

# OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR BOLTON

## November, 2004

### INTRODUCTION

The Open Space Plan for Bolton was developed to assist the public and the town's boards, commissions and committees that regulate or guide development within the town. The primary purposes of this plan are 1) to identify areas of the town and specific parcels and features that may merit long term protection; 2) to be a resource for land use agencies to use when reviewing applications; and 3) to establish policy for open space planning in Bolton. The Plan should not be interpreted as an infringement on the legal rights of private property owners, and it is not suggested that every parcel that was rated should be preserved.

### HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The Open Space Plan for Bolton updates the previous plan which was written in 1983 by the Bolton Conservation Commission. The current Plan is the result of work by the Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Committee (the Open Space Committee) which includes representatives of the Conservation Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission. A subcommittee of the Open Space Committee (the Subcommittee) reviewed a set of benefits associated with open space, established criteria to reflect those benefits and applied the criteria to parcels of existing undeveloped open space. As a result of this parcel evaluation, the Subcommittee identified four critical Core Areas that should receive special consideration for protection as open space. The criteria are listed at the end of this Plan.

### WHAT THE PLAN CONTAINS

The Plan consists of three parts: text, maps and an evaluation matrix.

1) The text of the Open Space Plan for Bolton sets out the following:

- A Definition of Open Space
- Benefits of Open Space
- Objectives
- The Role of Open Space in the Town Wide Planning Process
- The results of the Parcel Evaluation

- Specific discussion of each of the Core Areas
- Recommendations
- The evaluation criteria used in the parcel evaluation
- Estimate of Permanently Preserved Open Space in Bolton
- Descriptions of Evaluated Parcels

## 2) The maps:

The maps are an integral part of the Plan and should be consulted when reading the Plan. Individually they show Bolton’s natural and cultural features and together they highlight areas of town that require special attention. The Property Evaluation Map reflects the rankings of properties according to the results of the parcel evaluation. The map is a tool for land use boards to recognize existing and potential links between open spaces and to identify parcels that may require close scrutiny.

## 3) The Property Evaluation Matrix:

The matrix shows how the parcels on the Property Evaluation Map were rated in thirteen categories. As more parcel information becomes available, the matrix and the maps will be periodically updated.

## DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE

Open space means any land, the preservation or restriction of the use of which would: 1) maintain and enhance the conservation of natural or scenic resources; 2) enhance the value to the public of abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations or sanctuaries or other open spaces; 3) enhance public recreation opportunities; 4) preserve historic sites; 5) promote connections between natural or manmade corridors (“greenways”); or 6) promote the orderly development of the Town of Bolton; such lands may include but are not limited to: a) land left in its natural, undisturbed state; b) agricultural land; c) forests; d) areas used for passive or active recreation and e) land identified as open space in the Town of Bolton Plan of Conservation and Development or in this Open Space Plan.

## BENEFITS OF OPEN SPACE

Protecting open space provides many benefits to the town, including:

- Maintaining the rural and historic character of the town.

- Protecting the quality of surface water and groundwater resources.
- Creating corridors for wildlife movement and trails (“greenways”).
- Protecting rare, endangered, threatened species and species of special concern.
- Preserving the scenic beauty of the town.
- Protecting unique geological features.
- Protecting significant historic or cultural sites.
- Preserving the agricultural heritage of the town.
- Providing recreational opportunities for residents.
- Preserving forest resources for habitat protection and the beauty of the town.
- Protecting air quality.
- Enhancing quality of life for Bolton’s residents.

Enhancing these benefits for the town forms the framework for this plan. The objectives of the Plan and the criteria used to identify Core Areas were specifically developed to help maximize the benefits of open space.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The following objectives form the basis of the Plan. Some were adapted from the current open space plan, while others are new.

Objective: Encourage the retention of open space to protect natural resources.

In some cases, open space should be preserved to protect natural resources such as water quality (groundwater and surface water), wetlands, streams, species diversity, or wildlife habitat. In these situations, it might not be appropriate to allow any disturbance, or only limited recreational uses such as hiking trails.

Objective: Create links between preserved open spaces.

Connecting preserved properties increases the potential value of open space by creating opportunities to link trails, provides unfragmented forest areas which are needed for many wildlife species, provides a logical, thoughtful basis for land use development, and contributes to

the beautiful, rural appearance of the town.

