement. Open space improvements will be guided largely by the DPW, conservation commission, and individual property owners and developers. Partnerships should be created where appropriate and could include groups such as conservation organizations, the Portsmouth Housing Authority, and the Pease Development Authority, as well as larger institutional partners, such as the Portsmouth Regional Hospital.



The remainder of this plan will outline the details of Portsmouth's future open space network. This includes a prioritization of parcels to preserve for future use as open space, and improvements that should be made to specific properties so they can be better used by the public for years to come. This process was guided by Portsmouth's open space vision, as articulated on page 12. Implementing this vision to protect this critical network of open lands and the natural resources they contain will only be possible through collaboration with landowners, conservation organizations, City officials, and Portsmouth residents.







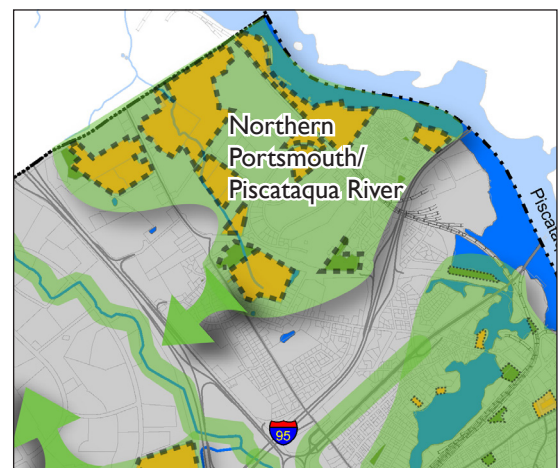
# Retaining and Expanding Portsmouth's Open Space Network

## Emerging Areas

As individual parcels in the City were evaluated for their potential to contribute to the open space network five distinct geographic areas emerged. While all five areas are interconnected to some degree and create the City-wide open space network, each area provides opportunity for coordinated land protection efforts. Below is a map image and description for each:

### NORTHERN PORTSMOUTH/PISCATAQUA RIVER

This area of Portsmouth is currently under-served when it comes to access to protected open space parcels, recreation opportunities, and conserved natural resources. The existing open spaces are also fragmented and many are privately owned. There are opportunities to create connections from residential areas and employment centers to green spaces. Focusing on protection of remaining open spaces will ensure that water quality, air quality, habitat, heat island reduction, physical and mental health benefits and other ecological values are retained.



### PEASE TRADEPORT

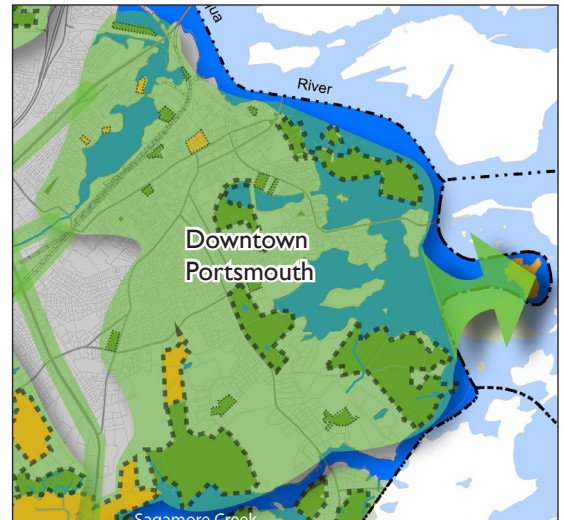
While somewhat fragmented from the rest of the City by transportation corridors, and dominated by business park land uses, there is a large corridor within the Tradeport that would benefit from permanent protection for the areas employees and residents. This area is also significant from a groundwater protection perspective, includes a large wetland complex, active and passive recreation areas, and is adjacent to a unique wildlife habitat area within the nearby airfield.





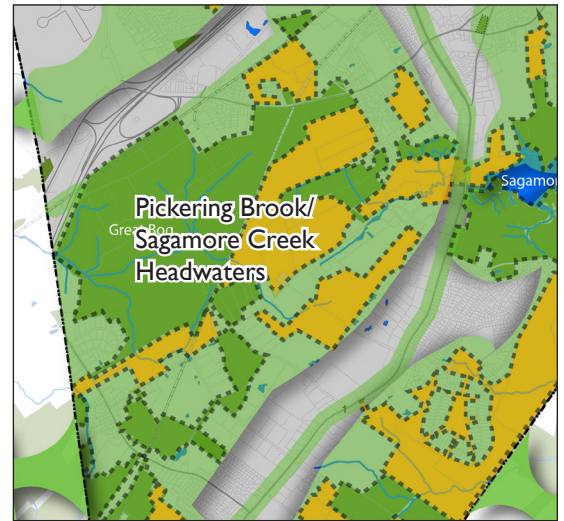
## DOWNTOWN PORTSMOUTH

Although the most intensely developed portion of the community, the Downtown has many established parks, cemeteries, and dedicated open spaces. While opportunities for additional parks and open spaces is limited in this area of the City, there are ways to create connections between open spaces within the Downtown as well as to other areas of the community. This can be accomplished by requiring the inclusion of green infrastructure solutions during redevelopment, as well as in municipal projects. These green infrastructure solutions include green street initiatives, vegetated walls, green roofs, and integrated landscaping solutions that provide numerous ecosystem services while creating green corridors for all to enjoy. More information on these solutions and other site level improvements can be found starting on page 58.



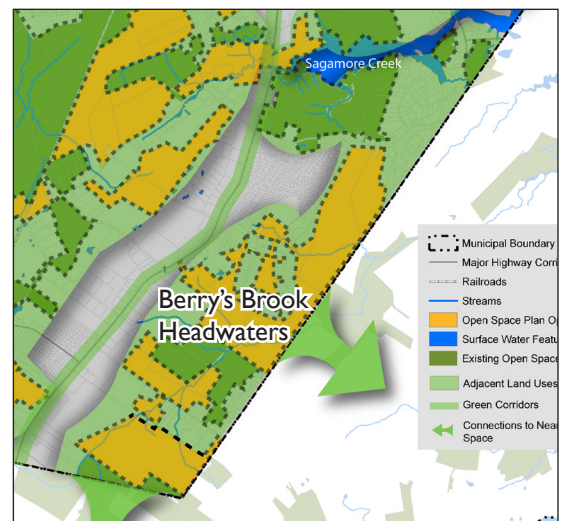
## PICKERING BROOK/SAGAMORE CREEK HEADWATERS

Home to the Great Bog and the future NH Seacoast Greenway rail trail, this already large unfragmented block of open space has the potential to expand. This would protect important ground water resources, and both creek systems and their associated wetlands. Such protection will provide tremendous habitat value, expanded recreation opportunities, and a long list of ecosystem services that will benefit residents and property owners while making the City more resilient.



## BERRY'S BROOK HEADWATERS

Even though this area of the City is dominated by wetlands and will not contribute as much recreational value overall it is important to retain these open spaces. This will ensure water quality is maintained in Berry's Brook as it flows into Rye and out to the coast. These contiguous open space corridors also ensure habitat connectivity exists for the many species living in and passing through this area of the seacoast. This open space area also offsets the impact of the more intensely developed corridor along Route 1 while helping to reduce flooding, improve air and water quality, reduce the heat island effect, sequester carbon, and other benefits. An effort should be made over time to green the Route 1 commercial corridor so that the developed areas provide connections between the large open space areas to the east and west. This can be accomplished using similar techniques to the ones outlined for the Downtown area.





# Opportunities Map & Matrix

The following Opportunities Map and Matrix presented in this section display open space opportunities for the City of Portsmouth to pursue. This is where the five emerging areas presented previously merge into a City-wide network. Implementation will require collaboration with willing property owners to bring this vision to reality. To develop this plan for an open space network across the City, parcels were identified and evaluated based on their potential for acquisition or through conservation easement as well as opportunities for improvements. Parcels were prioritized using the data generated during the existing conditions analysis, public feedback, and through site visits. These four ranking criteria were used to assign priorities:

## **PROXIMITY**

Refers to the proximity of existing conserved parcels of land and opportunities to create contiguous protected open spaces.

## **CONNECTIVITY**

Relates to the property's potential to contribute to existing or proposed trail corridors and habitat connectivity.

## **UNIQUE RESOURCES**

Include the natural and cultural resources identified in the many other plans and documents that informed this effort, GIS analysis, and field work.

## **EQUITY AND ACCESS**

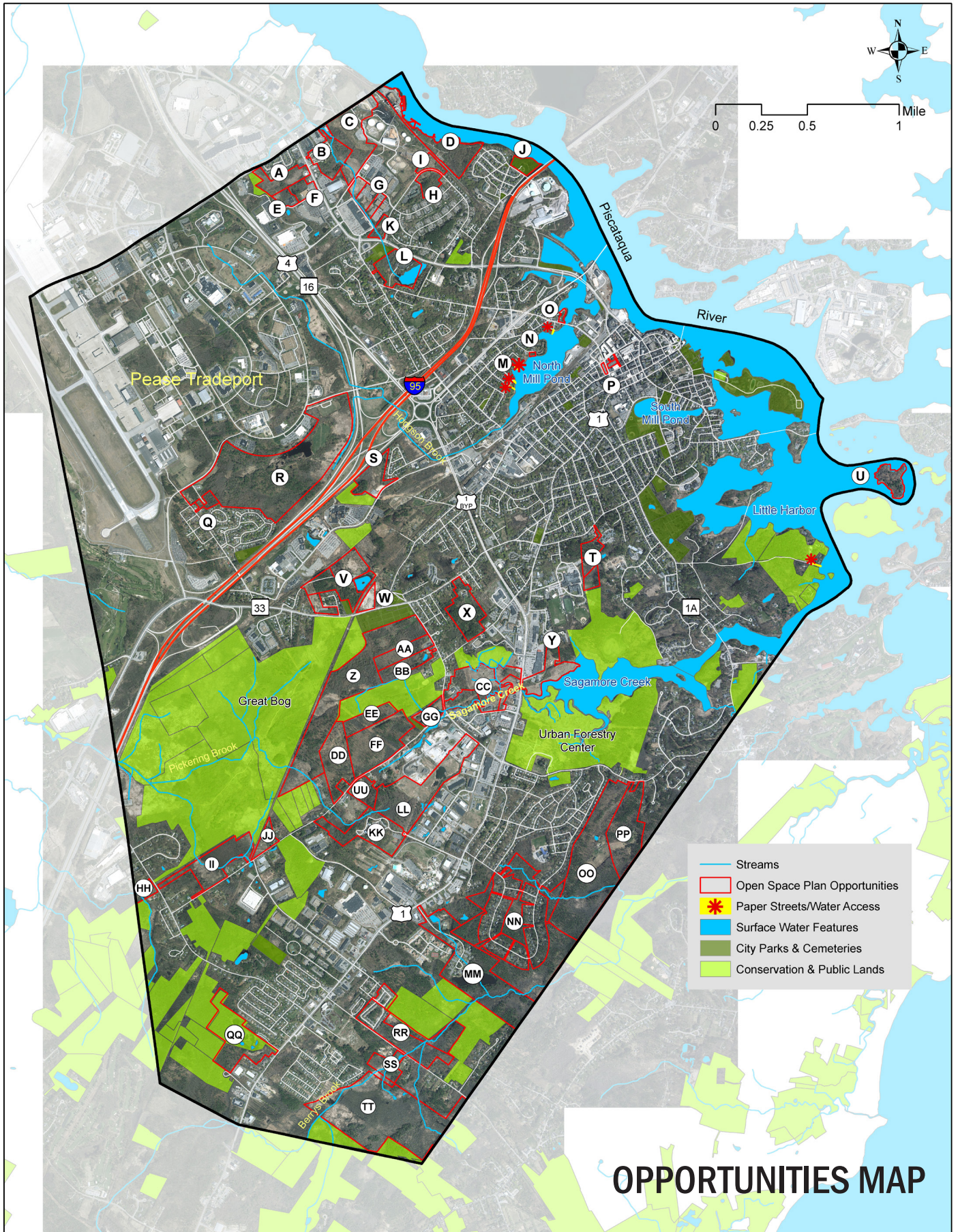
Encompass both the geographic distribution of open spaces and the equitable distribution and access to that open space network by all residents.

The ranking of each criteria was kept simple using a yes/no evaluation to indicate if the criteria is satisfied or not. Once the ranking criteria were evaluated for each parcel a level of prioritization was assigned. If only one criteria was indicated the parcel was assigned as a "future" priority. If two or three criteria were indicated the parcel was assigned a medium priority. If all four criteria were satisfied the parcel was assigned a high priority indicating a near term need to work to protect this parcel in collaboration with the property owner.

## **HOW TO USE THE OPPORTUNITIES MAP AND MATRIX**

The Opportunities Map includes a code letter for each of the open space parcels. This code letter can then be located on the Opportunities Matrix for additional information including a description of the parcel(s) importance as part of the open space network, the opportunity to explore acquisition/conservation of the property and in some cases the need for improvements on site. Each parcel was also ranked using four criteria and then prioritized for implementation, and those results are displayed on the matrix.







# OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

Map Code	Description	Ownership Status	Opportunity		Ranking Criteria				Priority		
			Acquisition/ Conservation	Improvement	Proximity	Connectivity	Unique Resources	Equity & Access	High	Medium	Future
A	Land between Gosling Meadows neighborhood and Durgin Lane provides open space access in an under-served area. A <a href="#">trail</a> could provide access to nearby properties.	Portsmouth Housing Authority	✓	✓	*			*		×	
B	This land has implications for water quality and habitat value in a heavily developed area of the City.	Private	✓				*	*		×	
C	This land has implications for water quality and habitat value in a heavily developed area of the City.	Private	✓				*	*		×	
D	Potential for a collaborative effort to create a <a href="#">trail</a> and habitat corridor along the river and through nearby parcels to Porpoise Way, Portsmouth Blvd./Dunlin Way.	Private	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	×		
E	Land between the Gosling Meadows neighborhood and Durgin Lane provides open space access in an under-served area. A <a href="#">trail</a> could provide access to nearby properties.	Private	✓	✓				*			×
F	Land between the Gosling Meadows neighborhood and Durgin Lane provides open space access in an under-served area. A <a href="#">trail</a> could provide access to nearby properties.	Private	✓	✓				*			×
G	This land has implications for water quality and habitat value in a heavily developed area of the City.	Private	✓				*	*		×	
H	Potential to contribute to a <a href="#">trail</a> and habitat corridor from Portsmouth Blvd./Dunlin Way to the river.	Private	✓	✓		*		*		×	



Map Code	Description	Ownership Status	Opportunity		Ranking Categories				Priority		
			Acquisition/Conservation	Improvement	Proximity	Connectivity	Unique Resources	Equity & Access	High	Medium	Future
I	This land has the potential to contribute to a trail and habitat corridor from Portsmouth Blvd./Dunlin Way to the river.	Private	✓	✓		*		*		×	
J	Hislop Park requires improvements to <a href="#">trail signage and access/wayfinding</a> to the shoreline. Consider rehabilitating the old pier as a <a href="#">fishing/observation area</a> and planting <a href="#">community garden plots or perennial food forest area</a> near ball field.	City	✓	✓		*	*	*		×	
K	This land has implications for water quality and habitat value in a heavily developed area of the City.	Private	✓				*	*		×	
L	This land has implications for water quality and habitat value in a heavily developed area of the City.	Private	✓			*	*	*		×	
M	Provides <a href="#">river access, further stewardship, community garden</a> potential, kayak launch, etc.	City	✓	✓		*		*		×	
N	Conserve this City-owned parcel and develop a <a href="#">kiosk and boardwalk viewing area</a> . Control access to the shoreline with a railing or fence and add shade trees.	City	✓	✓		*	*	*		×	
O	Property on Marsh lane - north of Maplewood Ave. Provides river access.	City by easement	✓			*	*	*		×	
P	The Vaughn/Worth Bridge area redesign provides a unique opportunity to create new open space in the urban core.	City		✓				*			×
Q	Preserve for wellhead protection. Possible opportunity for NRP zoning.	City	✓	✓		*	*	*		×	
R	Potential connection from nearby residential neighborhood and commercial businesses. Resource protection and recreation opportunities.	Pease Development Authority	✓	✓		*	*	*	×		
S	Conserve for habitat value and wetlands protection. Consider <a href="#">boardwalks in trail creation</a> to improve access to parcels. Possible opportunity for NRP zoning.	City	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	×		



