

## Section 9: Seven Year Action Plan

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The Seven Year Action Plan represents the breakdown of goals and objectives and the actions required to meet them. All the actions in this plan are essential for the town to achieve its open space goals. However, we have tried to prioritize the action items in a meaningful and manageable manner.

## Seven Year Action Plan

**GOAL # 1– Preserve the small town New England character of Sturbridge.**

### OBJECTIVE

**1A Identify those natural, built and historic elements that contribute to the character of the town and develop preservation strategies.**

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Develop preservation strategies for the Heritage Landscapes identified in the Sturbridge Reconnaissance Report	Open Space Committee, Community Preservation Committee, Historic Commission	High	Ongoing	None Required
Encourage the Historic Commission or other group to inventory our historic and archaeological resources using the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) inventory forms. Archaeological inventories cannot be released to the public but can prove to be a valuable tool to aid in future planning and development efforts.	Open Space Committee, Community Preservation Committee, Historic Commission	High	Ongoing	None Required if done by staff. Town of Sturbridge Budget.

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>1B Identify methods to preserve, promote, and enhance streetscapes.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Support the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen in working towards the implementation of the Commercial Tourist District Revitalization Study as it relates to streetscape improvements, pocket parks and access to the Quinebaug River.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Town Planner, and Town Administrator.	High	Planning FY12-13, Implementation – Long Term	Town Budget, MassWorks Grant, Private Sources
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>1C Advocate for open space preservation with relevant town boards and committees through the updating of bylaws and regulations.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Continue to review Town Bylaws and Regulations to incorporate requirements that can help retain the community character. Low Impact Development Standards, Infill Development Bylaws, Lakefront Overlay Zoning and Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts are just some examples of bylaws that can be instrumental in helping a community protect its character and charm.	Planning Board, Town Planner, Conservation Commission, Conservation Agent, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Historic Commission.	High	Ongoing	None Required – Regulatory Action

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>1D</b> Preserve agriculture and forestry land, which are important components of the Town's character.				
ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Work to preserve agriculture and forestry lands by partnering with the Agricultural Commission, Conservation Commission and others to promote/encourage the use of Agricultural Preservation Restrictions and Forest Conservation efforts.	Agricultural Committee, Open Space Committee, and Conservation Commission	Medium	Ongoing	None Required
<b>GOAL 2</b> – Educate residents and others about the importance of open space preservation for passive recreation, habitat protection and water supply protection.				
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>2A</b> Partner with the Conservation Commission and other relevant groups to provide educational opportunities for residents and landowners.				
ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Partner with the Conservation Commission to find a suitable location to create wetland interpretive trails and/or boardwalks. Wetland interpretive sites can be an ideal way to educate the public about the benefits of wetland preservation.	Conservation Commission, Conservation Agent, and Open Space Committee, Trails Committee	Low	FY 14	None Required

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ACTIONS (cont.)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Use venues such as trail cleanup days, Adopt-A-Trail events, etc. to set up an informational booth to disseminate information and maps describing open space acquisitions to date.	Conservation Commission, Conservation Agent, and Open Space Committee, Trails Committee, CPC	Medium	Ongoing	Departmental Budget for Printing Costs
Develop a slide presentation to use at various venues such as senior luncheons, school activities or other board and committee meetings, showcasing past open space acquisitions and explaining the role of that land now (i.e. watershed protection, passive recreation, etc.). Also highlight elements of the unique town character and explain how the open space plan seeks to maintain those features.	Open Space Committee and Conservation Agent	Low	FY 15 and then ongoing	None Required
Help support the efforts of the Conservation Commission in continuing its monitoring of the water quality of the lakes to determine which lakes are in need of cleanup or protection and publicize the results.	Conservation Commission, Conservation Agent, Lakes Advisory Committee and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

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## OBJECTIVE

**2B** Provide opportunities for local residents, individuals and families to become more involved in Open Space through trails and conservation lands.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Actively promote trails and conservation events through the town website, newspaper, flyers, and other venues.	Conservation Agent, Trails Committee and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

## OBJECTIVE

**2C** Draw upon external expertise to provide a broad understanding of the benefits of open space preservation.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Ask the local newspaper to write feature articles on the Open Space Plan and its implications for the community's future.	Conservation Commission, Conservation Agent, and Open Space Committee	Low	Ongoing	None Required