Objective: Protect the water quality of the town.

Special efforts should be undertaken to protect the town's aquifers, rivers, streams, lakes, ponds and groundwater resources. The town relies on groundwater from aquifers for drinking water, and surface waters provide habitat, recreational opportunities and potential groundwater recharge. Protection of the water resources is critical to the well-being of the town.

Objective: Protect the scenic qualities of the town.

Ridgelines, vistas, forest tracts, river/wetland areas, lakes, ponds and open fields all contribute to the rural and natural attractiveness of the town and should be protected.

Objective: Protect the wetlands of the town.

Wetlands of all types (including swamps, marshes, bogs and vernal pools) provide a valuable resource to the human and natural communities. Wetlands help to protect the quality of surface water and groundwater, help reduce the impact of floods, and provide habitat to wildlife. Special care needs to be taken to protect this valuable resource.

Objective: Protect the cultural and historic resources of the town.

Sites with historic or cultural significance contribute to the character of the town and preserving these assets provide an important link for Bolton residents between the town's past and present.

Objective: Encourage the retention of open space for ecologically sound agriculture, forest management, and recreation.

Open space can support multiple uses such as agriculture, forestry and recreation. If done properly, these activities can be conducted in a manner that will not significantly degrade natural resources. These areas can contribute to many of the objectives for open space such as

preserving habitat for a variety of species, or enhancing the scenic beauty of the town. Steps should be taken to ensure that agriculture, forestry and recreation are done in a manner that will not harm the natural environment associated with the open space.

Objective: Create a balance among land uses in Bolton.

The plan for Bolton's future land should include open space, commercial and residential development in order to help diversify the town's tax base and retain the aesthetic qualities of the town.

#### THE ROLE OF OPEN SPACE IN THE TOWN WIDE PLANNING PROCESS

Of Bolton's total acreage, about 95% is zoned for residential development. This includes the R-1, R-2 and R-3 zones, with the majority of the acreage in the R-1, or single family dwelling, category. Only about two percent of the town is zoned for business development, about the same percentage is zoned for industry, and there is no separate zone classification for open space. Although not all of the residentially-zoned land in Bolton is buildable, the natural evolution of the town's growth has been to single family houses. Because the town has relied on property taxes to balance its municipal budget, the majority of the taxes is paid by owners of single family houses.

Bolton's planning process should address this situation by integrating more open space into the growth pattern and encouraging well-designed business development in appropriate locations. With the installation of sewers along Route 44 likely to occur in the next few years, there may even be opportunities to combine commercial and residential development with preserved land there. Balancing land uses will help maintain the excellent quality of life of Bolton's residents, diversify the tax base and reduce the financial strain the town will incur from the high costs associated with single family residential development: road maintenance, fire and police services, garbage and recycling collection, maintenance of public buildings, providing and maintaining recreation facilities and education expenses. Open space does not usually require expenditures for these services. (See Appendix 1). Bolton will benefit from considering open space as a key planning tool for the intangible, aesthetic qualities that preserved land brings, and

from the financial balance that can be achieved. Acquiring open space may appear to be expensive in the short term, but by setting aside open space and planning for appropriate business growth, the town will realize long term social and economic benefits.

## RESULTS OF THE PARCEL EVALUATION: THE CORE AREAS

Eighty-five parcels in Bolton were rated in thirteen categories which are listed at the end of the Plan and are shown on the evaluation matrix attached to the Plan. The parcels were given a total score and divided into three rankings based on that score. The three levels are reflected by three shades of color on the map. Currently protected space is also shown.

Some of the parcels that received high scores formed groups which are identified as the Core Areas and are circled on the Property Evaluation Map. The Core Areas present the best opportunities to realize the benefits of preserving open space. The Core Areas are named according to the primary benefit they provide or the geographic location of the area in town. The Plan describes each of the Core Areas, identifying the significant benefits to be achieved through protecting open spaces within the area. Each area is considered important and the Core Areas are not ranked in order of preference.

The Core Areas contain numerous tracts of undeveloped land. While it would be desirable to protect all of that land, it is not feasible to do so. However, it is important to protect the most valuable and sensitive of those resources.