Map Code	Description	Ownership	Opportunity		Ranking Categories				Priority		
			Acquisition/ Conservation	Improvement	Proximity	Connectivity	Unique Resources	Equity & Access	High	Medium	Future
T	Land between Sagamore Creek and South Street has potential for habitat, trail connections, and recreation.	Private	✓	✓		*		*		×	
U	Pest Island provides an opportunity for acquisition, conservation, and passive recreation.	Private	✓			*	*				×
V	Wellhead Protection Tract. Opportunity to formalize the trail network and access points. Possible opportunity for NRP zoning.	City	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	×		
W	Land known as the “Stump Dump” should be conserved. It’s location adjacent to the NH Seacoast Greenway provides opportunity for <b>parking</b> , a kiosk, <b>bathrooms</b> , and an area for active recreation amenities.	City	✓	✓	*	*		*		×	
X	Chase Home for Children. Collaborate with the property owner to conserve the back side of property with potential access off of Greenleaf Ave.	Private	✓	✓	*	*		*		×	
Y	Property has habitat and water quality value.	Private	✓		*	*	*			×	
Z	Adjacent to the NH Seacoast Greenway Trail and the Great Bog. Potential for habitat and recreational uses.	Private	✓		*	*	*	*	×		
AA	Potential to protect a portion of the parcel for habitat and recreational uses.	Private	✓		*	*				×	
BB	Potential for habitat and recreational uses.	Private	✓		*	*				×	
CC	These parcels have water quality protection value in Sagamore Creek.	Private	✓		*		*			×	
DD	Potential for habitat and recreational uses.	Private	✓		*	*				×	

Map Code	Description	Ownership	Opportunity		Ranking Categories				Priority		
			Acquisition/Conservation	Improvement	Proximity	Connectivity	Unique Resources	Equity & Access	High	Medium	Future
EE	Potential for habitat and recreational uses.	Private	✓		*	*				×	
FF	Potential for habitat and recreational uses.	Private	✓		*	*				×	
GG	This parcel has water quality protection value in Sagamore Creek. Potential to create a habitat and recreation corridor to Sagamore Creek.	Private	✓		*	*	*			×	
HH	Connects existing habitat and conservation land.	Private	✓		*	*				×	
II	Provides a habitat and recreation connection to Great Bog. Protects water quality in Pickering Brook.	City	✓	✓	*	*	*			×	
JJ	Provides a habitat and recreation connection to Great Bog and the NH Seacoast Greenway. Protects water quality in Pickering Brook.	City	✓	✓	*	*	*			×	
KK	Campus Drive and the Foundation for Seacoast Health parcels by DPW land should be conserved. Existing trails connect to the St. Patricks School. Potential for other <a href="#">trail connections</a> .	Private	✓	✓	*	*				×	
LL	Incorporate active/passive recreation uses on this property with a focus on water quality protection. An initial master plan has been developed for this site.	City	✓	✓		*					×
MM	Water quality protection for Berry's Brook and habitat connectivity.	Private	✓		*	*	*			×	
NN	Consider conservation easement on surrounding open space area that is currently part of the open space set aside. Water quality protection for Berry's Brook, habitat connectivity, and some open space access around neighborhood perimeter.	Private	✓	✓	*	*	*	*	×		

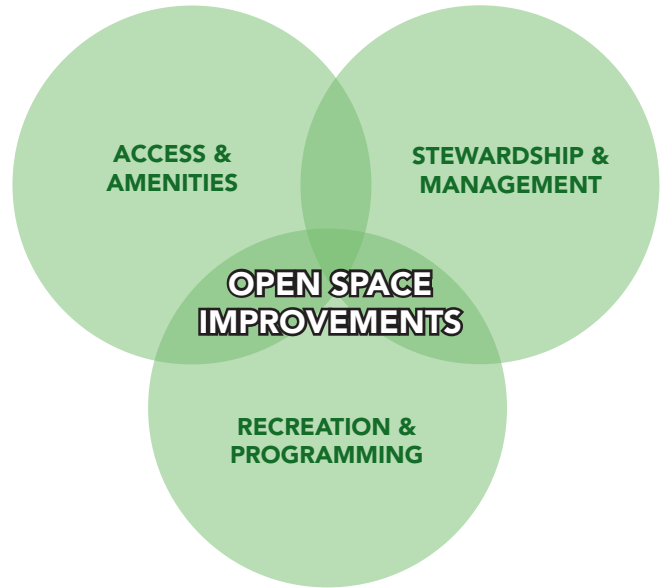


Map Code	Description	Ownership	Opportunity		Ranking Categories				Priority		
			Acquisition/ Conservation	Improvement	Proximity	Connectivity	Unique Resources	Equity & Access	High	Medium	Future
OO	Water quality protection for Berry's Brook and habitat connectivity within Portsmouth and into nearby Rye.	Private	✓		*	*	*	*	×		
PP	Water quality protection for Berry's Brook and habitat connectivity within Portsmouth and into nearby Rye.	Private	✓		*	*		*		×	
QQ	Part of property not yet conserved. Could provide ideal off-street parking area. Access to unconserved portion is off Rt 1. Build/formalize <a href="#">trails</a> . Property abuts SELT land to the south and connects to a mountain bike trail system in Rye (Breakfast Hill Rd.).	Private	✓	✓	*	*		*		×	
RR	Water quality protection for Berry's Brook, habitat connectivity, and connection to other conservation land north of Lang Road.	Private	✓	✓	*	*	*			×	
SS	Water quality protection for Berry's Brook and habitat connectivity.	Private	✓			*	*			×	
TT	Water quality protection for Berry's Brook and habitat connectivity within Portsmouth and into nearby Rye.	Private	✓		*	*	*	*	×		
UU	Saint Patrick's Academy; possible conservation and improved access.	Private	✓			*		*			×

# Improvements Map & Matrix

Identifying and protecting parcels to ensure that Portsmouth retains an interconnected network of natural resources and open lands is only part of the challenge addressed in this plan. It is also important to understand the need for infrastructure improvements on existing open space parcels and the potential for improvements on newly identified parcels. This may include trails, parking areas, amenities, signage, and other site elements.

The following map and matrix shows the highest priority open space parcels for future upgrades and improvements. The listed open space parcels and improvements were identified based on conversations with the Open Space Plan Steering Committee, public feedback, and through the existing conditions and opportunities analysis. The parcels are coded by numbers, but it is important to highlight that this is not a ranking system. The assigned number is simply a map code that corresponds to the Open Space Improvements Matrix. This comprehensive approach to planning future parcel improvements considers the following three categories that emerged as priorities for Portsmouth:



## **ACCESS AND AMENITIES**

This includes improvements related to public access and connections between open space parcels and nearby destinations, trails, and the shoreline. It also includes open space amenity upgrades related to seating, lighting, pathways, vegetation, signage, and more.

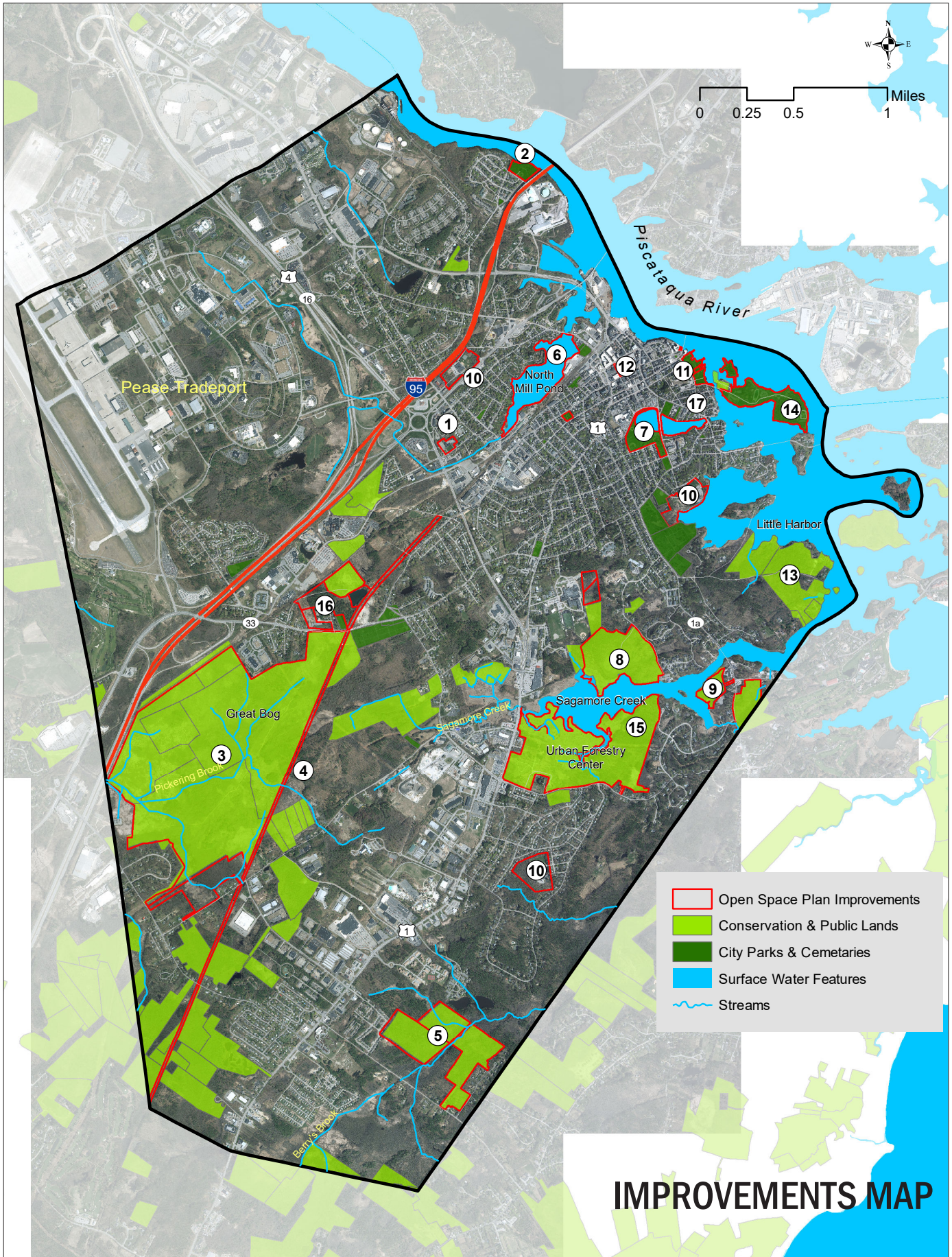
## **STEWARDSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

This includes improvements related to protecting the ecological integrity of the City’s open spaces through sustainable management activities. These may include maintaining high quality facilities, maximizing low-maintenance ecological landscaping, controlling invasive species, creating mowing regimes that benefit wildlife, and maintaining stormwater management systems that provide more than water quality benefits.

## **RECREATION AND PROGRAMMING**

This includes improvements related to recreation facilities and programming needs, with a focus on passive recreation, some active recreation, and making an effort to serve all residents in each phase of their lives.







# OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

Map Code	Description
1	<b>SENIOR CENTER:</b> Build a <a href="#">community garden</a> and/or a <a href="#">perennial food forest area</a> .
2	<b>HISLOP FIELD:</b> Improve trail signage and <a href="#">access/wayfinding to the shoreline</a> . Consider rehabilitating the old pier as a fishing/observation area. <a href="#">Community garden plots or a perennial food forest area</a> could be established near the ball field.
3	<b>GREAT BOG:</b> Formalize the <a href="#">trail system, trail maintenance, and wayfinding</a> . Explore opportunities for boardwalks and creating ADA accessible trail segments. Formalize access points from Banfield Rd, Buckminster Way, Greenland Rd, and the Seacoast Greenway. If the island with agricultural soils can be accessed, there is the possibility of creating a perennial food forest.
4	<b>SEACOAST GREENWAY:</b> Work with property owners to create <a href="#">designated parking areas</a> and associated trails along this corridor, as well as a wayfinding system.
5	<b>LANG ROAD PROPERTIES:</b> Work with property owner to explore the potential of a future park, but needs formal access and parking. Signage, a kiosk, and marked trails are also needed for passive recreation.
6	<b>NORTH MILL POND:</b> Continue working towards the vision for the North Mill Pond Trail and Greenway, including, a <a href="#">living shoreline</a> resilience project, public seating and interpretive signage, lookouts, and access points. Work to protect the existing buffer zone by implementing low impact trail construction methods and use of boardwalks where necessary. Investigate the potential to clean polluted areas of the Pond using innovative methods (possibly shellfish that would also provide some storm protection).
7	<b>SOUTH MILL POND/ LEARY FIELD AREA:</b> Shoreland buffer needs improvement, and has potential for living shoreline demonstration project. This area would benefit from a comprehensive park plan that includes improvements such as a <a href="#">better walking path network, shade, sitting/gathering areas, gardens, and other amenities</a> . Consider constructing walking paths, a pickle ball court, and a natural playground. Explore upgrading restroom facilities and providing drinking water.
8	<b>SAGAMORE CREEK LAND:</b> Improve access and appearance to landfill cap open space, create a more formal parking and access area along access driveway and create waterfront viewing opportunities. Create marked trails, add a kiosk, and improve signage. For more information on recommendations, please visit the Sagamore Creek Land Master Plan. Establish interpretive signage along existing trails off Jones Ave. to highlight and help protect vernal pools and other natural features.
9	<b>SAGAMORE CREEK HEADLANDS:</b> Would benefit from signage, a kiosk, marked trails and a well-signed, dedicated parking area.
10	<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:</b> A <a href="#">natural playground</a> and other Dondero School inspired improvements would serve the schools and surrounding neighborhoods. Continue to provide natural playground improvements to all schools. Continue to expand trail improvements at these schools as well.
11	<b>PRESCOTT PARK:</b> A number of upgrades have been identified in the Prescott Park Master Plan including improved pedestrian circulation, maximizing waterfront access, integrating coastal resilience strategies, and maintaining and increasing large open space areas for formal and informal activities.
12	<b>VAUGHN/WORTH/BRIDGE OPEN SPACE REVITALIZATION:</b> Ensure redesign of the Vaughn/Worth Bridge area incorporates open space elements as proposed in the report including shade trees, green stormwater infrastructure, and gardens.
13	<b>CREEK FARM AND LITTLE HARBOR TRAIL:</b> Work with property owner on trail management and rules for different types of uses. At Little Harbor Trail, create a stone path or boardwalk over the muddy area and remove oriental bittersweet (by hand).



14	<b>PEIRCE ISLAND:</b> Upgrade bath houses and playground, add more bike racks, improve pedestrian walkways, and explore parking solutions to accommodate high traffic volumes on weekends.
15	<b>URBAN FORESTRY CENTER:</b> Improve access and crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists across Elwyn Road. Work with the state to improve wayfinding and trail signage on the property and add more interpretive signage. Explore opportunities to improve connections with nearby schools for <a href="#">outdoor programming</a> .
16	<b>SHERBURNE STATION:</b> Consider creating community garden plots and a picnic pavilion. Evaluate and formalize the mountain bike pump track that has been constructed on the property.
17	<b>STRAWBERRY BANKE AND HISTORIC SOUTH END:</b> This is the most vulnerable, developed area (as outlined in the Historic Resources Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment) from a coastal resilience perspective in Portsmouth and efforts should be made in this area to <a href="#">improve urban green spaces</a> as critical green infrastructure.



## Site Level Improvements

To help guide the City on improving its open space resources, a series of vignettes were created as a way to provide basic information, design considerations, and resources related to open space amenities and other green infrastructure improvements. These improvements can add to an open space parcel's ecological integrity, sense of place, multi-functionality, and/or wayfinding.





# Open Space Management Guidelines

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Portsmouth's open spaces should be managed in a way that is consistent with its Open Space Plan Vision. Because the City's open spaces include wilder areas, such as its conservation lands, and more manicured areas, such as its parks and cemeteries, management guidelines will vary depending on the property, its facilities, and its uses. The following open space management guidelines below are a starting point for the City. It's recommended that Portsmouth develop City-wide general management standards and, over time, establish property specific guidelines.

## OVERARCHING MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Ensure that every neighborhood in the City is within walking distance to a park or open space.
- Build and maintain a wide-range of active and passive recreational facilities.
- Create and maintain public lookouts and boat launches along the City's shorefront.
- Conduct regular audits and inventories of parks, playgrounds, and other open space resources.
- Develop, update, and implement site level management plans for each of the City's open spaces.
- Identify and employ a sustainable funding strategy for open space needs.
- Develop and implement ecological land management practices to ensure open spaces maintain their habitat value and provide other ecosystem services such as food production and climate change resiliency.
- Incorporate open space amenities such as seating, lighting, and signage to increase safety and quality of experience at the City's open spaces.
- Maintain and expand open space programming related to public education, entertainment, wellness, and recreation.

## MANAGING LAND USING ECOLOGICAL METHODS

- Balance recreational and public access goals with open space protection.
- Preserve natural open space features, buffers, and functions. These may include wetlands, mature trees, or vegetative buffers.
- Manage stormwater on site and use low impact development approaches.
- Protect highly erodible and fragile soils.
- Preserve and/or plant diverse native vegetation including trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species to provide carbon sequestration, water quality protection, biodiversity services.
- Consider non-toxic lawn management guidelines for the City's athletic fields.
- Consider non-toxic invasive species management for the City's open spaces.



