

# Public Forum Summary

For Weston’s Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2026-2035

October 26 & 27, 2025

## Introduction

Weston residents were invited to attend the first round of community meetings for the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), with events held in-person on October 26, 2025, and virtually on October 27, 2025. Sixteen community members attended the in-person event at the Weston Recreation Center, with two BPG staff members assisting with group discussions. Nine community members joined the virtual meeting on Zoom, along with three BPG staff members facilitating discussion. Facilitators took notes on Miro, an online whiteboard platform that imitates a visible note-taking board for the participants.

	Attendees	Facilitators	Total Attendees	Discussion Groups
In Person	16	2	18	2
Virtual	9	3	12	1

Town of Weston Conservation Administrator Jordan McCarron introduced both meetings by welcoming participants and leading introductions. Consultant Barrett Planning Group then presented an overview of the OSRP process and timeline. The presentation then led into a whole group discussion about a vision for Weston’s Open Space and Recreation, followed by a conversation around Weston’s Scenic Landscapes and Unique Environments and OSRP goals. The summary of community feedback compiles comments from both forums by discussion topic.

## Envisioning Weston's Future

To begin discussion, participants were asked to generate the ending for the sentence, “In 2035, Weston’s open space and recreation resources will (offer, include, consider, etc.)...”.

In Person		
Help families get outside and moving together, exploring and engaging with nature rather than screens	Provide a model for successfully eradication Japanese knotweed and re-naturalizing the infested areas	Work out how to have trash can at trail heads
Weston will continue to lead	A swimmable Charles!	

“In 2035, Weston’s open space and recreation resources will (offer, include, consider, etc.)...”		
MetroWest with open space and trails with a leading environmental awareness		
More paved bike/walking trails	Outdoor classes, bird watching, name of the trees, participation with a “theme”	Receive a glowing report from the community about the work of the past 10 years
More connectivity through sidewalks	Expanded hours and season for memorial pool	Will have built a new playground on the north or south side of town such as at Malone Field
Be better connected with sidewalk and safe bike routes	Be easier to access and have options for everything, maintaining and improving the existing offerings	High visibility on the existing offerings, knowing before actively participating and stewarding
Weston will be more bike friendly and a town with better access to trails	More paved bike/walking trails	Provide more and larger playgrounds, provide even more connectivity through trails around town as well as sidewalks
Public transportation to and from parks/amenities	Be the same as they are today	
<b>Virtual</b>		
Be connected and accessible by safe biking lanes	A designated off leash dog park would be great!	Be enticing to everyone - there is something for everyone to be interested in being outside.
Have better connectivity to trails and recreational amenities	continue to need to be protected from development.	be a regional model for effective management of climate related stressors like invasive plants and deer over browse damage
Improved winter recreation opportunities (plow the rail trail?) - Cross County skiers protest!		

### Scenic Landscapes and Unique Environments

As described in the OSRP Handbook, scenic resources and unique environments encapsulate the areas in a town that contribute to the community’s character and make a town unlike its neighbors. Consequently, public participation is critical in order to create this list as no outside entities know what makes a town unique as well as its residents. Participants were shown a list

of the Scenic Landscapes and Unique Environments created for the Town's previous OSRP. Based on that inventory list from the 2017 plan, participants shared areas missing from the list and which areas could benefit from improvement.

What areas are missing?		
In Person		
Land's Sake Farm in the midst of town	Rails <u>with</u> Trails along Fitchburg Line	Norumbega shoreline trails
Sunset corner	Old foundations (Historic) on open space like Merriam Barn - Eagle Scout project cleared and put signage	Community Gardens Melone Homestead
Virtual		
Nature trails along the Lakes district of the Charles River	Top of Cat Rock scenic vista	Weston Trail Depot and future plans
Mass Central Rail Trail	Cult/Hist - Miriam Pond Barn and cleared land	
Are there areas that you are really happy with? Which areas need improvement?		
Clearing our existing vistas - Cat Rock, sunset corner, etc.	Finishing off the Rail Trail to get it all the way to Waltham	Gateway Farm - preserving on OSRP list and limiting development potential
Parking lot to support Cat Rock <u>in</u> the park	Better parking for Ogilvie	Leo J. Martin from golf(irrigation) to ski(snow) more
Conservation meadows as gateways into Weston (Millers Field, Blaney Field in need of improvement)	Abundant trail accessibility, especially on N side of town	

### Goals and Actions

Town staff and the Committee on Open Space and Recreation (COSRP) provided an updated list of ongoing and new actions developed to further four of the five total goals included in the OSRP from 2017. These goals will carry over into the new plan while suggested actions will evolve to more precisely address current priorities.