### 1) BLACKLEDGE RIVER HEADWATERS

The Blackledge River Headwater Area is bounded generally by Camp Meeting Road, Route 85 and the Glastonbury and Hebron town lines. The outstanding feature of this Core Area is how the headwaters of the Blackledge River are revealed: first as a large open marsh located on the property immediately north of Deming Road; then as a more defined stream with marshy banks farther south and eventually as Gay City Pond located in Gay City State Park.

The source of the Blackledge River, an important tributary to the Jeremy and Salmon Rivers, and its surrounding wetlands are some of the highest quality in Bolton and merit strict protection. Recognizing this, in 1993 the Capitol Region Council of Governments sponsored the Blackledge River Watershed Protection Study which reviewed stormwater management plans in Bolton and

other towns in the watershed. A primary recommendation from that study was that the Town of Bolton should adopt a 200-foot review area along the Blackledge River to ensure that all development within that area is done in a manner that will not degrade the quality of the water.

The surface water quality in the upper regions of the Blackledge River Core Area is rated Class A which means that the water is of the highest quality, is a potential source of drinking water and is excellent for fish habitat. The groundwater in this area is rated Class GA, which means that it is suitable for drinking without treatment. Preserving open space in this area would address the Plan's objective of protecting the town's water quality.

The southwest corner of Bolton, where this Core Area is located, is part of a larger forest area characterized by the Connecticut Resource Protection Mapping Project as consisting of more than 2,000 acres of unfragmented forest. This area also lies within the Meshomasic Forest Landscape, one of The Nature Conservancy's seven "Last Great Places" in Connecticut. The Nature Conservancy identified this area for its 17,483-acre forest, valuable as habitat for migratory birds, ruffed grouse, hawks, fox, coyote, and fisher, as well as its location in the Connecticut and Salmon River watersheds. This Core Area, therefore, is significant regionally as well as a locally.

Some land in this Core Area is currently protected open space: 132 acres of Gay City State Park are located in the southern portion and two conservation easements, located at the end of Norma's Way and Hatfield Drive, protect 22 acres along the Blackledge River north of Gay City State Park.

Because of the high wetlands and water quality, the potential for downstream damage from development in the headwaters area and the beautiful and significant forest land, the town should make an effort to continue the preservation trend in this area by attempting to link Gay City with existing conservation easements and other preserved land.

## 2) THE NOTCH

The Notch Core Area is located in the northwest corner of the town, west of Bolton Lake and

north of Route 44. This area addresses many of the Plan's objectives. The area consists of largely unfragmented forest tracts which, in addition to their beauty, offer excellent wildlife habitat and help create corridors to encourage wildlife migration. The most striking physical characteristic of this area is the ridgeline which runs north to south, roughly parallel to the Hop River State Park Trail (the "State Park Rail Trail") described later in the Hop River State Park Trail Core Area section of the Plan. This ridge affords a view of the valley created by Railroad Brook which parallels the ridgeline, draining uniquely north (away from Long Island Sound) to Valley Falls Park in Vernon. This area offers a special wildlife habitat and at least two species of special concern can be found here. A 1999 Breeding Landbird Survey conducted in the Freja Park/Bolton Notch State Park area through efforts of the Conservation Commission identified two species of birds that are listed by the State of Connecticut as species of special concern: the Common Raven and the Brown Thrasher.

Another important characteristic of the Notch Core Area is the existence of the town's only Class A stratified drift aquifer. This is an underground area of sand and gravel of glacial origin which provides drinking water. The water table in these types of aquifers is usually within 50 feet of the land surface and therefore is susceptible to contamination. Considered by the state to be a key groundwater resource, state laws require towns to map the boundaries of aquifers and their recharge areas so that development in the area of the aquifer can be monitored closely. By preserving properties in the Notch Core Area, the town would be protecting the quality of drinking water in Bolton.

The Notch Core Area is also significant for its ability to link currently preserved open space. In this Core Area the Manchester Land Conservation Trust owns about 70 acres in Bolton near Risley Reservoir, the Town of Bolton's Freja Park encompasses 22 acres and the State of Connecticut has preserved 95 acres as Bolton Notch State Park. The proximity of these properties to one another presents an opportunity to the town to link them. By obtaining conservation easements, the town could create a wildlife corridor and a walking trail that would start at Risley Reservoir, cross an unfragmented forest area with beautiful ridge line features, pass through Freja Park and ultimately join the State Park Rail Trail where the trail continues east through the railroad tunnel and west toward Manchester.