Above: Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA is a 45-acre nature preserve consisting of wetlands, forest, and a brook. Native plant communities are showcased and pay tribute to the larger New England landscape. This site is a good example of an open space designed around its rich natural resources.

# Stewardship and Education

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Promoting an ethic of stewardship, care, and ownership of the City's open space resources ensures that they remain high-quality, functional, and sustainable places. In planning for the future, Portsmouth should maintain the aesthetics and ecological integrity of its open spaces through regular stewardship activities by City departments and volunteers.

## STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

- Maintain facilities care in order to provide a clean and safe environment for visitors.
- Increase public awareness and appreciation of Portsmouth's open spaces and the protection of natural habitats and resources.
- Monitor for and address trail blockages, soil erosion, vandalism, and litter.
- Remove trash and debris found on site.
- Trim and remove vegetation along trails. Plant and prune street trees and other vegetation. Utilize pruned material for compost that can be used by the City.
- Install signage and trail markers.
- Produce and distribute open space maps and educational literature.
- Lead nature hikes with community members.
- Organize community work days and other events.
- Consider establishing partnerships with local schools and other community groups to create a volunteer land stewards program.



Above: The NH Forest Society trains volunteer stewards to monitor land like Creek Farm in Portsmouth.



Above: Prescott Park gardens. Portsmouth's Parks and Greenery Department is responsible for maintaining the City's parks, playgrounds, cemeteries, athletic fields, and other municipal spaces.



# Trails and Wayfinding

A well-developed trail system is essential in creating a healthy community. Trails improve quality of life, deliver substantial health benefits, entice residents and visitors to get outside, and provide access to natural resource areas for a variety of activities. Trail corridors can also provide important ecological connections for other species. Portsmouth's public lands offer a high quality trail network for walking, biking, running, and other passive recreation uses. As the City and its partners work to implement this Plan, there are also opportunities to construct additional trails at existing open spaces and at newly acquired and/or protected properties in the future.

## GOALS FOR PORTSMOUTH'S TRAIL NETWORK

- Link trailheads to the on-street bicycle and sidewalk network around them.
- Promote the use of trails with accessible maps, wayfinding, and other resources.
- Incorporate trail amenities and features along trails and at trailheads including mile markers, wayfinding, seating, boardwalks, and parking to increase use of, and improve access to, trail corridors.
- Adequately maintain and operate trails. Plan and fund periodic upgrading of trail surfaces and associated features. Ensure all trails are designed and maintained to reduce erosion and protect the surrounding natural environment.
- When constructing trails, consider the character of the land (soil, slope, and vegetative cover), the type of expected use, and the volume of that expected use. Make trails wide enough to accommodate all desired users.
- Include interpretive/educational features and public art components that connect the trail to the natural and cultural characteristics of the area around it.

## Resources

- **Portsmouth Wayfinding Plan:** <http://planportsmouth.com/wayfinding.html>
- **Best Management Practices for Erosion Control During Trail Maintenance and Construction:** <https://naturegroupie.org/sites/default/files/documents/bmp-manual2017.pdf>

## Wayfinding

Wayfinding is a broad term used to describe the ways that people orient themselves in a physical setting and navigate from place to place. A comprehensive wayfinding system of signs and maps can help orient vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic with a logical and intuitive navigation system and increase accessibility to key open spaces and trails within the City. Functional wayfinding systems may include a variety of tools (both physical and virtual) that provide a predictable and consistent way for people to find their way around. Wayfinding elements should highlight walking and biking paths, directions, and distances and be located at key points in the City and at trailheads. Portsmouth established a Wayfinding Plan in 2014 and has been working to improve its wayfinding network since then. This Plan should be utilized for specific design guidance and selection of appropriate wayfinding tools.



Above: Wheelchair accessible trail on Mud Pond Trail; Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge.

# Natural Playscapes

In a world where more and more children are disconnected from their natural environment, providing ways to interact with nature has become increasingly important. Creating opportunities for children to play in natural environments promotes a sense of stewardship in them at a young age, and an awareness that they are part of a larger ecosystem. Natural play areas are inspired by the local ecological context of a community, integrating elements that are part of nature or are made from natural materials including trees, grass, wood, logs, water, and stone. The City has set a goal to work with the elementary schools to add or enhance natural play areas and to investigate the potential for creating natural playscapes in other parks and open spaces.

## BEST PRACTICES IN NATURAL PLAYSCAPE DESIGN

- Allow for a variety of types of play and activity including: physical play (chasing, running, hide and seek), exploratory play, construction, creative play with raw materials, social interaction, imagination, and quiet contemplation/solitude.
- Create a sensory experience that includes sound (chimes, bells), smell (fragrant plants), taste (edible fruit on trees/shrubs), touch (materials with a variety of textures), and sight (flowering plants, natural art).
- Choose playscape elements based on the existing character of the site including topography, vegetation, and other natural features. Desirable site elements include varied topography (slopes, trenches, mounds), existing trees to provide shade and climbing features, and a flat open area.
- Playscape structures should be built with natural materials or be appropriately nature themed and allow for balancing, swinging, and climbing. Other elements to consider include perennial gardens, insect boxes, interactive plant features (willow dome, tall grass maze, sunflower house), water (small pools, running water), placed items (downed trees, stones/boulders), and formal seating nearby for adults.

## Resources

- **Nature Play Area Guidelines:** <https://oregonplay.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/thprd-nature-play-guidelines-share.pdf>
- **Benefits of Connecting Children with Nature:** [https://naturalearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Benefits-of-Connecting-Children-with-Nature\\_InfoSheet.pdf](https://naturalearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Benefits-of-Connecting-Children-with-Nature_InfoSheet.pdf)

## Goals of Natural Playscapes

- Provides children of all ages, abilities, and socio-economic backgrounds safe, accessible spaces to interact with the natural world.
- Provides a setting that encourages creativity and imagination rather than, or in addition to, one which allows only for prescriptive physical activities.
- Helps children develop motor skills, social behaviors, and creativity.
- Promotes the value of environmental education and stewardship on various levels, including spontaneous and formal adult teaching, as well as that provided by hands on, unstructured play.



Above: Children explore and play on downed trees. Chicago, IL.



# Community Gardens and Perennial Food Forests

Portsmouth’s open space network provides opportunities to grow vegetables, fruits, nuts, and herbs while bringing residents together and building community. Urban food production also promotes health and well-being, creates a sense of security, encourages exercise and recreation, beautifies the city, and contributes to it’s resilience.

In Portsmouth, food production can be accomplished a number of ways. Organizing and constructing **community garden plots** is one technique that typically focuses on annual agriculture. These spaces provide opportunities for individuals, families, or organizations to grow their own food in a supportive setting. Establishing a community garden requires planning, organizing, managing group dynamics, developing interpersonal relationships, and facilitating group decision making.

**Perennial food production systems** provide an additional opportunity in Portsmouth that has been underutilized by municipalities. Often implemented as food forests or edible landscapes, these food systems provide habitat value, beauty, and other ecosystem services that make them worth the investment in time and materials. They can be configured as large areas in coordination with community garden plots (as seen here <https://beaconfoodforest.org/>) or as amenities in parks and open spaces. They can also be designed and installed in place of traditional landscaping, and within stormwater solutions, to leverage the additional services and functions beyond food production.

## Resources

- **Community Gardening in New Hampshire from the Ground Up:** [https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource002173\\_Rep3203.pdf](https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource002173_Rep3203.pdf)
- **Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden Using Native Plants:** [https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/AttractingPollinatorsEasternUS\\_V1.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/documents/AttractingPollinatorsEasternUS_V1.pdf)
- **Edible Landscapes:** <https://www.americanforests.org/magazine/article/edible-landscapes/>

## Challenges To Be Aware Of

- **Management-** these projects require a “champion” who can work with and organize people and projects and create systems to enforce rules and resolve conflicts
- **Maintenance-** grass needs to be mowed, equipment to be repaired, and plant debris to be composted (for example)
- **Participation-** people come and go
- **Theft and vandalism-** commonplace to many gardens
- **Gardening skills or lack of gardening skills**
- **Leadership skills are needed**
- **Services and supplies-** plowing, tilling, and delivery of compost and mulch can be challenging for gardeners to arrange themselves
- **Water-** finding an efficient water source
- **Site permanency-** most sites are on borrowed land



Above: Beacon Food Forest, a public perennial food system based in Seattle, WA.

# Parking Facilities and Access Points

An access point, or trailhead, is a point of formal public entry into an open space. At these locations, there are opportunities to also provide amenities such as parking, restrooms, shade, benches, EV charging infrastructure, and wayfinding signage. High quality parking facilities provide space for motorists and bicyclists to park at an open space destination safely and conveniently. Depending on the parcel, parking areas may require more infrastructure on some properties. According to NH's "Planning for Play: A Parks and Playgrounds Guidebook for NH", there are currently no universal standards for determining how many spaces there should be for a park or other open space. Open space classifications are usually based on acreage, how many people are served within a 1/2 or 1-mile radius, expected volume of use, and existing nearby public parking. Parking lot surface material may be paved with asphalt in higher use areas, crushed gravel, or dirt in some cases. Consider adding paid parking where it makes sense as a way to generate revenue for site improvements.

## GREENING PARKING AREAS

Parking areas have the potential to incorporate green infrastructure elements to provide ecosystem services and greater visitor satisfaction. This may include plantings for biodiversity, water infiltration, shade, food, and clean air. Integrate the parking lot into the surrounding natural environment as a way to improve its aesthetics and sense of place. Consider adding curb cuts and grading the parking surface toward swales and basins planted with a diversity of vegetation including trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species.

## Resources

- **Green Parking Lot Resource Guide:** [http://www.streamteamok.net/Doc\\_link/Green%20Parking%20Lot%20Guide%20\(final\).PDF](http://www.streamteamok.net/Doc_link/Green%20Parking%20Lot%20Guide%20(final).PDF)



Above: A simple curb cut allows plants to filter stormwater that enters this open space's parking lot; Arcade Creek Preserve, CA.



Above: A classic timber frame kiosk provides directions to trail users, VT.



Above: A small kiosk, picnic table, crushed gravel parking area improve the entrance to this open space.



# Open Space Amenities

Open space amenities create areas designed for people, providing a welcoming entry, comfort, safety, and information to users. The addition of amenities enhance the overall user experience at a site. **BENCHES** and **PICNIC TABLES** should be located at trailheads, along trails or pathways, and in designated gathering spaces as appropriate. Site level design of open spaces should prioritize the creation of **GATHERING SPACES** for various programming needs. **COVERED STRUCTURES**, such as a pavillion or smaller kiosk, offer open space users refuge from weather. **VIEWING POINTS** allow visitors to enjoy scenic vistas and pleasant views of Portsmouth and the surrounding region. These should be strategically located along a trail or within an open space. **SIGNAGE** that should be considered for an open space typically falls under three categories: directional signage (communicates where to go, how long it will take, points of interest), interpretive signage (cultural and ecological information about the surrounding area), and entry signage (communicates that you have arrived). **TRASH RECEPTABLES** are necessary at all trailheads and major access points. **RESTROOMS** and **DRINKING FOUNTAINS** should be located, where appropriate, at major trail access points and parking areas to accomodate open space or trail users. Exploring opportunities to add **PUBLIC ART** to open spaces creates additional cultural value, sense of place, and aesthetics. **BIKE RACKS** should be located at trailheads to provide parking for cyclists.

To better plan and fund open space amenity improvements, the City should conduct an in-depth assessment of each open space’s existing amenities (especially those parcels that do not already have plans and designs guiding their development). Once this information is collected the City can create a list of specific amenities needed for each and identify a prioritization scheme for future funding.



Above: In Prescott Park, a trash receptacle also serves as a canvas for public art.



Above: A pavillion provides a covered area for gathering and provides accommodations such as picnic tables and trash receptacles; Essex Junction, VT.



Above: An example of solar powered restrooms with roof mounted solar panels.

# Water Access

Portsmouth's 22 miles of tidal shorefront plays a significant role in the City's history, evolution, and sense of place. The existing open spaces located along the coast offer residents a way to connect to these various water resources. Portsmouth's shorefront includes land adjacent to the Piscataqua River, tidal basins of Sagamore Creek, and the offshore islands. There are 10 formal and informal water access points in the City. Viewing areas connected to trails or pedestrian paths offer lookouts, boat launches provide kayakers and canoeists a way to explore Piscataqua River and other tidal areas, and open areas provide space for sitting, relaxing, swimming, and other activities. Additionally, the City had developed a policy that will ensure all "Paper Streets" leading to the shore will be retained for public access.

## BEST PRACTICES IN ESTABLISHING WATER ACCESS

- Create clear access and connections to the waterfront from adjoining neighborhoods.
- Frame and create viewing areas at shorefront open spaces.
- Promote the City's ecological and cultural history with interpretive signage and public art.
- Ensure water access points are safe for everyone. Appropriate signage should be posted with guidelines related to usage and relevant safety protocol.
- Construct boardwalks where necessary and restrict pedestrian access in environmentally sensitive shorefront areas.
- Include amenities to facilitate recreation activities on the water. Where feasible, add boat launches in existing and newly aquired shorefront open spaces and ensure existing boat launch infrastructure is maintained.
- To increase resiliency to climate change, consider "living shoreline" systems where feasible. Living shorelines are protected, stabilized coast edges made of plant, rock, and/or sand. They can reduce damage and erosion while simultaneously providing ecosystem services to society, including food production, nutrient and sediment removal, and water quality improvement.

## Resources

- **The NH Smart Shoreline Project: A Living Shoreline Site Suitability Assessment Initiative:** <https://www.nhcaw.org/project/the-nh-smart-shoreline-project-a-living-shoreline-site-suitability-assessment/>

## Open Space Water Access Points

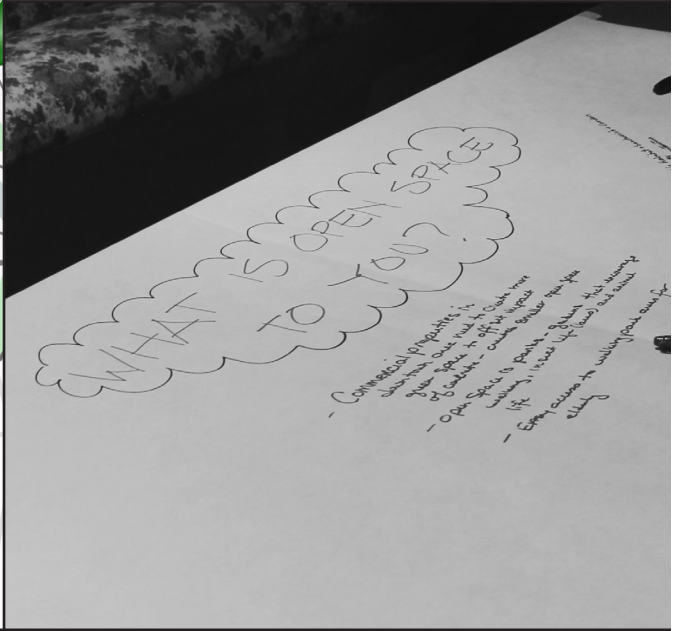
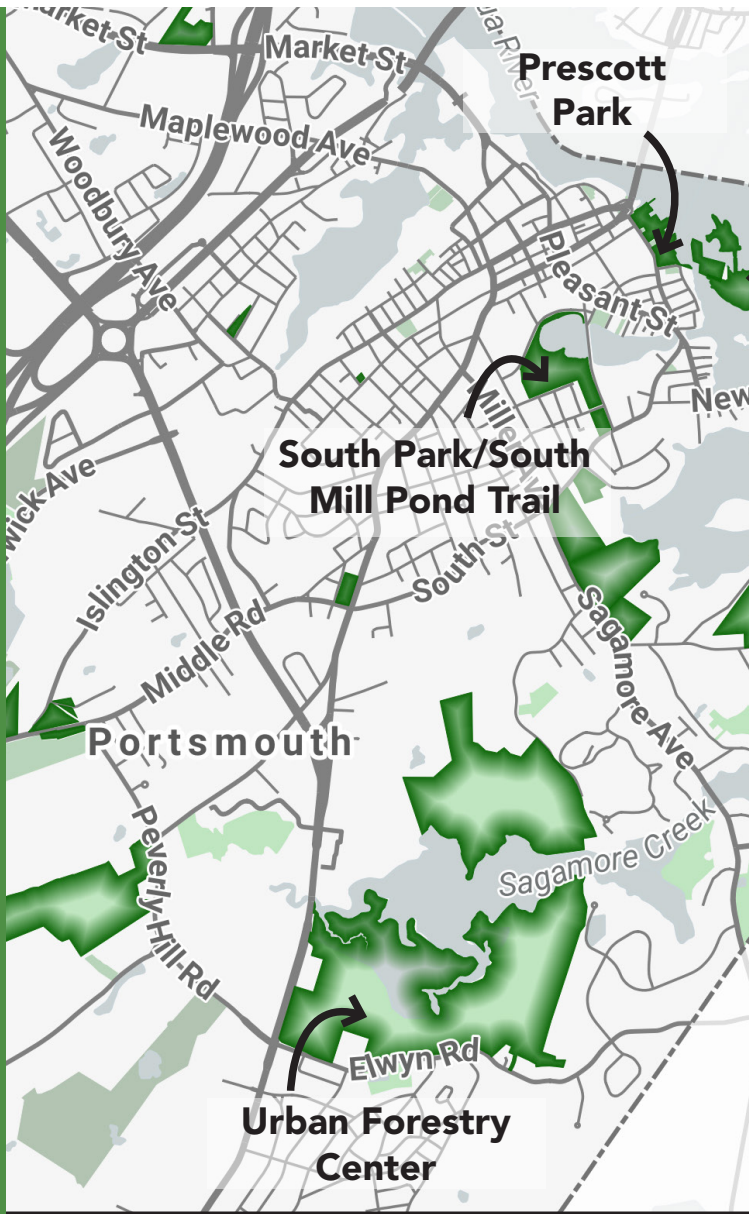
- Prescott Park
- Four Tree Island
- Pierce Island
- Creek Farm
- Hislop Park
- Atlantic Heights Park
- Wentworth Coolidge Mansion
- Sagamore Creek Headlands
- Urban Forestry Center
- Future North Mill Pond Trail
- South Mill Pond Park
- Little Harbor School
- South Street Cemetery



Above: Morris Landing, a North Carolina Coastal Federation living shoreline site in Holly Ridge, NC



# Appendix



## PORTSMOUTH OPEN SPACE PLAN

# Community Engagement Summary Report

August 2019



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# INTRODUCTION

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Above: Hislop Field      Courtesy: Resilience Planning & Design

This report highlights the **key themes, findings, and feedback** collected during the public outreach phase of the Portsmouth Open Space planning process.