Goal 1: Maintain, steward, and restore existing natural resources, open spaces, and recreational facilities
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<b>In Person</b>		
Land's Sake Farm in the midst of town	Rails <u>with</u> Trails along Fitchburg Line	Walking/biking path along Charles River waterfront
Weston will continue to lead MetroWest with open space and trails with a leading environmental awareness	Weston will continue to lead MetroWest with open space and trails with a leading environmental awareness	A swimmable Charles!
<b>Virtual</b>		
Address Black swallow-wort	Stream crossing improvements  Balancing recreational and climate value of major ponds and dams	Fire protection and maintenance
Planting more milkweed	Raptor protection	
Goal 2: Preserve the semi-rural character of Weston by protecting open space, preserving scenic & historic features, & implementing thoughtful development strategies		
<b>In Person</b>		
(New action) Work closely with the Historical Commission and T and SC when developing new trail connections, etc.	(New action) Possibly reducing some trails; more intentional to preserve semi-rural character.	
<b>Virtual</b>		
MBTA Communities and 3A and its influence on this goal	Targeted areas for 3A will require further protection and oversight	Better coordination with Historic Preservation Groups in Weston as trail connectivity improves
Goal 3: Promote the use of recreational facilities and open space		
<b>In Person</b>		
Featuring regular "Nature's Corner" in newspaper	High school, COA intergeneration programming	Using iNaturalist, citizen science/bioblitz to "gameify" logging and sharing features and species on conservation land = get people on the trails
WFTA environmental priorities scholarships, elected by school staff	Norumbega accessible corridor	Sidewalk walks, indoor track, monthly walks with Council of Aging

High school organized walks	Junior Ranger booklet, introducing families to trails	
<b>Virtual</b>		
Improve access to Blue Heron trail by adding access from River Road	Add cultural and art events (like those on Town Green) to other open spaces	With available materials, promote programming through already used media channels
Weston observer blurb, one line to highlight Open Space/Rec-minded info	more creative approach to communications on outlets	More neighborhood playgrounds accessible without cars
Set program or online class to introduce Open Space and Rec offerings (like Citizens Academy)	Backyard Naturalist, Tales of the Trails	Streamline approach to wayfinding, map availability, and balance on online and print navigation
Self-guided offerings		
Goal 4: Improve access to & connectivity among open spaces, recreational facilities, & other important town resources		
<b>In Person</b>		
Prioritize new locations, maintaining rules around resting/eating areas (DPW collections)	Family Loop trails - install more of these and put up maps/info brochures about them	Promoting the use of All Trails, maintaining signage for in-person navigation
Benches and picnic tables mean different considerations for regulations	Picnic, benches, playground design. Universal recreation infrastructure	Connecting trails to neighborhoods (350th anniversary, every kid can reach friends, school, parking by trail...)
<b>Virtual</b>		
Providing parking, improving access	(Modifying signage action) Clarify indicators of progress on this goal  How to best provide information to people when they are on the trails?	(Modifying Trail Easement action) Trail Easement Use Plan, connectivity plan

Photos of Meeting and Notes  
**In person**



# Envisioning Weston's Future

"In 2035, Weston's open space and recreation resources will (offer, include, consider, etc.) ..."

help families get outside and moving together, exploring and engaging with nature rather than screens.

provide a model for successful connectivity systems (powered by green banking) that are integrating and aligning existing and new ideas

... Be better connected with sidewalks and safe bike routes

... be easier to access and have options for everyone, maintaining & improving the existing offerings.

High visibility routes along streets, connecting areas, including trail, park, and community

By 2035 Weston will be more bike friendly and a team will have access to better access to trails

work out how to have trash cans at trail heads

Weston will continue to lead the Metrowest with open space and green spaces with a focus on providing more natural amenities

more connectivity through sidewalks

will have built a new playground on the north or south side of town such as at Malone Field?