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>2D Have funds available to promote awareness of open space and to build support for future land acquisition.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Secure funds through grants or donations or secure donations of services from public or private entities to publish use aids such as: conservation maps, trail maps and public education guides as a way to promote awareness about these lands and to continue to build support for future land acquisition.	Conservation Commission, Conservation Agent, Community Preservation Committee, and Open Space Committee	<b>Low</b>	Ongoing	Various Public and Private Sources
<b>GOAL 3 – Increase the inventory of Open Space by fee, conservation restriction, donation, or easement in perpetuity. Give emphasis to parcels that create green corridors, protect water supplies and natural, cultural and historic resources, and provide access to our recreational resources.</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>3A Have in place methods for identifying, evaluating and prioritizing parcels for possible preservation.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Develop criteria and a rating system for evaluating properties for future open space acquisitions. The criteria should emphasize the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, community character, and the potential for passive recreation.	Open Space Committee, Town Planner, and Conservation Agent	High	FY 12-13	None Required
Prioritize parcels under Chapter 61 for future acquisitions using the criteria and the rating system.	Open Space Committee, Town Planner, Assessor, and Conservation Agent	High	FY 12-13	None Required

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<b>ACTIONS (cont.)</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Prioritize parcels for protection identified on the BioMap2 as Core Habitat and/or Critical Natural Landscape.	Open Space Committee, Town Planner, and Conservation Agent	Medium	FY 14-FY16	None Required
Partner with the Trails Committee and Conservation Commission to support land acquisition and easements that help advance trail construction and connectivity.	Open Space Committee, Conservation Agent, and Trails Committee	Medium	Ongoing	CPA Funds, Grants, Town Budget
Initiate efforts to identify and acquire important parcels for conservation and resource protection purposes. These can include habitat for threatened or endangered plant or animal species, water supply protection land, agricultural land, and land that connects existing open space areas or creates buffers between sensitive natural resources.	Open Space Committee, Town Planner, and Conservation Agent	Medium	Ongoing	CPA Funds, Grants, Town Budget
Protect areas critical for water supplies.	Open Space Committee, Town Planner, and DPW Director	Medium	Ongoing	None Required – Regulatory



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<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>3B Improve public access to the water for fishing and boating by identifying parcels that could provide varying degrees of access depending on the environmental conditions.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Partner with the Sturbridge Lakes Advisory Committee to work to identify areas that could provide greater public access to the lakes.	Lakes Advisory Committee, Conservation Agent, Conservation Commission and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>3C Review the disposition of tax title properties in relation to the possibility of meeting localized recreational needs.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Work with the Town Planner and Assessor to identify parcels that may provide access to recreational resources and/or that are contiguous with other open space parcels.	Town Planner, Assessor, and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>3D Identify funding sources available to increase open space and recreational opportunities.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Continue to research funding sources for the creation or preservation of open spaces.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required
Cultivate local, state and federal fiscal resources for open space funding.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

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**OBJECTIVE**

**3E** Continue to support the use of Community Preservation Act funding for the acquisition of important open space parcels for conservation, passive and active recreational purposes.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Continue to play an active role with the Community Preservation Committee.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required
Continue to educate residents about the benefits CPA funding provides to the community.	Community Preservation Committee and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

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**GOAL 4** – Expand outdoor recreational opportunities, both passive and active, for all Sturbridge Residents regardless of age or ability.

### OBJECTIVE

**4A** Encourage all town boards and committees to work together on open space and recreation objectives.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Distribute copies of this plan to various Boards, Committees and Departments and ensure that all understand their roles in the implementation of this plan.	Open Space Committee	High	FY12 and then ongoing follow-up sessions	None Required

### OBJECTIVE

**4B** Improve access to recreational facilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Provide inclusive passive and active recreational opportunities, resources, and facilities for all citizens.	Recreation Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Open Space Committee, Trails Committee	High	Ongoing	Town Budget, grants, private sources
Continue to make progress on action items noted in the Town of Sturbridge Accessibility Plan	Recreation Committee, Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and Open Space Committee, Trails Committee	High	Ongoing	Town Budget, grants, private sources

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### OBJECTIVE

**4C Create an improved network of multi-use trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes between neighborhoods, conservation and recreation lands and commercial areas. Ensure that trail development includes trails that are ADA/ABA compliant.**