The purpose of Portsmouth's Open Space Plan is to improve public access to, increase use and stewardship of, and improve connectivity between open space assets city-wide. Open space can be defined as both privately and publicly owned undeveloped or lightly developed land and recreation areas. High-quality and interconnected green infrastructure offers tremendous potential to help the city increase its resilience related to climate change, food security, and the health of its ecosystems.

To strengthen the City's open space network, the Plan includes a prioritized list of undeveloped parcels for future acquisition and/or permanent protection, an evaluation of current open space assets, land stewardship and management guidelines, targeted open space improvements, and opportunities for increasing or protecting ecosystem services of open space in the City. To ensure that the Plan reflected the goals and priorities of the City's residents and visitors, the City and its consulting team (Resilience Planning & Design, Greenfire GIS, and Toole Design Group) developed a diverse community engagement plan utilizing a variety of outreach mechanisms. These included:

- Two Community Forums
- Interactive Table at Piscataqua Riverfest
- An Online Wiki Map
- An Online Feedback Form

The results from these engagement activities will directly inform the Plan and its implementation actions.

## WHAT WE HEARD:

**Access & Amenities:** Public access and safe biking and walking infrastructure to and within open spaces is a high priority to the public and should be considered when planning for Portsmouth's open space network. In this outreach process, community members said amenities such as seating, lighting, pathways, vegetation, wayfinding, signage, and restrooms should be located and maintained, where appropriate, in the City's open spaces. Open space should also be equitable in terms of accessibility throughout the City.

**Stewardship & Management:** Protecting the ecological integrity of open space assets in the City should be emphasized in management guidelines. Permanent protection of existing open spaces and continued exploration of new open space opportunities should be prioritized.

**Recreation & Programming:** Open space assets in Portsmouth should have high quality active and passive recreation facilities, flex space for diverse programming, access to the water, and connect to trails and nearby destinations.



# COMMUNITY FORUMS

The City hosted two community forums during the public outreach phase of the project. The first meeting took place on Saturday, June 1 at the Urban Forestry Center from 10-12 pm. The second forum was held Tuesday, June 4 at City Hall from 6-8 pm. The main purpose of the forums was to present the City's preliminary understanding of existing open space assets in Portsmouth and to learn from community members what their priorities were related to open space protection and infrastructure improvements. The consulting team and the City used the "World Cafe" format for the forums to engage participants.

The central ideas behind the **"World Cafe"** format is that the community members are considered the "experts" of the room and provide many opportunities for conversations to emerge and ideas proposed. Questions asked to community members are intentional, well-thought out, and compelling.

The "cafe" usually includes multiple tables set up to serve as "stations" that offer a variety of ways for individuals to participate. For these forums, six stations were created that each focused on a theme including:

- The vision for Portsmouth's Open Space network
- Land use and population density
- Existing open space and conservation lands
- What open space parcels need protection and why?
- Trail systems
- Access to the coast

Each station had materials designed to spark conversation, solicit feedback, and create a more interactive experience for attendees including guiding questions, maps, butcher paper, comment cards, and whiteboards. Approximately 20-25 people attended the community forums. The following page identifies key points, comments, and concerns related to the station themes above. On pages 9-11, three maps were generated that shows spatially where people are visiting open space in the city based on the feedback provided at the community forums and the Piscataqua Riverfest.



Above: Community Forum #1      Courtesy: Toole Design Group

## SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY FORUM COMMENTS

ISSUE	SUMMARY OF COMMENTS
<p><b>Vision for Portsmouth's Open Space Network</b> <i>What is open space to you?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildlife habitat and corridors</li> <li>• Places with trees, sounds of nature, and pleasant views</li> <li>• Places that provide recreational amenities and ecosystem services to the community and that are resilient to a changing climate</li> <li>• Trails for walking, hiking, biking, and running</li> <li>• Greenery intertwined with built environment</li> <li>• Parks and gardens that are walkable to residences and downtown and accessible to people of all ages/abilities</li> <li>• Open spaces promote an ethic of stewardship</li> <li>• Accesible walking trails, sitting areas/benches, and other pedestrian amenities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Existing Open Space and Conservation Land</b> <i>Which properties do you visit and for what activities?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creek Farm- walking</li> <li>• Little Harbor Trust- biking, walking</li> <li>• Cemeteries- walking</li> <li>• Pierce Island- kayaking, walking</li> <li>• 4 Tree Island- picnicing, walking</li> <li>• South Mill Pond- walking, bird watching</li> <li>• Albacore Submarine Park</li> <li>• Prescott Park- picnicing, walking, concerts, views of water</li> <li>• Wentworth Coolidge- walking</li> <li>• Urban Forestry Center- hiking, walking</li> <li>• Sagamore Creek- hiking, walking, kayaking</li> <li>• Leary Field- walking, pickleball courts</li> </ul>
<p><b>What Open Space Parcels Need Protection and Why?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Stump Dump near Portsmouth Cove</li> <li>• South Mill Pond- needs better attention to walking paths</li> <li>• Calvaretta land near Elwyn Pond (connected to important wetlands)</li> <li>• Water Supply Protection Sources</li> <li>• Lands contiguous to already protected important lands</li> <li>• DPW site and future fields</li> <li>• Mountain bike trails that spider off Hampton Branch Trail</li> <li>• Albacore Submarine Park</li> <li>• HCA land near hospital- more trails</li> <li>• Land between Great Bog and Banfield Road</li> <li>• All waterfronts</li> </ul>
<p><b>What Open Space Improvements are Needed in Portsmouth?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living green walls/building faces and rooftop green spaces throughout city</li> <li>• Downtown commercial properties need more green space to offset development impacts</li> <li>• Develop conservation land for open spaces</li> <li>• Downtown needs more green space in general</li> <li>• Hislop Field- more trail access along the river</li> <li>• Prescott Park gardens need maintenance; opportunities to add or convert gardens into a community vegetable garden/edible landscaping demo?</li> </ul>



- Baseball field at Lafayette playgrounds is too muddy
- Creek Farm- managed by three different entities that all have different rules (not very convenient when recreating here)
- Clean polluted North Mill Pond (use innovative methods such as oysters and mussels?)
- Improve access to Great Bog- little maintenance currently and poor access points
- Ensure that low-income areas have access to open space
- Heaven Park (Livermore and Pleasant)- needs curb on Livermore to protect from damage from cars parking
- Focus future open space planning efforts on passive recreation rather than more athletic fields
- Consider non toxic lawn management guidelines for athletic fields
- Incorporate more naturalized green spaces into park designs, rather than planting so much grass
- Parks need lighting for safety reasons
- During development, limit removal of native species without replacing said species

### **Trail Systems**

*Which do you use and for what activities? Where are trails needing to be improved or constructed?*

- Urban Forestry Center trails- walking/cross country skiing
- Construct Trails at the Wentworth Homelands parcel
- Better bike/ped crossing from Elwyn Park to Urban Forestry Center
- Jones Arc/Dump Trail to view vernal pools
- North Mill Pond trail should not be in the 25' buffer zone
- Make printable maps of trails and city owned land available for people to visit
- Pease Tradeport
- Cemetery Paths- running
- South Mill Pond- would love to see trail extend entirely around pond

### **Access to the Coast**

*Where do you go to gain access to the coast? For what activities? Are there improvements to be made?*

- Prescott Park- walking
- Urban Forestry Center- walking
- Four Tree Island- walking
- Goat Island- kayaking, walking
- Pierce Island- kayaking, walking, swimming at the pool
- Goat Island/Pierce Island need better parking solutions (lots fill up fast on weekends especially with commercial paddleboard/kayak rental companies)
- Pierce Island- bath houses need upgrading
- Motorcycle or bike along coastal roads
- Primarily through Portsmouth Marina- kayaking, paddle boarding, boating
- Need more opportunities to access coast downtown
- Could there be a water access closer to the Urban Forestry Center?

# PISCATAQUA RIVERFEST



As part of its outreach efforts, the City's consulting team tabled at the first annual Piscataqua Riverfest on June 1, 2019. This enabled the City to **bring community members into the local planning process who would not normally attend a public forum** and will result in a better, more informed planning document.

The Riverfest is a day dedicated to celebrating the heritage, ecology, and culture of the Piscataqua River, a major tributary that runs through the city. The consulting team asked passer-bys where they go to access open space in Portsmouth and to place a sticker on a map to indicate their answers. Approximately 40 people were engaged during the Piscataqua Riverfest.

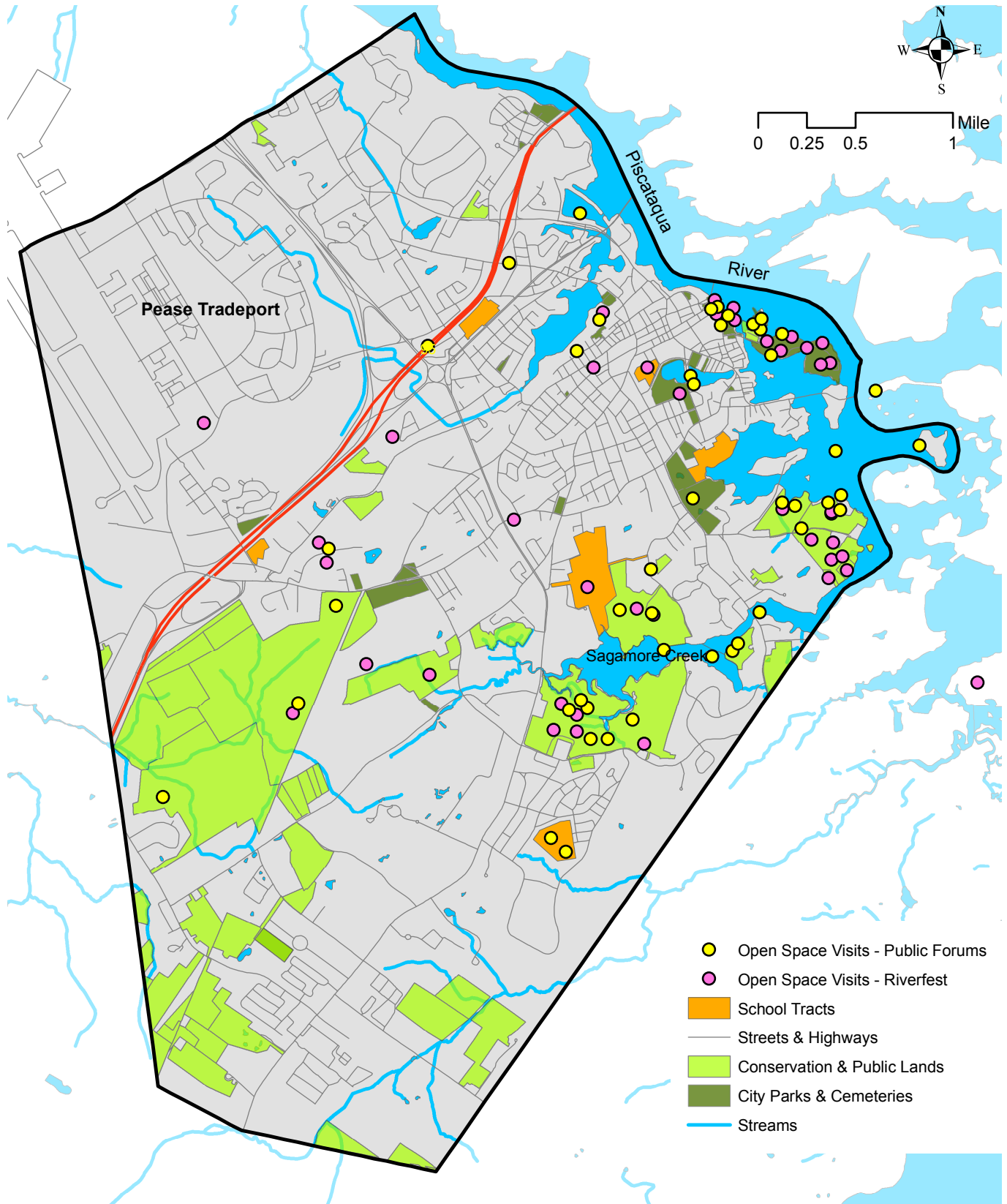
The three maps shown on pages 9-11 also show where participants who attended Riverfest go in the city to access open space, what trails they use,

and where they access the coast. A summary of the results from these responses are listed below:

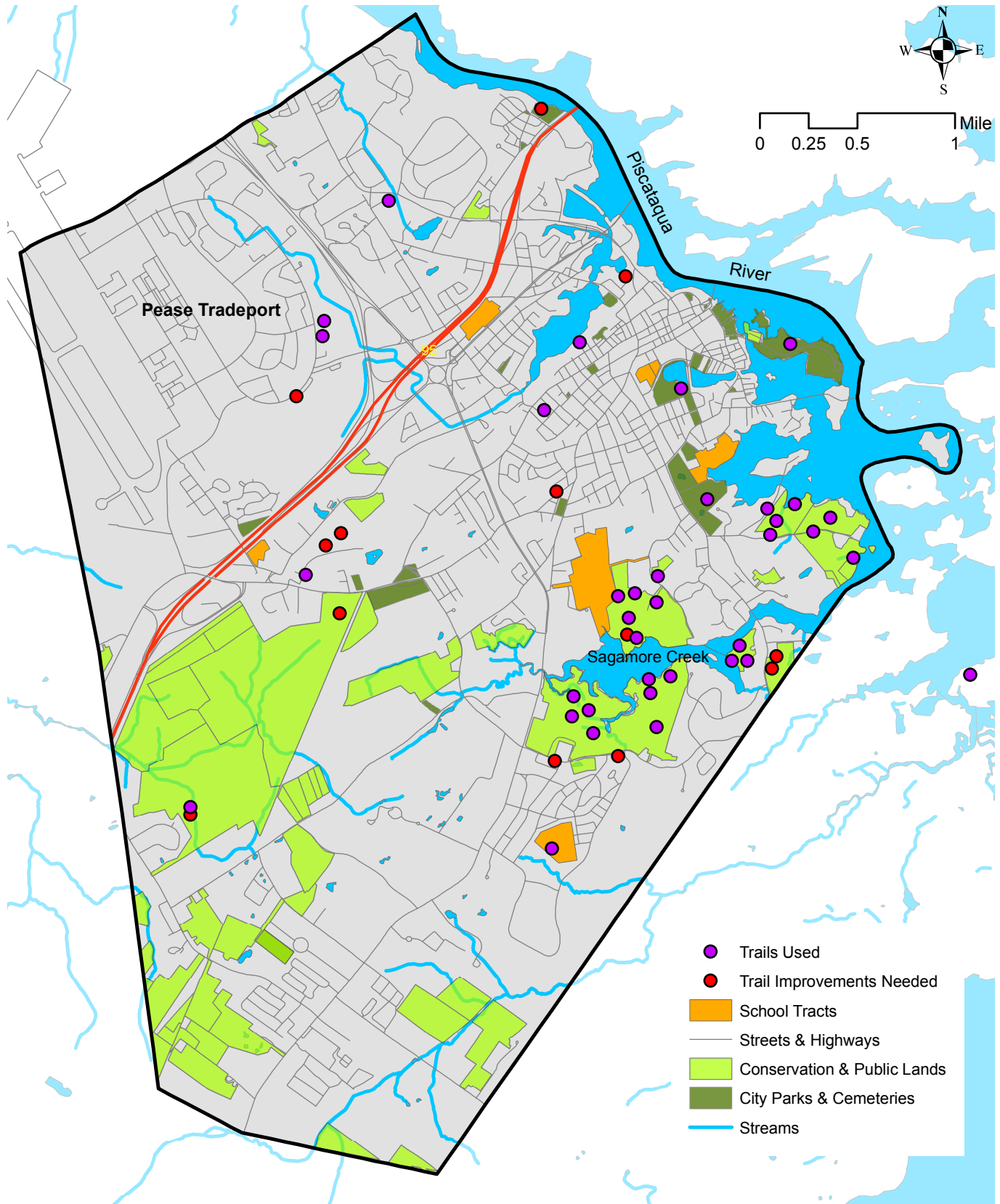
- 1) The Sagamore Creek Land, the Urban Forestry Center, Creek Farm, Prescott Prak, and South Mill Pond are among the most popular open spaces in Portsmouth for walking, cross country skiing, picnicking, accessing the coast, kayaking, and other outdoor activities.
- 3) Trail improvements were identified at Great Bog, Hislop Park, the Dondero School, and around Sagamore Creek.
- 4) Other notable open space parcels respondents visit include land adjacent to the Hospital and Pease Tradeport, which are less formalized open spaces in the City.
- 5) The open space parcels in the southwest corner of the City had few dots placed by respondents. This indicates that these parcels may not be as widely known as other open spaces in town or may need improvements.