### 3) ROCHAMBEAU ROUTE

One outstanding feature of this area, in the southeastern area of Bolton, is the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road, now known as Bailey Road, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. During the Revolutionary War Generals George Washington, Count de Rochambeau and their troops marched along this road and Brandy Street to the Rose Farm, where the troops camped. Bailey Road also crosses the former railroad bed discussed below, which presents an excellent opportunity for the Town to create a recreational use that highlights Bolton's role in the Revolutionary War. Bailey Road should be established as a historic trail, leading from the railroad bed to Bailey Road, north on Brandy Street to the Rose Farm. Hikers could then take advantage of whatever historic information or programs that may be in place at the Rose Farm. The hiking trail could also be linked further along the railroad bed to Shoddy Mill Road, the portion of School Road currently not in use, then again, north onto Brandy Street to the Rose Farm.

The other primary feature of this Core Area is its unfragmented forest area. The southeast corner of Bolton is located in an area identified by the Connecticut Resource Protection Mapping Project as lying within more than 500 acres of unfragmented forest. Certain species of wildlife require large tracts of unbroken woodland to survive, and it is generally accepted by conservation professionals that the phrase "bigger is better" applies when the goal is to promote a strong, diverse wildlife habitat. The Rochambeau Route offers the Town a chance to create a low-impact recreation opportunity in a beautifully forested location through which people who use it will learn of the route's local, regional and national significance. The Bolton Land Trust owns 26 acres and the Northern Connecticut Land Trust owns 25 acres of permanently preserved land in this area.

### 4) HOP RIVER STATE PARK TRAIL AREA

Approximately three miles of the former New York-New Haven and Hartford Railroad line runs through Bolton from the Vernon line south through Bolton Notch and then southeasterly to the Andover town line. With the tracks and ties having been removed a number of years ago, this rail bed provides an excellent site for hiking, running, biking, cross country skiing and horseback

riding. The rail line has both state and national significance, having been officially designated the Hop River State Park in April, 2001 by the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, and being a segment of the East Coast Greenway which will eventually run from Maine to Florida. In 1999 President Clinton formally designated the trail as the new Millennium Trail which will cross the continental United States. Locally the rail bed is significant as a link to Bolton's Freja Park and the Shenipsit Trail, Valley Falls Park in Vernon and to Valley View Farm which has approximately 1100 feet of frontage along the rail line. The Town of Manchester in 2003 approved funding to continue the bike path from Main Street in Manchester to the Bolton town line. The Town of Bolton should work to have the last piece of the path continued from the Manchester town line to the railroad bed near the Notch. Trail users would then be able to bicycle or walk from Bolton to Hartford entirely on trails.

In addition to its recreational value and state and national greenway significance, the State Park Rail Trail area has other aspects which warrant its designation in the Plan as a Core Area. Numerous streams pass beneath the rail bed, flowing toward the Hop River, and a significant watercourse that begins west of Notch Road flows through the properties in the Core Area into the marsh south of Johnson Road and west of Route 6. The properties in this area also form a large unfragmented forest area which addresses the Plan's objectives of preserving wildlife habitat and the scenic beauty of the Town.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations pertain to the Core Areas:

The Blackledge River Headwaters Area:

- Links should be created between existing preserved lands to each other and to Gay City State Park by acquiring conservation easements along the Blackledge River.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission should request, where appropriate, conservation easements or land donations along the Blackledge River when a parcel that abuts the River is the subject of an application before the Commission.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission should adopt a 200-foot review area along the Blackledge River as recommended in the 1993 Blackledge River Watershed Protection Study sponsored by the Capitol Region Council of Governments.

#### The Notch Area:

- The town should seek to expand existing preserved open space and to prevent the degradation of the aquifer which lies beneath much of this area. Easements for a trail linking the Manchester Land Conservation Trust properties with Freja Park and the former railroad line should be obtained.

#### The Rochambeau Route:

- A historic recreation trail should be established along the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road, linking Bailey Road, Old School Road, the former railroad bed, Shoddy Mill Road and Brandy Street.
- Efforts should be made to continue the preservation begun by the Northern Connecticut Land Trust and the Bolton Land Trust by acquisition or conservation easements.