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Continue to develop and improve a network of trails, sidewalks and bike paths between neighborhoods, conservation and recreation lands and commercial areas. Insure that trail development includes those that are handicap accessible and multi-use serving walkers, runners, bicyclists and wheelchairs.	Trails Committee, Conservation Agent, Planning Board, Town Planner, Recreation Committee, Board of Selectmen, DPW Director, and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	Private Grant Sources, Donations, Volunteer Services
Continue to support the efforts of the Sturbridge Trails Committee.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required
Support the planning process of the Recreational Trails Master Plan Steering Committee.	Open Space Committee	High	FY12 – FY13	None Required
Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in all new roadway projects.	Planning Board, Town Planner, Board of Selectmen, and DPW Director	High	Ongoing	None Required

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### OBJECTIVE

**4D Improve and increase recreational facilities, both public and private, to meet current and future needs.**

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Continue to work with the Recreation Committee in its efforts to create new fields and upgrade existing facilities.	Recreation Committee, Board of Selectmen, Community Preservation Committee, and Open Space Committee	High	FY12-FY15	CPA Funds, Town Budget, Grant Sources
Improve access to the riverfront and to ponds.	Conservation Agent, Conservation Commission, Lakes Advisory Committee, and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	CPA Funds, Town Budget, Grant Sources
Ensure sufficient supply of playing fields for team sports	Recreation Committee and Board of Selectmen	High	Ongoing	CPA Funds, Town Budget, Grant Sources

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### OBJECTIVE

**4E Determine the maintenance needs (daily, annual or major investments) for all town owned open space and recreation properties.**

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Incorporate recreational needs and facilities in the Town's capital budgeting process	Trails Committee, Conservation Agent, Recreation Committee, Recreation Director, Board of Selectmen, DPW Director, and Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	Town Budget

**GOAL 5 – Encourage the appropriate use of public lands and recreational resources as a tool to promote sustainable tourism and enhance economic development within the community.**

### OBJECTIVE

**5A Promote broadened public awareness of open space opportunities.**

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	FUNDING SOURCE
Identify sites that may be suitable for active outdoor commercial recreation uses that could be privately operated and that would complement other public open space areas	Trails Committee, Conservation Agent, Board of Selectmen, PLAC, and Recreation Committee	Low	FY15 – FY 18	None Required
Working with appropriate parties, encourage the promotion of outdoor events and activities such as snowshoeing, cross country skiing, kayaking, and bird watching.	Trails Committee, Conservation Agent, Board of Selectmen, and Recreation Committee	Low	FY15 – FY 18	None Required

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>5B Build partnerships with state, federal, conservation groups, and non-profit owners of land in Sturbridge.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Continue dialogue and partnerships with the state, federal, conservation groups and non-profit owners of land in Sturbridge	Open Space Committee	Med	Ongoing	None Required
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>5C Develop and distribute maps of scenic drives and views within Sturbridge and the Region.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Working with the STA and/or Chamber of Commerce, mark and promote the scenic views identified in this plan	Open Space Committee, STA, Chamber of Commerce	Low	Ongoing	None Required
<b>GOAL 6 – Protect and Enhance Drinking Water Supplies</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>6A Protect current and future water supply areas from pollution.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Ensure that the Water Supply Protection District Bylaws are complied with at all times	Planning Board, Town Planner and Zoning Enforcement Officer	High	Ongoing	None Required
Maintain contact with the DPW Director to gain an understanding of future water supply areas under consideration	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

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<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>6B Acquire critical land areas necessary for water supply protection.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
When water supply protection areas are identified, work with the Community Preservation Committee and other appropriate parties to work towards acquisition of these lands	Open Space Committee, DPW Director, Community Preservation Committee and Town Administrator	High	Ongoing	CPA Funds, Town Budget, Grant Sources
<b>GOAL 7 – Promote a cooperative and regional approach to Open Space and Resource Protection</b>				
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>7A Assure collective and cooperative commitment by town departments, boards and staff to accomplish the objectives of this open space plan.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Distribute the Open Space plan to appropriate town departments and boards and discuss the goals and objectives of this plan with them.	Open Space Committee	High	FY12	None Required
<b>OBJECTIVE</b> <b>7B Maintain awareness of open space efforts in surrounding communities and the region.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Develop contacts in surrounding communities and at regional land organizations to gain an understanding of open space activities in the planning stages.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required
Make an effort to review the Open Space Plans of surrounding communities so that communities can work in collaboration on similar goals.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