**The following maps depict feedback from both the Riverfest and the two community forums.**



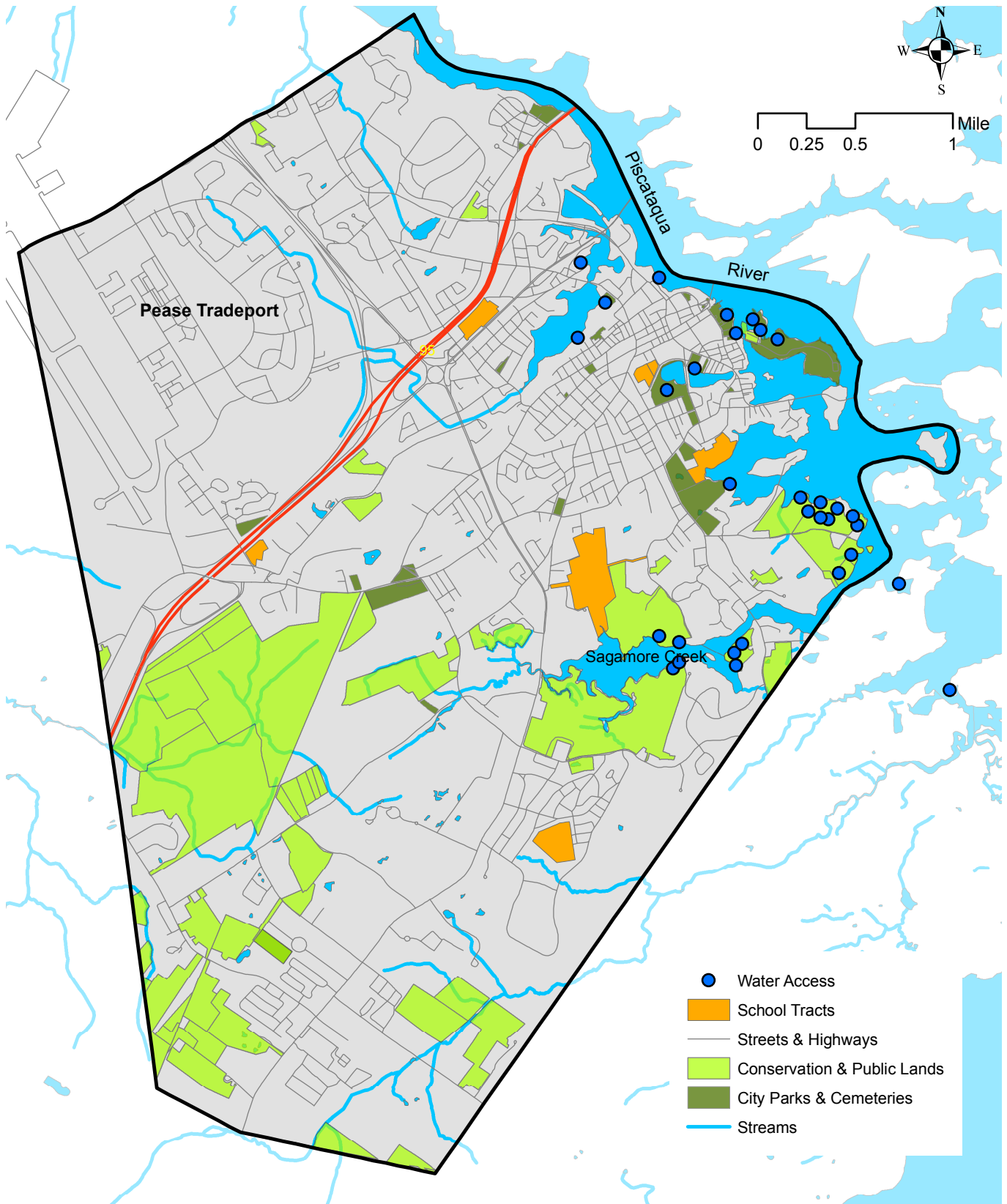


**Forums/Riverfest Outreach Map:  
Open Space Visits**



**Forums/Riverfest Outreach Map:  
Trails Used**





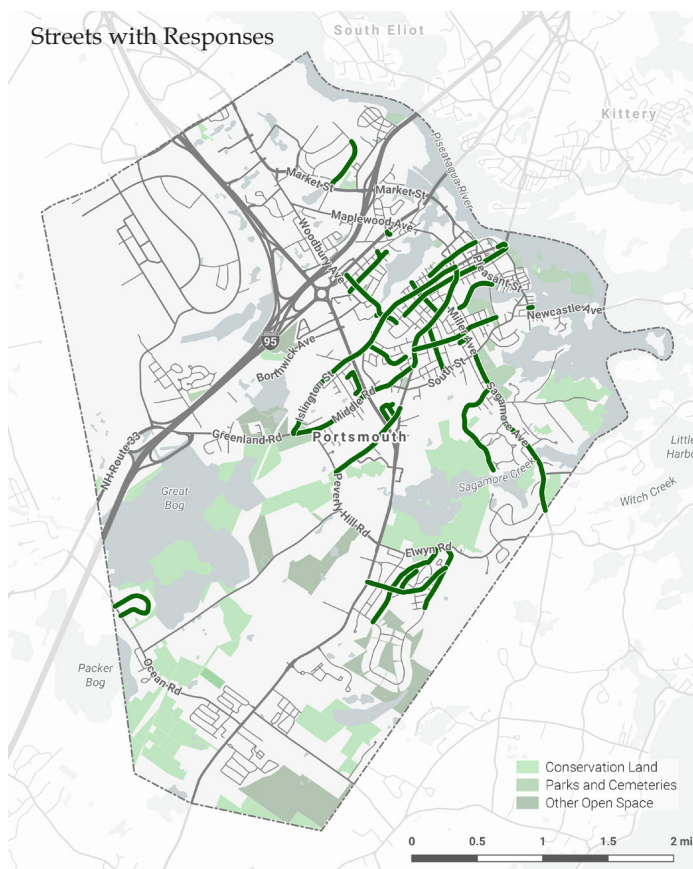
**Forums/Riverfest Outreach Map:  
Shoreline Access**

# ONLINE WIKIMAP

A “wikimap” is a participatory online mapping tool used to collect digital, spatial feedback from the community on a particular issue or project. The data the City collected using this tool for its Open Space Plan represents local knowledge and was used to identify priorities related to open space access, use, and experience. The map included a simple questionnaire and allowed participants to “pin” open spaces that they use or visit and provide comments. 112 responses were collected through the wikimap tool. Below is a summary of key findings:

## WHAT STREET DO YOU LIVE/WORK ON?

Wikimap respondents live and work, primarily, in the downtown area and eastern areas of the City. Street segments are shown in green in the map below:



## HOW DO YOU ACCESS OPEN SPACE?

Respondents chose either bike, walk, or other to indicate how they travel to open space parcels in the city. In general, most of the respondents either walked or chose other for how they got to a specific open space parcel. Biking was the least selected mode of transport.

The following few pages show maps of how respondents access open space. The labeled parcels are the most visited properties by walking, biking, or other forms of transport. Below are key findings from analyzing these maps:

### Location:

Considering most respondents stated that they either lived or worked in the downtown area, it was not surprising to see that most parcels that people walked or biked to were also located near the downtown. However, it is important to still note that few parcels from the southern and northern parts of town were accessed at all by respondents. Great Bog is the only site in the western portion of town that is visited by some respondents.

### Infrastructure:

Sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure are prominent in the downtown area and provide people safe experiences traveling by foot or bike to open space parcels. Planning for future pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between open spaces and places of work and residences will prove to be important when thinking about how people can access open space.

### Multi-Functional Spaces:

The parcels that most people walked and biked to are open spaces that host a variety of activities for visitors ranging from walking trails to waterfront access to outdoor programming. The following page shows popular open space parcels visited by respondents.





**South Park and South Mill Pond** and the adjoining Leary Field provide a playground, athletic fields, a popular dog park, and a saltwater pond.



**Pierce Island** includes an outdoor swimming pool, a boat launch, walking trails, picnic areas, and scenic views.



**Prescott Park** provides waterfront access and views, flower gardens, walking trails, dock space, and flexible open space for events.



**Urban Forestry Center** provides waterfront access and views, flower gardens, walking trails, dock space, and flexible open space for events.



**Sagamore Creek Land** provides walking trails and cross country paths through a forested area near Sagamore Creek.



**Creek Farm and Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site** have a popular trail network for hiking, snowshoeing, water access, and other activities.

## DESIRED OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

Wikimap respondents noted the following types of improvements for Portsmouth's open space parcels:

### On-Site Infrastructure

Additional seating, more lighting, repairs to existing infrastructure, trail maintenance, more coordinated parking, better or clearer signage, and covered gathering spaces were all mentioned.

### Activities

Some respondents indicated that they would like to see additional activities and programming (such as environmental education and live music) at various open spaces. The monitoring and management of specific activities, such as dog walking, were noted as well.

### Access

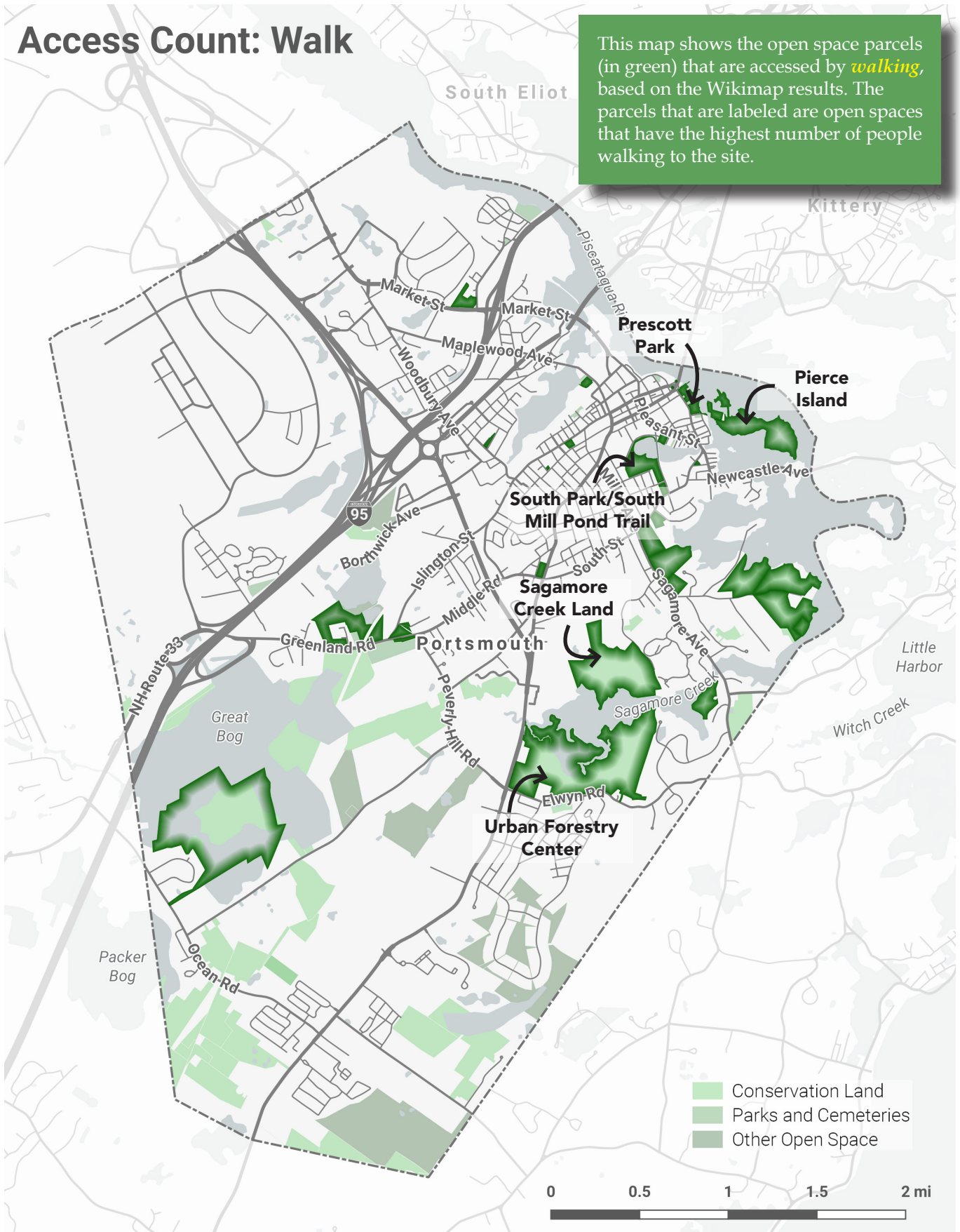
Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, such as crosswalks and bike lanes, were suggested at various streets or intersections to improve the safety of walking and biking to an open space.

### Stewardship

Respondents emphasized that open space management protect natural resources on and off site.