#### The State Park Rail Trail:

- Preservation of land contiguous to the railroad bed should be continued through acquisitions to preserve its forest and watercourses and expand the preserved area which already includes Valley View Farm.
- No construction or cutting of trees should be permitted within 100 feet of either side of the State Park Rail Trail to preserve its scenic and recreational value.

In addition to properties in the Core Areas there are other parcels which the Town should consider acquiring for their location near the center of town, proximity to town parks and potential for creating links between existing open space. The Property Evaluation Map shows parcels that have these characteristics.

The following are general recommendations:

1) The Town of Bolton should set a goal of preserving at least 20% of Bolton's total acreage as open space. This is slightly lower than the State's goal of setting aside 21% of Connecticut's total acreage by the year 2023. As of December, 2003, approximately 10% of Bolton's land is preserved. The town should take primary responsibility for achieving this goal, working cooperatively with town land use groups and the Bolton Land Trust.

Residents of the Town of Bolton have expressed their support for preserving open space. In a

1998 Bolton Community Survey, conducted by the Bolton Economic Development Committee, preserving open space ranked tenth in importance out of thirty-nine “community services”. Forty-two percent of the respondents supported funding open space purchases with a combination of town monies and grants. Seventy-two percent of those responding felt that at least 10% of the town’s land should be set aside for recreational purposes, including parks and greenways. Sixty-seven percent responded that if all available land were to be developed in Bolton in the next 20 years the town should preserve as much open land as possible by “making it unavailable for development”. These results justify the Board of Selectmen, with support from the Board of Finance, taking an aggressive and progressive approach to preserving open space.

2) The town should continue to use its financing ability to set aside land as open space. A referendum authorizing bonding for future open space purchases may be the most cost-effective way for the town to obtain enough funding to be in a strong negotiating position if a desirable property is put on the market. As a municipality, the town has the ability to finance an open space acquisition program through the issuance of bonds or notes, such as the bonding that was approved for the purchases of the Peracchio property (contiguous to Herrick Park) in 1999 and Valley View Farm in 2000. Consideration should be given to adding to the Open Space Preservation, Acquisition and Conservation Fund through the budget process each year, although it is recognized that during difficult budget years this may not be feasible.

In addition to outright purchases the town may consider other methods of land preservation such as purchasing development rights, obtaining conservation easements and soliciting donations of land. The first two methods involve restricting the use of the property to a particular set of uses agreed upon by the landowner and the town, such as passive recreation or agricultural activities. The landowner retains ownership of the property and is free to sell it but future owners must continue to use the land as agreed upon by the town and the original owner. These options are effective preservation tools for farms as well as other types of open spaces because they allow landowners to maintain ownership and the right to sell or pass on the land to their heirs, while establishing a plan for the future of the property.

3) The Town should continue to play an active role in preserving its agricultural heritage, as it

did with the acquisition of Valley View Farm in 2000. Farmland connects Bolton's economic and social past with the present and in many cases contains other resources that make them even more valuable assets. Streams, ponds, excellent soils, views and wildlife habitat are among the benefits provided by farmland

4) The Planning and Zoning Commission should take full advantage of its authority under Conn. Gen. Statutes Section 8-25, the Bolton Subdivision Regulations and the Bolton Zoning Regulations to obtain open space land and/or open space fees in connection with subdivision applications. By statute, the open space fees are deposited into the Open Space Preservation Fund and may equal up to 10% of the appraised value of any land to be subdivided if open space land is not otherwise provided by the applicant. In a traditional development, the Commission may require up to 20% of the property to be subdivided to be dedicated as open space. In an open space conservation development the applicant must set aside a minimum of 40% of the total parcel area as open space. The Town should use this authority and funding mechanism to the greatest extent possible in order to achieve the goals of this Open Space Plan.

5) Obtaining state and federal grants for land acquisitions should be supported by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. The successful partnership among the Board of Selectmen, Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission in obtaining a \$389,302 grant through the State's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program for Valley View Farm in 2000 is an example of the efforts that should be continued in order to take advantage of grant programs for land acquisition.