Provide more and larger playgrounds  
Provide even more connectivity through trails along townships as well as sidewalks

OSRP a swimmable Charles!

more paved bikes/walking + trails

expanded hours/season after municipal pool

subtransportation to and from properties amenities  
GMM

Amherst, Massachusetts  
Urban  
Public  
Maine of the  
Maine

Receive a glowing report from the community about the work of the past 10 years.

Be the same as they are today

OSRP will provide a bike path along route 30 (GMM,?)

# Identify Scenic Landscapes & Unique Environments

What gives Weston community character and unlike surrounding communities?

## Scenic Landscapes

### Privately Owned

- Wellington Gateways Farm
- Dickson Farm
- Church Street
- Regis College
- Weston College/Campion Center
- Weston Golf Club
- Pine Brook Country Club
- Farm Road
- The Carter Property

### MWRA and State Properties

- Weston Reservoir
- Norumbega Reservoir
- Leo J. Martin Golf Course

MCRT

## Scenic Roads

- Ash Street
- Chestnut Street
- Church Street
- Conant Road
- Concord Road
- Crescent Street
- Glen Road
- Highland Street
- Lincoln Street
- Loring Road
- Love Lane
- Lexington Street
- Maple Road
- Merriam Street
- Newton Street
- Sudbury Road
- Summer Street
- Ware Street

## Town of Weston and the Weston Forest and Trail Association Land

- Case Estates
- Town Green
- 40-Acre Field, Case Park, and Case House
- Coburn Meadow and Stony Brook
- Cat Rock/80 Acres
- Burt Field and Hubbard Trail
- Jericho Town Forest
- Ogilvie Town Forest
- Highland Town Forest
- Sears Land - the Malone illustration
- Forbes Land
- Doublet Hill and Elliston Woods

## Cultural and Historic Areas

- Local Historic Areas
- National Register of Historic Homes
- Old Library
- Josiah Smith Tavern
- Golden Ball Tavern

## Unusual Geologic Features

In 2017 OSRP, no unusual geologic features were singled out (previous reports highlighted the town's hilltops)

## What is missing?

- Norumbega shoreline trails
- Sunset Corner
- Old foundations (Historic) on Open Space e.g. Merriam Barn - Eagle Scout project cleared & put signage.
- Community Gardens
- Malone illustration

## Are there areas that you are really happy with? What areas need improvement?

Leo J. Martin from golf to ski more.  
Bridgman Snowshoe

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## What is missing?

- Land's Sale Farm in the midst of town
- Rails with trails along Fitchburg line
- Linking/area from existing Charles River water trail

## Are there areas that you are really happy with? What areas need improvement?

- Clearing our existing view - cat rock, sunset corner, etc.
- Parking and connectivity to ski walking routes
- Bea - drive of
- Finishing off the Paul Trail to get it all the way to Westham
- Gateway farm - preserving on OSRP list and limiting development potential?
- Parking lot to support Cat Rock, in the park

**Goal 1: Maintain, steward, and restore existing natural resources, and recreational facilities**

Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
Continue to reduce the impact of stormwater on local water bodies via the NPDES MS4s & the Stormwater Permitting	Develop Japanese Knotweed Monitoring & Native Restoration Program
Continue deer monitoring program & review at the end of each season	Transition Forest Mgt. Program to new climate resilience & habitat improvement model
Continue to restore field edges, maintain stone walls, and retain meadow habitat and scenic views	
Explore options for enforcing trail user compliance, particularly w/ regard to illegal trail cutting & dog walking	

**Goal 2: Preserve the semi-rural character of Weston by protecting open space, preserving scenic & historic features, & implementing thoughtful development strategies**

Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
Support the Affordable Housing Trust in providing more affordable housing options in town per the Housing Production Plan.	Permanently protect a portion of Parcel 9 at the Case Estates through the Water Tank
Monitor opportunities for fee and easement acquisition	Develop plan for continued use of Dickson Riding Rings at Jericho Town Forest
Support the Case Estates Master Planning process to provide the best combination of agricultural, historic, recreational, conservation and other uses.	Work closely w/ Hist. Comm. + T-SSR when developing new trail connections, etc.
Work to permanently protect Parcels 6 & 9 of the Case Estates as open space.	Possibly reduce some trails; more intentional to preserve semi-rural character