# Access Count: Walk

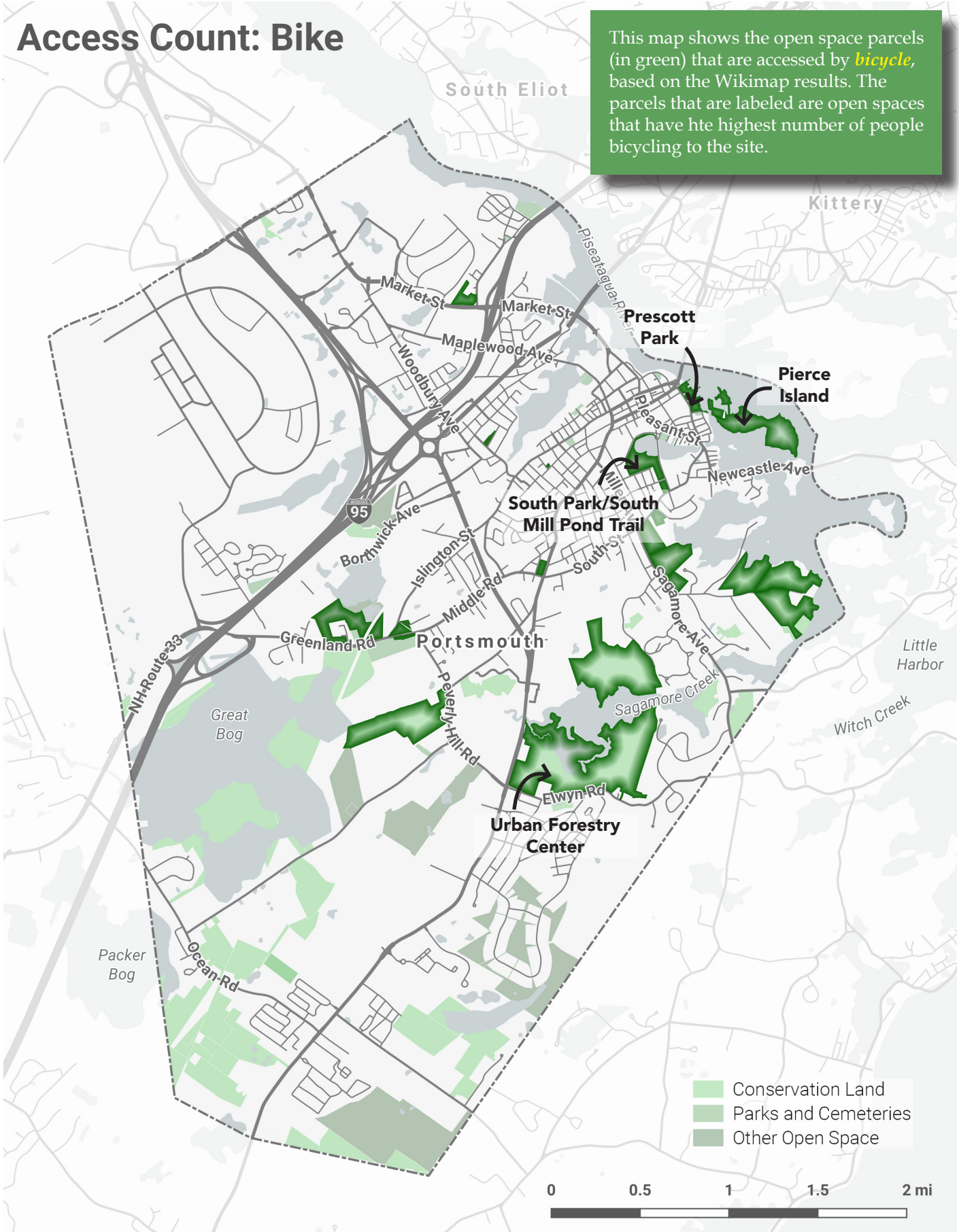
This map shows the open space parcels (in green) that are accessed by *walking*, based on the Wikimap results. The parcels that are labeled are open spaces that have the highest number of people walking to the site.





# Access Count: Bike

This map shows the open space parcels (in green) that are accessed by *bicycle*, based on the Wikimap results. The parcels that are labeled are open spaces that have the highest number of people bicycling to the site.



### WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN AT VARIOUS OPEN SPACE PARCELS?

Wikimap respondents participate in a variety of outdoor activities in the City's open spaces. Many people walk, hike, or stroll through properties like Pierce Island, around South Mill Pond, Prescott Park, and the Urban Forestry Center (which received the highest number of respondents who indicated they walked as an activity at an open space). Other properties that individuals noted that they walk through include Clough Field, Sagamore Creek Land, and Creek Farm. People also go to two City of Portsmouth properties (seen on the map as the green spaces above Market Street and above Greenland Road) that are less formalized than other open spaces but serve as neighborhood green space close to residences or work.

Respondents indicated that they participate in bicycling at properties such as Pierce & Four Tree Islands, South Park, Harmony Grove Cemetery,

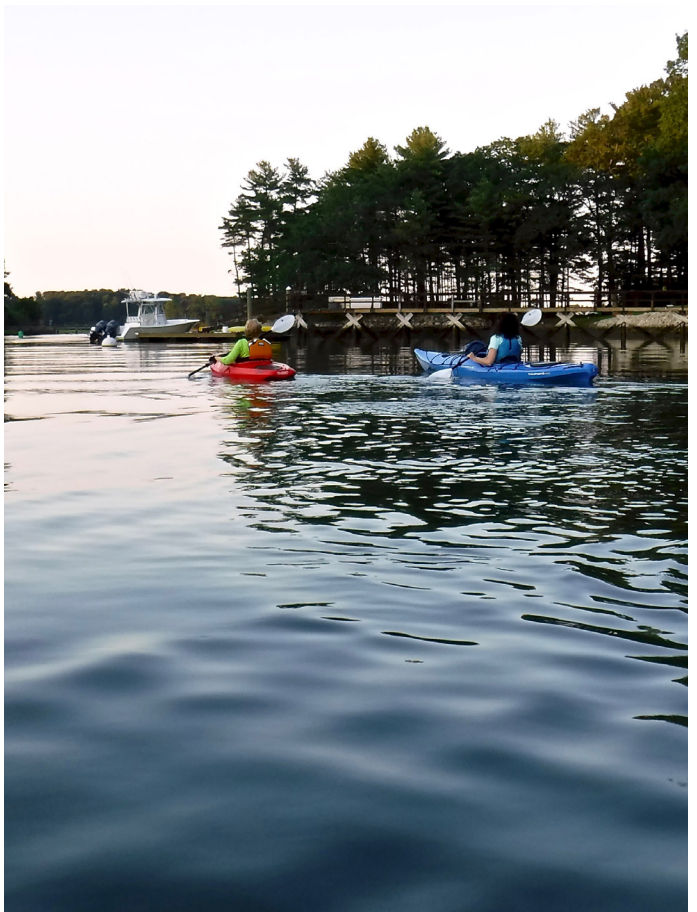
Prescott Park, and the Creek Farm/Wentworth-Coolidge Historic Site.

Walking is a more popular activity than biking is at open spaces in Portsmouth. Parcels such as Great Bog, Wentworth Homeland, and Sagamore Creek Headlands are popular for walking, but reported having zero respondents biking there.

Participants also indicated a number of other activities they participate in at Portsmouth open spaces including picnicking, visiting playgrounds, crosscountry skiing, horseback riding, fishing, swimming, kayaking, playing tennis or pickleball, and attending concerts. For example, respondents enjoy picnicking, sitting, and relaxing at Daniel Street Pocket Park. Harmony Grove Cemetery is popular for biking, walking, and cross country skiing. Pierce Island is popular for swimming and for kayaking. People enjoy live music, frisbee, the playground, and walking at Prescott Park.



*Above: Little Harbor Loop Trail in winter  
Courtesy: Society for the Protection of NH Forests*

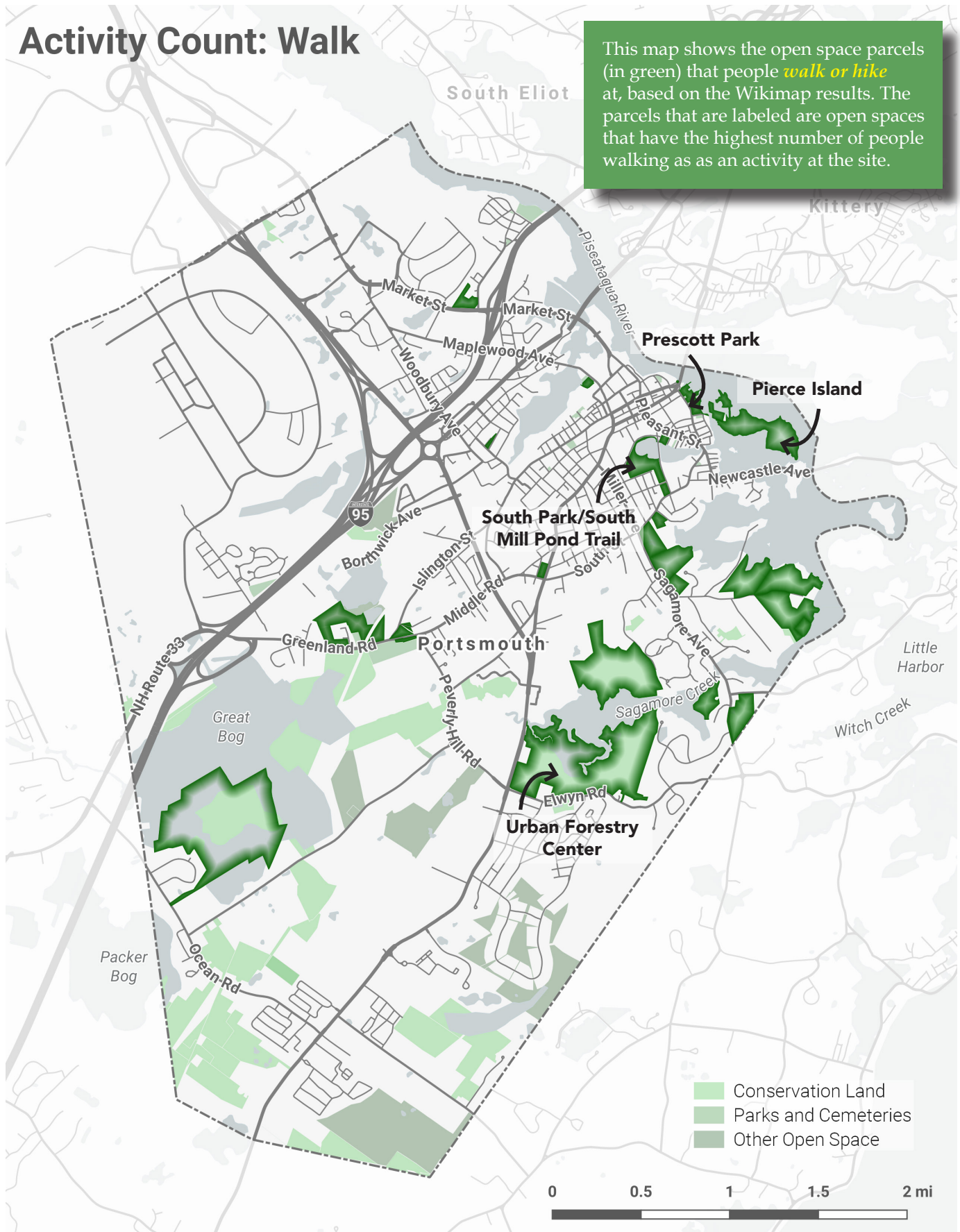


*Above: Kayaking on Sagamore Creek  
Courtesy: Wilderness Girls Kayaking*



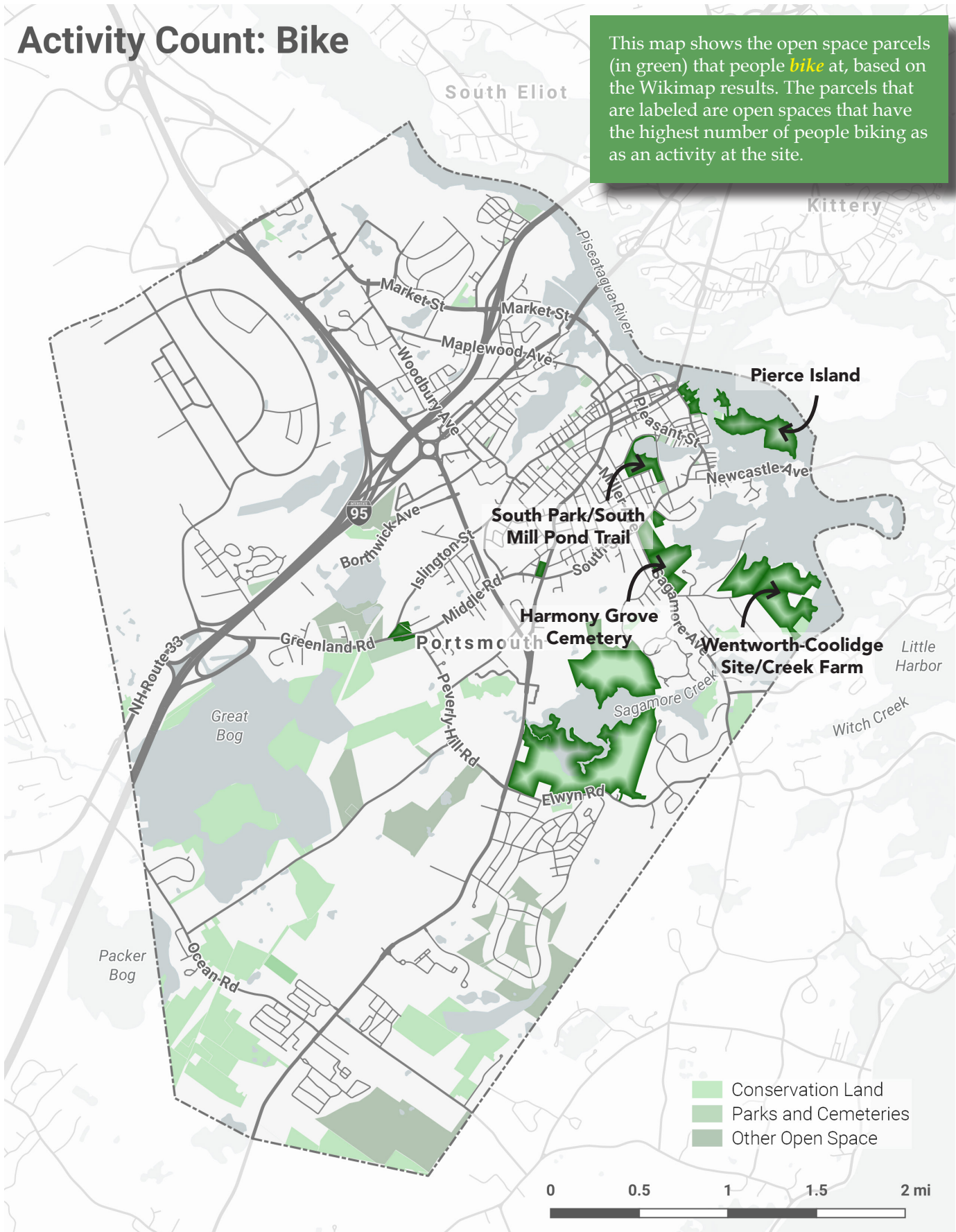
# Activity Count: Walk

This map shows the open space parcels (in green) that people *walk or hike* at, based on the Wikimap results. The parcels that are labeled are open spaces that have the highest number of people walking as an activity at the site.



# Activity Count: Bike

This map shows the open space parcels (in green) that people **bike** at, based on the Wikimap results. The parcels that are labeled are open spaces that have the highest number of people biking as an activity at the site.





## SUMMARY OF WIKI MAP COMMENTS

### WHAT IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AT THIS OPEN SPACE?

OPEN SPACE PARCEL	SUMMARY OF COMMENTS
Portsmouth Fish Pier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a beautiful spot...but the Fisherman's Memorial is unkempt.</li> </ul>
Harmony Grove Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundary walls need repair</li> </ul>
Goodwin Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better lighting, particularly along the paths, would make the park feel safer after sundown. Also, one of the benches was removed earlier this year and hasn't been replaced.</li> </ul>
Prescott Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"No dogs allowed" signs at all entrances</li> <li>Add screening around the dumpsters near the State Street park entrance or relocate them.</li> <li>Construct a covered stage</li> <li>More shade plants near water fountain.</li> <li>Allow for an area for dogs off leash.</li> <li>Keep bathrooms open in the winter.</li> <li>Better seasonal stage with roof for performers</li> <li>Along the water, there's a need to improve the seawall and remove the chain-link fence</li> <li>Maintain park infrastructure regularly.</li> <li>Stop roping off the park when there is a concert there. This is a public park and the rope lines are unwelcoming and offputting.</li> </ul>
Clough Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a bike lane from downtown to Little Harbor School.</li> <li>Add bleachers for visitors.</li> <li>Expand the use of the field to other Portsmouth teams.</li> <li>Add weekend sports clinics to programming.</li> </ul>
Little Harbor Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a stone path or boardwalk over the muddy areas.</li> <li>Remove invasive species, such as oriental bittersweet (by hand).</li> <li>Ensure proper drainage control on trail, as portion can become flooded.</li> <li>Some trail maintenance and possibly improvements to the stream crossing would help.</li> </ul>
Cotton Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A crosswalk from Richards Ave to the Cemetery entrance.</li> <li>Boundary walls need repairs.</li> </ul>
North Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parts of these two cemeteries are litter-filled and look uncared for. Sad to see in such a history-laden area.</li> </ul>
Sagamore Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundary walls need repairs</li> </ul>
Pine Street Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repair the sidewalks on Bartlett Street and paint the crosswalk regularly</li> <li>Put in place traffic calming devices on Bartlett Street</li> <li>Keep the bus stop on Bartlett Street.</li> </ul>
Aldrich Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep the adult swingset.</li> </ul>
Haven Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs more lighting to enhance safety and security.</li> </ul>
South Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct 2 courts with pickleball height nets</li> <li>Extension up to Lincoln St. - needs a proper foot path, &amp; lighting, some benches.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Pierce Island Park</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No off leash dogs.</li> <li>• Playground is incredibly unsafe. Rusted and many areas smaller kids can fall through.</li> <li>• More bike racks at the pool</li> <li>• Bike lane</li> <li>• Continue to restrict parking to users of Peirce Island.</li> <li>• Consider replacement of playground with a natural playground (there is great potential for this due to existing topography for built-in slides, etc.)</li> <li>• Pedestrian walkway to pool from parking lot. Encourage bikes need to yield to pedestrian.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Urban Forestry Center</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paint cross walk on Elwyn Road.</li> <li>• Upgrade trail signs and paint better markers/ blazes.</li> <li>• At Grant and/or Taft Rd, paint a crosswalk and trail entrance to the UFC.</li> <li>• Need better signage (with distances) for various trails/loops.</li> <li>• Paint a bike lane down Peverly Hill and across RT 1 to Elwin road to access this space</li> <li>• Cultivate a partnership between UFC and schools (especially Dondero, as UFC is on current bus routes) for outdoor programming, possibly with a physical home at the Urban Forestry Center.</li> <li>• More interpretive signage or other descriptive elements that indicate what happens at UFC: invasives management, sawmill, etc.</li> <li>• More educational material about the trees, etc.</li> <li>• Improved enforcement of the dogs-on-leash rule; less timbering, more trees.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sagamore Creek Land</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice better stewardship of land and vernal pools.</li> <li>• Open the capped landfill up for access.</li> <li>• Implement recently completed Master Plan for this site.</li> <li>• Removal of oriental bittersweet (by hand pulling/pruning).</li> <li>• Keep land forested.</li> <li>• Improve wayfinding and access to the trails from the high school side. Trails behind the bleachers are often iced over for a large part of the year, even when most snow has thawed.</li> <li>• Improve enforcement of it being a dog-on-leash area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sagamore Creek Headlands</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove oriental bittersweet at the entrance of headlands.</li> <li>• Fix the ramp to the float (reattach netting).</li> <li>• We remove bottles and cans from this site weekly. Parties are held here and people aren't responsible.</li> <li>• Add a sign letting passers-by know that it is a public dock.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wentworth-Coolidge Historic Site</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need additional benches.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Daniel Street Pocket Park</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More shade.</li> <li>• Connect it pocket park to Prescott Park and/or Ceres St.</li> <li>• Skateboarders love this gorgeous space, and ride here (LOUDLY!) at all hours of the day and night. Their boards scuff up the benches and create intolerable noise. Please install a "NO SKATEBOARDING" sign!</li> </ul>