6) Regular communication among town land use boards such as the Bolton Planning and Zoning Commission, Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Committee, and the Conservation Commission and non-governmental groups such as the Bolton Land Trust will promote consistent planning for open space preservation. The Planning and Zoning regulations that

became effective August 1, 2001 encourage subdivisions that are designed to meet the objectives set forth in this Plan, and all of the town boards that are concerned with open space preservation should be informed of subdivision plans when they are submitted and involved in discussing how the open space proposed to be dedicated meets the objectives of the Plan.

7) The Planning and Zoning Commission should encourage creative land use designs that incorporate open spaces.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Subcommittee used the following criteria for evaluating parcels:

### Wetlands, Watercourses/Water Body

*Protection of surface or groundwater quality, plant, fish and wildlife habitats; maintenance of drainage and flood storage capacity, with special consideration for parcels directly affecting the Blackledge River, Railroad Brook, or Hop River.*

### Aquifer Protection for Groundwater Resources

*Protection of identified stratified drift aquifer areas, particularly recharge areas.*

### Farm Land

*Continuation of agricultural tradition in Bolton; preservation of large tracts of open space and prime agricultural soils.*

### Forest Land

*Preservation of healthy, dynamic forest ecosystem that promotes biological diversity.*

### Recreational Resources

*Existing or potential active or passive recreation, including existing or potential trails.*

### Proximity to Existing Protected Open Space

*Formation of links between preserved open spaces to enhance recreation opportunities, create wildlife corridors and promote orderly development in town.*

### Wildlife Corridors

*Creation or preservation of contiguous, undeveloped parcels, portions of parcels or stream belts to act as avian flyways and wildlife corridors.*

### Historical or Archeological Resource

*Preservation of historic sites, structures, cemeteries, village areas and/or archaeological resources.*

Scenic Beauty

*Preservation of a beautiful view, distinct geological feature or a site which enhances the aesthetic beauty of the town.*

Rare/Endangered Species

*Protection of existing or potential habitat for known or potential rare and endangered plant or animal species, including vernal pools.*

Potential for Future Development

*Location is near existing or anticipated highly developed areas, or the site is at risk for development due to site characteristics.*

Greenways

*Preservation or creation of corridors of open space that protect natural resources and may or may not include trails.*

Partnership

*A parcel which has the potential to be partially developed and partially preserved. Represents an effort to preserve a portion of a parcel which is unlikely to be preserved in its entirety.*

ESTIMATE OF PERMANENTLY PRESERVED AND TOWN OWNED  
LAND IN BOLTON AS OF NOVEMBER, 2004

<u>Property or Owner</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Gay City State Park	177.6
Freja Park	21.0

Bolton Notch State Park	69.5
Bolton Notch Pond	29.9
Indian Notch Park	27.3
Herrick Park	125.0
Bolton Land Trust	45.3
Manchester Land Conservation Trust	70.05
Northern CT Land Trust	26
Valley View Farm	
Under Conservation Restriction	90.4
State of Connecticut (former Toomey Property)	41
Bolton Lake	179.4
Tinker Pond	15
Conservation Easements	
Norma's Way	10
Hatfield Drive	8.7
Golf and Country Club Roads	32.5 (18.68 + 13.82)
Lookout Landing	4
Camp Meeting Road	1.01
Bolton Land Trust	<u>6.0</u>
Preserved Land	979.66 acres
Town Owned Land	
Firehouse and adjacent lot	2.97
Old firehouse	.34
Town Hall	1.16
Town Green	.40
Library and Gazebo Green	1.48
High School	54.84
Elementary School and Town Garage	46.5
Valley View Farm	
Available For Municipal Purposes	12.7
Land near Tumblebrook Road	<u>23.2</u>
Town Owned Land	143.59 acres
Total	1,123.25 acres

- Bolton's total acreage: 9,665 acres
- Approximate Bolton acreage permanently preserved: 10.1%
- Approximate Bolton acreage used or available for municipal purposes: 1.5%
- To reach the recommended 20% preservation, the town would need to preserve an additional 9.9%, or 956 acres, for a total of 1,935 preserved acres. If town owned land is considered, an additional 8.4%, or 811 acres, would need to be preserved.

#### DESCRIPTIONS OF EVALUATED PARCELS



These parcel numbers correspond to those on the parcel evaluation matrix and on the Property Evaluation Map.