**Goal 3: Promote the use of recreational facilities and open space**

Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
Fulfill transition plans for ADA accessibility at recreation facilities based on ADA self-evaluation	Kick-off and promote new regular e-newsletter to WFTA members
Provide better awareness of and access to the Charles River	Leverage new Weston Observer weekly print paper for more regular outreach to all households in Weston
Explore ways to better provide recreational services to populations that are underserved.	
Release Conservation Connections quarterly newsletter; Promote use of new MapsOnline trail app	

- Featuring regular "Nature Corner" in newspaper
- high school, COA intergenerational programming
- Norwintega w- accessible corridor
- Sidewalk walks, indoor track, monthly walks of COA
- Using naturalist activities, science, identify, logging and shading factors
- WFTA environmental priorities: stewardship, elected by staff person
- High School organic walks, guided walks for students/PTSD programming, outreach for youth
- Junior Ranger booklets, introducing families to trails

**Goal 4: Improve access to & connectivity among open spaces, recreational facilities, & other important town resources.**

Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
Support a Traffic & Sidewalk Plan that provides & improves sidewalks & bike paths that connect to schools, town center, public transportation & conservation trails	Install benches and picnic tables at select trailheads
Improve parking at trail heads	Parking Access Plan for Conservation Land
Improve trail marking signage so it is more user friendly	Trail Easement Inventory Analysis Plan

- Prioritize new locations
- maintaining trails around resting/resting areas (shrubbery)
- Family Loop trails - install more of these and put up markers along them
- Promoting use of All Trails, Maintaining Signage for Imperson Navigation
- benches w/ picnic tables near different considerations for rest (restroom) stone benches wood picnic tables
- picnic bench, playground design, seasonal innovations infrastructure
- Connecting trails to neighborhoods (South Amherst, Gotta and can make through school, parky trails...)
- benches & tables at playgrounds/ small play area

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## Unusual Geologic Features

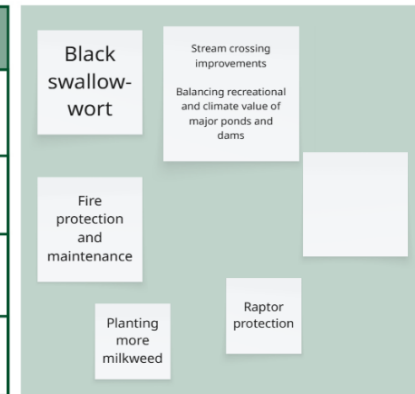
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## What is missing?

## Are there areas that you are really happy with? What areas need improvement?

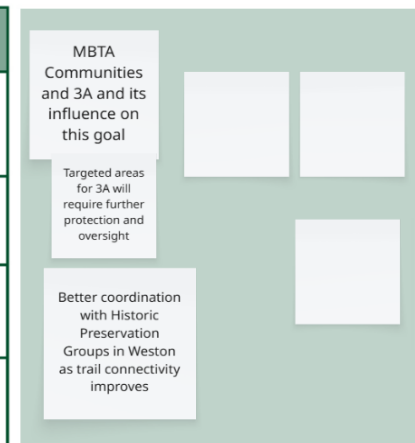
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## Goal 2: Preserve the semi-rural character of Weston by protecting open space, preserving scenic & historic features, & implementing thoughtful development strategies

Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
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Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
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Provide better awareness of and access to the Charles River	Leverage new Weston Observer weekly print paper for more regular outreach to all households in Weston
Explore ways to better provide recreational services to populations that are underserved.	Identify areas for easy to follow, family-friendly trail loops with visible signage
Release Conservation Connections quarterly newsletter; Promote use of new MapsOnline trail app	



### Goal 4: Improve access to & connectivity among open spaces, recreational facilities, & other important town resources.

Ongoing Actions	New (2025)
Support a Traffic & Sidewalk Plan that provides & improves sidewalks & bike paths that connect to schools, town center, public transportation & conservation trails	Install benches and picnic tables at select trailheads
Improve parking at trail heads	Parking Access Plan for Conservation Land
Improve trail marking signage so it is more user friendly	Trail Easement Inventory Analysis Plan <small>Trail Easement Use Plan, connectivity plan</small>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">clarify indicators of progress on this goal</div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; width: 40%;">How to best provide information to people when they are on the trails?</div> </div>	