Mark H. Wentworth  
Homeland

Four Tree Island

- The loudest peepers emerge at this pond every spring. It would be nice to have a short trail & bench to enjoy.
- A small acoustic music series 1x/mo would be nice.
- Continue to monitor the parking for Four Tree Island access (some downtown employees and Prescott Park visitors currently use the parking).

# ONLINE FEEDBACK FORM

The City launched an open-ended online feedback form as another mechanism of collecting feedback for the Open Space Plan. 35 responses were collected through this form. Key findings include:

## Overall, people thought open space was defined as:

- Natural areas with little development such as green space, forest, unobstructed skyline, waterways and shoreland.
- Recreation assets that are multi-functional including trails, community gardens, parks, fields, and flexible event space.
- Providing public amenities and services including universal accessibility, programming, shade, benches, picnic tables, vegetation, etc.
- An “escape” from city life that offers peace, quiet, and enjoyment of the outdoors.

## Existing open space and future open space:

- Popular open spaces include the parks downtown, the cemeteries, Pierce Island, Urban Forestry Center, the open space around North

and South Mill Pond, and Creek Farm.

- The McIntyre lot was identified as having potential for the incorporation of green space.

## What should the City consider when working on the Open Space Plan?

- Many respondents said that the City should put resources towards permanently protecting existing open space for recreation, relaxation, and habitat protection.
- Consider all users when planning for open space, including the elderly, when designing walking paths, lighting, and overall accessibility.
- Open space is valuable for property values, livability, health, and quality of life and should be emphasized to garner public support.
- Continue improving green space in downtown by considering pocket parks and other green infrastructure.
- Stewardship of open space in the City, such as North Mill Pond, must be a priority moving forward.



Above: Future Seacoast Greenway rail trail at the Route 33 Overpass

Courtesy: City of Portsmouth



## APPENDIX

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The following pages include the raw data and results from the community engagement phase of the open space planning process.

# Portsmouth Open Space Community Forum Feedback

## Vision: What is Open Space to you?

- Trees with places to sit, sounds of nature, views (of green space, nearby landmarks, and ideally water), accessible by walking (nearby to residential or downtown)
- Wildlife habitat, sanctuaries, and corridors, native plants, restoration opportunities
- Trails for walking/running (need information/marketing and wayfinding system), bike trails that are safe (rail trail and bike lanes)
- What about living walls intertwined in the city? - Two Other People said- yes! Love that idea!
- Wolfeboro has a great bike and walking trail along the railroad tracks- we could do the same- it's open space to encourage a blend of nature and exercise
- Develop trail areas for walking/biking (High Line in NYC); develop conservation plan for open spaces; create map that includes open spaces
- Commercial properties in downtown area need to create more green space to offset impact of concrete- creates smaller open spaces
- Open space is parks- gardens that encourage walking, insect life, and animal life
- Easy access to walking park areas for elderly
- Carry in/Carry out for all open space access to assist in preserving
- Use tops of buildings (flat) for open space. Mandate it. The senior center in the works- should be considered open space. Business in the city should not be able to bank green space credits. If creating a new space (along waterfront)- traffic should be slowed. Loud traffic near park defeats the purpose.
- Places that provide recreational amenities to the community and at the same time provide ecosystem services now and, in the future, as we confront changing climate conditions.
- Quality of Life! Physical activity, accessible walking trails and sitting/benches; More green space in general and in downtown; the advantage of city owned land- to benefit many people and interests; support local farmers/fisherman/women

## Coastal Access:

***Where do you go to gain access to the coast? For what activities? Are there improvements to be made?***

- The Prescott Park gardens have looked sad the last couple of years. What if you either turned this into a community vegetable garden or added vegetables to demonstrate floral and edible landscaping which is popular, as well as vertical gardening?
- Prescott Park- gardens, PPAF
- Walking along coast of Forestry center and Four Tree Island.
- Access:
  - Goat Island, Pierce Island for kayaking
  - Urban Forestry Center- walking/trails
  - Pierce Island and Four Tree Park- walking/visits



- Improvements:
  - Goat island- parking of commercial businesses, Portsmouth Paddle Company
  - Pierce Island- stickers work well for Portsmouth residents and parking spaces
- Goat Island- kayaking- improvement: there are very limited spots here to park and off load your kayak; all too often these are taken by a kayak company- please restrict companies from taking all the spots
- Goat Island boat access ramp for kayaking- improvements needed to keep commercial vehicles (e.g. Portsmouth Paddle/Yoga Company) for parking in lot
- Pierce Island- kayaking and walking, using the awesome pool; the bath houses need to be upgraded at Pierce Island; the pool is great, but the bath houses are sketchy
- Pierce Island for kayak access- well managed- stickers for residents work well
- Pierce Island for swimming, Four Tree Island
- Osiores Point- kayaking
- Big boat from Great Bay- down to Piscataqua to Isle of Shoals
- Motorcycle along coast roads or bicycle some roadways (early in morning) and along 1A
- Mostly outside of Portsmouth- Rye, Odiorne, Pirates Cove
- Some in New Castle, also Sagamore Creek
- Primarily through Portsmouth marine- boating, kayaking, paddle boarding
- Would be great to have better spot to swim in creek to access
- I'd love to see more coast access from downtown. There are a few places to sit on the water. Maybe open up access by the big pile of salt?
- Could there be a water access closer to the water at the urban forestry center?

## Trail Systems:

***Which do you use and for what activities? Where are trails needing to be improved or constructed?***

- Urban Forestry Center trails
- Would love to see trails at the Wentworth Homelands- parcel behind Bean Group property
- Better bike/ped crossing from Elwyn Park to UFC (multiple if possible- Harding, Grant)
- Connect UFC trails further through Tucker's Cove, Sagamore
- Jones Arc/Dump Trail- awesome vernal pools
- Lafayette playgrounds- baseball field is muddy
- The North Mill Pond trail should not be in the 25' buffer zone
- When working on getting Bartlett Tressle enlarged perhaps include bike trail on one side- if you're spreading the money
- Make printed maps of trails and land the city owns and is available for people to visit (also downloadable PDFS)
- Trails- Pease Tradeport area as built with sidewalks is wasted as most people are not walking to there. Better use is to have wide bike/walk paths instead to support biking commuting and recreational riding/walking. Area is relatively quiet to bike around. A partnership to get trails all the way around it would be fairly simple as the businesses have large frontage available. There is the preserve area as a destination. I bike from Spinnaker Way to (over Market St) Woodbury Ave to bike path over Spaulding Highway to Pease bike path. It can be improved but I am thrilled the overpasses are there already for access. This area, though not "open space" can be better utilized for people.

- Wentworth Coolidge- walking/to see river
- South Mill Pond- to get to library- would like to see this extended completely around the pond
- Cemetery- running
- Urban Forestry- cross country skiing

## Which properties do you visit and for what activities?

- Creek Farm- managed by 3 different entities which all have different regulations/rules (not very convenient)
- Mtn biking trails near Little Harbor Trust/Creek Farm
- Walk through cemeteries
- Cotton Cemetery- walking
- Pierce Island for kayak launch and walking
- Pierce Island- kayaking
- Goat Island- kayaking
- 4 Tree Island- picnicking and walking
- South Mill Pond- walking and watching birds
- Maybe some oysters or mussels need to be put into the N. Mill Pond and clean it up like they did with the S. Mill Pond years ago
- Wish I could visit the Great Bog more often but seasonally it is difficult, due to mud, no maintenance hunters and poor access points
- By submarine to watch the Herons- walking (albacore market street extension)
- Prescott Park- picnicking, walking
- Prescott Park- concerts/walking
- Prescott Park- arts, gardens, views of water
- Strawberry Banke/Prescott park
- Wentworth Coolidge- Creek Farm, Little Harbor- All for walking, sitting/reflection
- Little Harbor Trust- hiking with kids
- Most properties I visit for walking/ running/ sitting
- Urban Forestry center- walking/hiking
- Urban Forestry Center- hiking with kids
- Sagamore Creek- hiking with kids
- Sagamore Creek- kayaking
- Leary Field- walking
- Leary Field- courts for pickleball
- I'm particularly concerned that people in low-income areas have the least access and least say in decision making about open space. I hope the needs of these communities is being taken into account.

## Properties that Deserve Protection and Why:

### ***Identify properties that deserve protection and tell us why.***

- Old Stump (very old gun club area) near Portsmouth Cove, across from Calvary/bog area along 33 is all dirt and could be a wonderful park, walking area especially if its close to the bogs
- Protect the bridge area for bicycles that crosses Spaulding over to Pease along 95



- The railroad tracks parallel to Islington run by a variety of forest/wetlands. These areas should be protected. However, there should be a gravel path developed to allow pedestrians to walk the area and still sustain/protect the area.
- South Mill Pond- needs better attention to paths
- Heaven Park (Livermore and Pleasant)- needs curb on Livermore to protect from damage from cars parking
- All current preserved land in Portsmouth should be kept preserved.
- Cavaretta land of Elwyn Pond. It is connected to lots of important wetland area.
- Focus on water supply protection lands
- Acquire lands contiguous to already designated high resource parcels
- Use lots of different resources to fund- source water protection grants
- Neighborhood outdoor recreation focus land on passive not team athletic activity
- There is a pond at Pease Tradeport that I don't recollect the road name to it, but that is a great area for walking and wildlife
- DPW site and future fields – make as a case study for non-toxic management of athletic fields and open spaces
- Mountain bike trails spider off the Hampton Branch Trail
- Albacore Submarine Park
- HCA Land near hospital- has some trails, could use more
- Hislop Field- more trail access along river? How to serve this part of the city?
- Maple Harvey Park Area- make sure they and the trailer park have access to open space
- Land between Great Bog and Banfield Road
- Parks and trails should include less grass and more natural green spaces- its been my experience that most people enjoy walking, riding, jogging in areas where trees and bushes and small paths exist. Safety is often an issue- none should be lighted to allow wildlife to rest from human traffic and night animals to flourish.
- Urban forestry center – has community garden space and demo gardens
- Once lands are overdeveloped, where does the wildlife go? We need to ask developers to stop using arbor vitae and plant native shrubs and tall trees as part of their plans. Please don't allow take down and clearing of native species and not expect them to replace for wildlife.
- North Mill Pond- development needs to be done carefully. Toxins in water- NHDES 305(b) and staff- no fishing, swimming, boating, or shell fishing. Wonderful wildlife and habitats need to be protected, especially trees and shrubs in buffer zones.
- I'd like to see trees protected and more trees overall. Any plan should be carbon-negative, i.e. capture more CO2 than it causes.
- The Great Bog- it's such a large tract with different resources and accessible from many different neighborhoods. A unique opportunity for a large-scale meaningful area for "re-creation".
- South Mill Pond- flood regularly into South playground parking lot- needs some vegetative additions all around the pond.
- All waterfronts-There should be no roads or paths on buildings allowed within the 25-foot buffer zone. We have it in ordinances, but it is often allowed.

## Portsmouth Open Space Plan On-Line Map Responses: Survey

Name	ID	Datetime	IP Address	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4
08/10-JW-PERMIT-NOH-OFFICE EMPTY	0151-0008-0000	Wed Jun 12 2019 18:31:08 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	73.89.192.31	Middle Rd.	Walk,Bike,Other,ball fields	Walk,Bike,Other,car	Would love to see improvements made to the baseball field and surrounding fencing on this parcel, it is really in poor shape.
08/10-JW-PERMIT-NOH-OFFICE EMPTY	0151-0008-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 12:36:13 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.199.212.153	Hillside Drive	Walk,Bike,Other,playground, little league	Walk,Bike	climbing trees at the edges of the playground area - consider reconfiguring the planting beds to encourage this activity and make it safer. Please add more natural elements to ALL City playgrounds!
08/10-JW-PERMIT-NOH-OFFICE EMPTY	0151-0008-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:39:45 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk,Other,use the playground and basketball courts	Walk,Bike	Add a drinking fountain. Add bike rentals
Aldrich Park		Thu Jul 11 2019 10:56:28 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Other,picnicking & using the swings	Walk	Please keep the swings that are sized for adults! There is nothing like the happiness generated by the feeling of flying through the air!!!
City of Portsmouth Land	170-035 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:35:24 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.233.54.42	live on Dunlin Way, work on Maplewood Av	Walk	Walk,Bike,Other,car	bike lane!
Clough Field	0206-0033-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:38:45 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.233.54.42	live on Dunlin, kids go to LHS	Bike,Other,CAR	Bike,Other,Car	bike lane from downtown to LHS
Clough Field	0206-0033-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:09:33 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66	Lincoln Avenue	Walk,Bike,Other,practice fields	Walk,Bike	Bleachers for visitors. widen the use of the field to other Portsmouth teams. Weekend sports clinics.
Cotton Cemetery	0206-0036-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 17:28:14 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	undefined	Parrott Avenue	Walk	Walk	A crosswalk from Richards Ave to the Cemetery entrance.



Cotton Cemetery	0206-0036-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:41:24 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk	Walk,Bike	
Cotton Cemetery	0206-0036-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:10:47 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66		Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	Boundary walls need repairs.
Daniel Street Pocket Park		Tue Jun 04 2019 19:55:29 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.123	No Name	Walk,Other,Sit for lunch	Walk	A bit more shade
Daniel Street Pocket Park		Wed Jun 05 2019 06:48:11 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	this park is fantastic. only improvement would be to connect it, to prescott park and/or ceres st.
Daniel Street Pocket Park		Thu Jul 11 2019 13:15:30 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Walk	Walk	here (LOUDLY!) at all hours of the day and night. Their boards scuff up the benches and create intolerable noise. Please install a "NO SKATEBOARDING" sign!
Daniel Street Pocket Park		Tue Jul 16 2019 08:58:23 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66		Other,Relax, sit	Walk	None. Leave it as is.
Four Tree Island	0208-0002-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:49:06 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.147.241.24 2	7 Hampshire Rd	Bike	Bike	None, just keep as is!
Four Tree Island	0208-0002-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 08:57:13 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66	Lincoln Avenue	Walk,Other,Grill, picnic	Walk,Bike	Small acoustic music series 1x/mo would be nice.
Goodwin Park	0137-0023-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 15:24:08 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	72.71.240.98	Cabot	Other,Reading on the park benches	Walk	improvements a year or 2 ago, but have heard nothing since. Better lighting, particularly along the paths, would make the park feel safer after sundown. Also, one of the benches was removed earlier this year and hasn't been replaced.