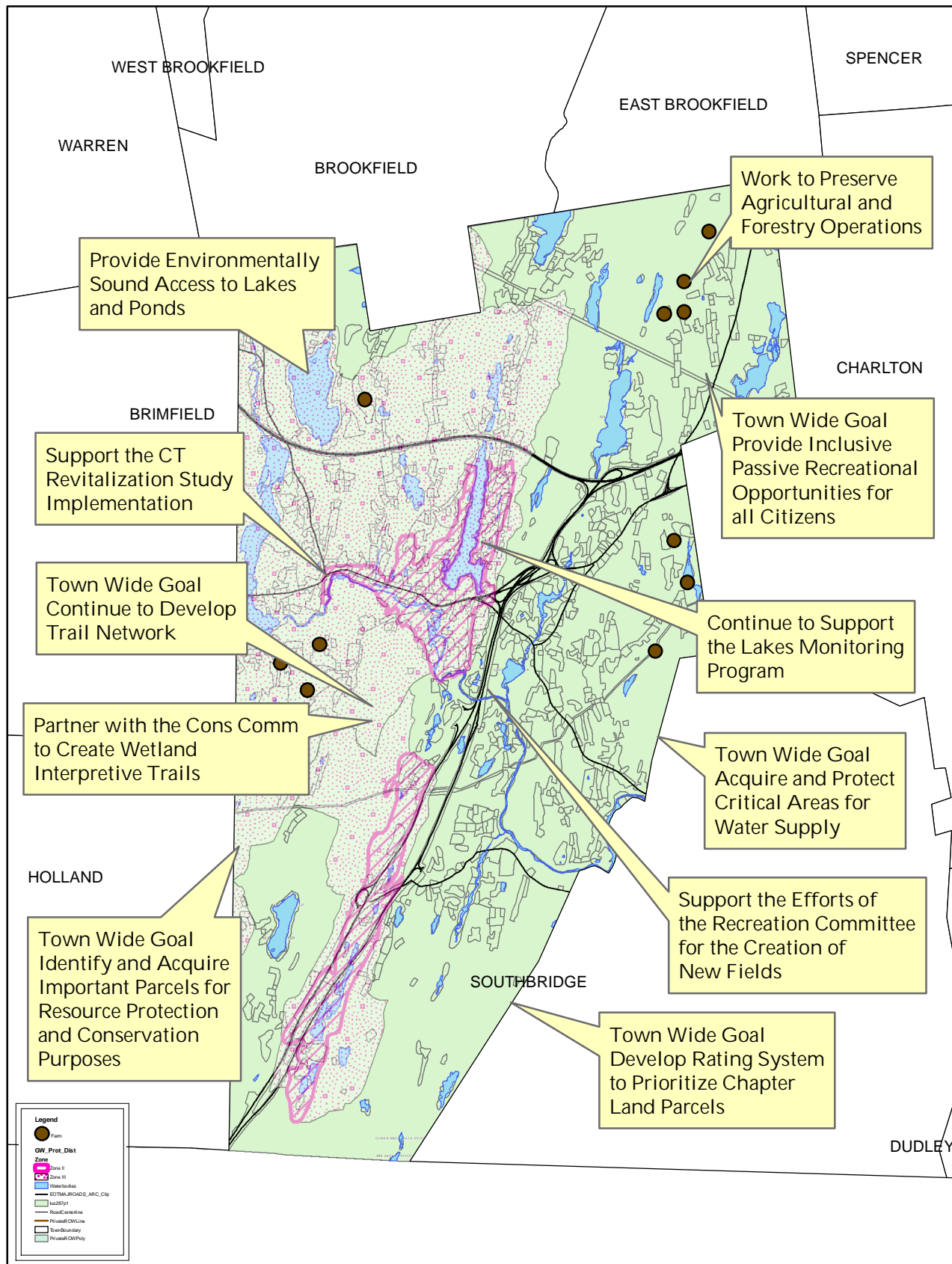


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<b>OBJECTIVE</b>				
<b>7C    Review the accomplishment of these goals and objectives on an annual basis to insure implementation of this plan.</b>				
<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</b>	<b>PRIORITY</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>	<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>
Meet with responsible parties identified in this plan on a regular basis to document goals and objectives achieved.	Open Space Committee	High	Ongoing	None Required

Town of Sturbridge Action Plan  
(For a complete listing of Action Items  
See Section 9 of the Plan)



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