GREENLAND RD	undefined	Tue Jun 04 2019 16:34:21 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	199.192.11.5	Thornton Street	Walk	Other,park at the park and ride and walk in	This is a great site with a lot of potential. I'd love to see the old water plant made into a picnic pavilion and the site cleaned up of culvert debris and old truck beds.
GREENLAND RD	undefined	Wed Jun 12 2019 18:34:33 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	73.89.192.31	Middle Rd.	Walk	Walk,Bike,Other,car	This has been a great dog park addition to the city, however I feel that is also a potential good spot to start a community garden in part of the parcel. Part of it is very flat and receives tons of sun.
Harmony Grove Cemetery	0206-0037-0000	Tue Jun 04 2019 20:26:48 GMT-0400 (EDT)	75.68.180.66	State street	Walk	Walk	Nothing
Harmony Grove Cemetery	0206-0037-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:48:38 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.235.20 0	Middle Road	Walk,Bike,Other,Cross country ski	Walk,Bike,Other,Drive in winter if skiing	
Harmony Grove Cemetery	0206-0037-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:41:12 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk	Walk,Bike	
Harmony Grove Cemetery	0206-0037-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:11:01 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66		Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	Boundary walls need repairs
Haven Park	0109-0022-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:43:37 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	this is a lovely park, but it is too dark and scary at night. needs more lighting.
Haven Park	0109-0022-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 16:27:18 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.167.216.21 3		Other,Picnics	Walk	
Hett	170-001 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:44:01 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Other,horseback riding	Bike,Other,drive	



Little Harbor Trust	171-011 -001	Wed Jun 05 2019 12:03:12 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	108.171.130.1 82	Greenleaf Avenue	Walk	Other,Car	Create a stone path or boardwalk over the muddy area. Remove oriental bittersweet (by hand). Permit accessing the chapel through this property.
Little Harbor Trust	171-011 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:02:07 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.224.215	Islington Street	Bike	Bike	nothing needed
Little Harbor Trust	171-011 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 21:27:04 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	174.242.81.24 4	Middle Street	Walk	Walk	
Little Harbor Trust	171-011 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 12:30:56 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.199.212.15 3	Hillside Drive	Walk	Other,arrive by car	there is a portion of the trail right at a stream that is often flooded and is sustaining damage because of people creating work-arounds. Some trail maintenance and possibly improvements to the stream crossing would help
Lot A	171-028 -001	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:51:10 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	save Carey Cottage! could be an anchor facility to support outdoor use of abutting forest lands (arts & educational community programming)
Lot A	171-028 -001	Sun Jul 14 2019 16:11:19 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	71.235.8.58	73 taft road	Walk,Other,fish	Other,drive and park	
Lot C	171-028 -003	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:02:24 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.224.215	Islington Street	Bike	Bike	None
Lot C	171-028 -003	Wed Jul 10 2019 21:27:32 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	174.242.81.24 4	Middle Street	Walk	Walk	
Mark H. Wentworth Homeland	171-012 -001	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:54:10 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Other,drive by with open windows in spring	Other,drive	the loudest peepers emerge at this pond every spring. would be nice to have a short trail & bench to enjoy.

Mark H. Wentworth Homeland	171-012 -001	Sun Jun 16 2019 14:45:17 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	75.68.180.66	State Street	Walk		
North Cemetery	0124-0002-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:57:56 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Walk	Walk	Parts of these two cemeteries are litter-filled and look uncared for. Sad to see in such a history-laden area.
PARK	0111-0020-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:41:31 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	needs a proper footpath, benches, better lighting - and most of all - a safe sledding area for the kids who do & will sled here anyway in winter - without risk of smashing into trees and granite monuments.
PARK	0111-0020-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:07:49 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66	Lincoln Avenue		Walk,Bike	Wish there was not an off-leash dog park near here.
PARK W/ SWINGS & FENCE	0145-0023-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:10:28 GMT-0400 (EDT)	72.65.103.6	Islington	Other,Playground	Walk,Bike	Playground is old and unsafe for smaller children. Kid size or adjustable basketball hoops would also be a great addition.
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Tue Jun 04 2019 20:26:02 GMT-0400 (EDT)	75.68.180.66	State street	Walk,Other,Kayak access: 4 tree park	Walk,Other,Either	Nothing now
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Sun Jun 16 2019 14:46:48 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	75.68.180.66	State street	Other,launch kayak		
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 17:00:41 GMT-0400 (EDT)	71.232.208.25	Jones Ave	Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	Island access. Once the construction is done and the monitors go away we won't be able to go there anymore because all the Prescott Park folks and downtown workers think it is public
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:44:31 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.235.200	Middle Road	Walk,Other,Picnic	Walk,Other,Drive	No off leash dogs once the trails open again
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:47:53 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.147.241.242	7 Hampshire Rd	Bike	Bike	None, just keep it!



Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:14:39 GMT-0400 (EDT)	72.65.103.6	Islington	Walk,Other,Playground and pool	Bike,Other,Drive	many areas smaller kids can fall through. Probably the worst off one in the city—which is sad because is gets a lot of usage in the summer!
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 21:30:18 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	174.242.81.24 4	Middle Street	Other,Swim	Bike,Other,Drive	More bike racks at the pool
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:36:01 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.233.54.42	live on Dunlin Way, work on Maplewood Av	Walk,Bike,Other,car	Walk,Bike,Other,car	bike lane
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 12:33:33 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.199.212.15 3	Hillside Drive	Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike,Other,usually arrive by car	Island, this has been a huge improvement since construction has been going on there as parking for the pool and playgrounds was often difficult when events were happening at Prescott Park. CONSIDER REPLACEMENT OF THE PLAYGROUND WITH A NATURE
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:45:18 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk,Bike,Other,picnic	Walk,Bike	
Pierce Island Park	0208-0001-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 08:55:58 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66	Lincoln Avenue	Other,swim at the outdoor pool, play on playground, picnic	Walk,Other,drive	Pedestrian walkway to pool from parking lot. Bikes need to yield to pedestrian. Safe walkway for children.
Pine Street Park	0162-0019-0000	Fri Jul 12 2019 11:47:05 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	209.23.223.4	Bartlett Street	Other,Sit and read; wait for the bus there	Walk	
Pine Street Park	0162-0019-0000	Fri Jul 12 2019 11:50:13 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	209.23.223.4	Bartlett Street	Walk,Other,sit and read	Walk,Bike	crosswalk regularly; put in place traffic calming devices on Bartlett Street (neighbors had a few meetings with E Eby this past winter/spring); keep the bus stop there.
Plains Park	0242-0002-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:18:46 GMT-0400 (EDT)	72.65.103.6	Islington	Walk,Bike,Other,Playgroun d and field	Walk,Bike	Great open space!

PLAYGROUND	0101-0071-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:40:12 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Other,playground, football, frisbee	Walk	allow dogs
Portsmouth Fish Pier	170-005 -001	Mon Jul 15 2019 08:08:22 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Walk	Walk,Bike	This is a beautiful spot...but the Fisherman's Memorial is unkempt.
Portsmouth I, City of	170-064 -001	Tue Jun 04 2019 14:43:06 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	23.25.214.185	Buckminster Way	Walk	Walk	Better trail maintenance.
Prescott Park	0104-0003-0002	Thu Jul 11 2019 11:01:19 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	Please post one near the dumpsters by the State Street entrance...many dog owners walk in this way and don't see the tiny old sign located on the fence there.
Prescott Park	0104-0003-0002	Thu Jul 11 2019 11:07:18 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Walk,Bike,Other,picnicking	Walk,Bike	entrance are an eyesore - the first thing many people see as they enter the park! Often the lids are left open, and many people are using the dumpsters for their personal needs...non-park- related vehicles arrive and unload directly into the dumpsters. Why not relocate the dumpsters near
Prescott Park	0104-0003-0002	Mon Jul 15 2019 08:14:31 GMT-0400 (EDT)	66.31.3.81	Harbour Place	Walk,Other,Enjoying the view!	Walk	between stage events, destroying the quiet nature of this public space. This open "public" space is already cordoned off to the public for much of the festival season. No reason to add
Prescott Park	0104-0003-0002	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:01:22 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66				Stop roping off any entrances to the park when there is a show. This is a public space and there is no fee to enter. The ropes are distasteful and make it a barrier to lower income people.
PRESCOTT PARK ADMIN BLDG	0104-0005-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:40:46 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk,Bike,Other,picnic	Walk,Bike	
PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Tue Jun 04 2019 16:34:37 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.234.89	118 Spinnaker Way	Walk,Other,Concerts, the arts, gardens, green grass	Walk,Bike,Other,Car	Covered stage, more shade plants near water fountain



PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:46:26 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk,Other,picnic, concerts, frisbee, football, playground (aka whale statue), flowers & fountains	Walk	please allow for dogs on leash - at least off season (sept - may). and at least along the waterside pathway if not on the grass. we are city dwellers without yards in this neighborhood, and streets are too busy in summer for a nice
PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:42:32 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.235.200	Middle Road	Walk	Walk,Other,Scooter, drive in the winter	Bathrooms open in the winter!
PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 21:33:22 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	174.242.81.244	Middle Street	Walk,Other,Park Events	Walk,Bike	Better seasonal stage with roof for performers
PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:37:31 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.233.54.42	live on Dunlin way, work on Maplewood Av	Walk,Bike,Other,car	Walk,Bike,Other,car	bike lane
PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Fri Jul 12 2019 10:15:57 GMT-0400 (EDT)	24.147.240.9	77 Hanover St. #7, Portsmouth	Walk,Other,Outdoor performances - summer play, films, and concerts.	Walk	seawall, remove the chain-link fence, and generally improve the infrastructure of Prescott Park.
PRESCOTT PARK TAKEOUT STAND	0104-0001-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 08:59:55 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66		Walk,Other,Sit, listen to music	Walk,Bike	Stop roping off the park when there is a concert there. This is a public park and the rope lines are unwelcoming and offputting.
Sagamore Cemetery	0204-0001-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:41:33 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk	Bike	
Sagamore Cemetery	0204-0001-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:11:19 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66		Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	Boundary walls need repairs
Sagamore Creek Headlands	170-090 -001	Wed Jun 05 2019 11:58:47 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	108.171.130.182	Greenleaf Avenue	Walk	Other,	Remove some oriental bittersweet at the entrance before it moves into the interior. Fix the ramp to the float (reattach netting). We remove bottles and cans from this site weekly. Parties are held here and people aren't responsible.
Sagamore Creek Headlands	170-090 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:37:02 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.149.193.102	Sagamore Avenue	Walk	Walk,Other,Drive	

Sagamore Creek Headlands	170-090 -001	Sun Jul 14 2019 16:09:21 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	71.235.8.58	73 taft road	Other,swimming at the dock	Other,kayak	Sign letting passers-by know that it is a public dock.
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Tue Jun 04 2019 16:29:55 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	199.192.11.5	Thornton Street	Walk	Walk	is trying to drain the vernal pools and keeps cutting new trails. I also would like to see the capped landfill opened up for access, there is no reason to keep it gated. And please let's get started on implementing the master plan that was
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Wed Jun 05 2019 12:00:30 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	108.171.130.182	Greenleaf Avenue	Walk	Other,car	Removal of oriental bittersweet (by hand pulling/pruning).
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:36:22 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.149.193.102	Sagamore Avenue	Walk	Walk	Keep it woodland
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 12:27:58 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.199.212.153	Hillside Drive	Walk	Walk	improve wayfinding and access to the trails from the high school side. Trails behind the bleachers are often iced over for a large part of the year, even when most snow has thawed.
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:40:33 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	64.223.129.157	Wibird	Walk,Other,	Walk	None
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:42:14 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk,Bike,Other,Run XCOUNTRY trails	Walk,Bike	
Sagamore Creek Land	170-013 -001	Fri Jul 12 2019 12:13:28 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	66.31.6.61	jones	Walk	Walk	improved enforcement of it being a dog-on-leash area
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Tue Jun 04 2019 16:36:35 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.234.89	118 Spinnaker Way	Other,Pickleball	Bike,Other,Car	In the summer, 2 courts with pickleball height nets



South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:42:09 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	extension up to lincoln street - needs a proper foot path, & lighting, some benches.
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:42:55 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk,Other,playground, tennis, dog park	Walk	needs real public bathrooms & a drinking fountain right here.
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:44:14 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	by all means please provide a nice walking path around south mill pond.
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 16:26:57 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.167.216.21 3	Spring	Walk,Other,Tennis	Walk	
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 17:29:20 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	undefined	Parrott Ave.	Walk	Walk	Maybe don't mow at lunchtime? I've been kicked out of the park so they could mow, but that's the time of day most people want to be there.
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:45:31 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.235.20 0	Middle Road	Other,Tennis	Bike,Other,Drive	More PortoPotties and regularly maintained
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:12:27 GMT-0400 (EDT)	72.65.103.6	Islington	Walk,Bike,Other,Playgroun d	Walk,Bike	the water fountain work??  There is a little grove of trees up small hill from playground—wouldn't some natural climbing structures be great here?
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:38:02 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.233.54.42	live on Dunlin, work on Maplewood	Walk,Bike,Other,car	Walk,Bike,Other,car	bike lanes
South Park	0114-0001-0000	Tue Jul 16 2019 09:07:02 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66	Lincoln Avenue	Walk,Bike,Other,Play on playground, watch games	Walk,Bike	Great park. Bring back the collegiate baseball teams. Wish there was not an off-leash dog park here.

Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Tue Jun 04 2019 16:05:31 GMT-0400 (EDT)	24.147.242.53	Harding	Walk	Walk,Bike	Cross walk on Elwyn Road.
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Wed Jun 05 2019 06:52:46 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	24.61.216.167	walden st	Walk	Walk	wonderful place - fine as is.
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Thu Jun 06 2019 10:41:10 GMT-0400 (EDT)	96.67.23.205	McKinley Road	Walk,Other,Run; Nordic skiing; Dog walking	Walk,Bike,Other,Run; Park and run	Trail signs and better markers/ blazes
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Sun Jun 16 2019 14:44:33 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	75.68.180.66	State Street	Walk,Other,Snowshoe	Other,Park to enjoy the space	
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Fri Jun 21 2019 21:38:54 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	66.31.0.67	Harrison Ave	Walk,Other,XC ski, snowshoe	Walk,Bike	At Grant and/or Taft Rd there should be a crosswalk and trail entrance to the urban forestry center.
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 17:57:21 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	71.192.187.69	Sagamore Ave (live) / Congress St (work)	Walk,Other,XC skiing	Other,I park in the available spaces on-premise and then walk/ski around the grounds/trails from there.	Better signage (with distances) for various trails/loops.
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:34:21 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.149.193.102	Sagamore Avenue	Walk	Other,Drive	
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:46:19 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.235.200	Middle Road	Walk,Other,Cross country skiing	Other,Drive	
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 20:16:01 GMT-0400 (EDT)	72.65.103.6	Islington	Walk	Other,Drive	Bike lane down Peverly Hill and across RT 1 to Elwin road to access this space.
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 12:39:56 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.199.212.153	Hillside Drive	Walk	Other,arrive by car	(especially Dondero, UFC is on current bus routes) for outdoor programming, possibly with a physical home at the Urban Forestry Center. Would also love more interpretive signage or other descriptive elements that indicate what



Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:43:04 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	63.239.32.10	Thaxter Road	Walk	Walk,Bike	More educational material about the trees, etc
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Fri Jul 12 2019 12:14:24 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	66.31.6.61	jones	Walk	Walk	improved enforcement of the dogs-on-leash rule; less timbering, more trees
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Sun Jul 14 2019 16:12:44 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	71.235.8.58	73 taft road	Walk	Walk	
Urban Forestry Center	170-004 -001	Tue Jul 16 2019 10:46:17 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	69.168.4.66		Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	Love this space.
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Tue Jun 04 2019 16:38:58 GMT-0400 (EDT)	67.189.234.89	118 Spinnaker Way	Walk,Other,Beautiful, peaceful viewing area.	Bike,Other,Car	Additional benches
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Sun Jun 16 2019 14:46:08 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	75.68.180.66	State St	Walk		
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 16:25:14 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.167.216.213	Spring	Walk,Bike	Walk,Bike	
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 18:35:16 GMT-0400 (EDT)	73.149.193.102	Sagamore Avenue	Walk	Walk	
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Wed Jul 10 2019 21:28:06 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	174.242.81.244	Middle Street	Walk	Walk	
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 10:36:32 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.233.54.42	live on Dunlin Way, work on Maplewood Av	Other,car	Other,car	bike lanes

Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 12:29:26 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	50.199.212.15 3	Hillside Drive	Walk	Other,arrive by car	Wouldn't change a thing, this is a beautiful place with great access.
Wentworth Coolidge Historic Site	171-006 -001	Thu Jul 11 2019 13:41:15 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time)	64.223.129.15 7	Wibird	Walk,Bike,Other,Fish, picnic	Walk,Bike	