The general category rankings are:

High:	Total score between	37 – 50
Medium:		29 – 36
Low:		15 – 28

<u>Parcel No.</u>	<u>General Ranking</u>	<u>Notable characteristics</u>
5	Medium	Contains a portion of Warner Swamp; possible cranberry bog; possible golden eagle sighted; steep slopes; high potential for development
6	Medium	Partly contiguous to Gay City State Park; contains a pond and stream; high development potential
7	Medium	Located on two sides of Old School Road (part of proposed trail incorporating Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road); has greenway potential for links along this trail and for continuation of preservation trend in this area; contiguous to land owned by Northern Connecticut Land Trust and just south of land owned by Bolton Land Trust; located in large unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; old mill site
15	High	Located on two sides of Old School Road (part of proposed trail incorporating Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road); has greenway potential for links along this trail and for continuation of preservation trend in this area; a portion was active farmland; contains stream that flows into Baker Brook; potential for recreational resource because is on Old School Road; enhances wildlife corridor; old mill site
23	Medium	Contiguous to land owned by Northern Connecticut Land Trust; located in large unfragmented forest area so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential along Old School Road and through connections with existing preserved land
28	Medium	Owned by Bolton Land Trust; located on Old School Road (part of proposed trail incorporating Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road); located in large unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
29	Low	Contiguous to land owned by Northern Connecticut Land Trust and the Bolton Land Trust; wildlife corridor and greenway potential high due to its location between preserved properties
30	Medium	Contains stream; located in area of large unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; high development and greenway potential (for linking already preserved land); area of 1800's religious crusade
31	Low	Located in area of large unfragmented forest; has greenway potential for preserving corridor of this forest; contains stream
33	Low	Greenway potential for preserving portion of large unfragmented forest
34	High	Contiguous to Bolton High School; scenic vista to the southeast; contains stream and wetlands system on eastern portion; high development potential; high potential as recreation resource; has greenway potential to link High School property with preserved land to the south; can enhance

		wildlife corridor
36	High	Contiguous to Bolton High School; northern boundary is Bailey Road (Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road); high recreation potential; enhances wildlife corridor and has greenway potential to link potential Bailey Road trail with preserved land to the south; railroad history
37	Medium	Contains stream; located in area of large unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential to link potential Bailey Road trail with preserved land to the south; area of 1800's religious crusade
38	Medium	Contains two streams; borders on Bailey Road (Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road); located in area of large unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential potential to link potential Bailey Road trail with preserved land to the south; area of 1800's religious crusade
43	Medium	Development potential high
44	Medium	Development potential high; possible partnership
45	Medium	Good forest quality; development potential high; near Revolutionary Road
46	Medium	Working farm with high visibility located near center of town; across street from Herrick Park and Bolton High School; scenic vista to southeast; high development potential
49	High	Located in center of town; contiguous to Herrick Park so expands existing open space; high recreational value as additional park land; creates link between library, town green, Valley View Farm and Herrick Park; contains pond and wetlands; high potential for development; possible partnership; area of 1800's religious crusade
59	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest; greenway potential high because could form partial link between Manchester Land Conservation Trust land and Freja Park; wildlife corridor; possible partnership
60	High	Contiguous to land of Manchester Land Conservation Trust; located above aquifer; scenic value; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as partial link between Manchester Land Conservation Trust land and Freja Park
63	High	Contiguous to land of Manchester Land Conservation Trust; located above aquifer; scenic value; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as partial link between Manchester Land Conservation Trust land and rail trail; railroad history
69	High	Contains marsh and stream; ridgeline; steep slopes; contiguous to rail trail; scenic value; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as partial link between Manchester Land Conservation Trust property, State Park Rail Trail and preserved land in Vernon; potential for recreational use; railroad history
72	High	Contiguous to Freja Park; contains marsh, ridgeline and steep slopes; located above aquifer; high recreation potential; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as link between Freja Park and Manchester Land Conservation Trust; possible partnership; railroad history

72A	High	Contiguous to Freja Park on south and State Park Rail Trail on north, so links two existing recreation areas; scenic beauty high for ridgeline; forest quality high; railroad history
72B	High	Contiguous to Freja Park; has long section of frontage along State Park Rail Trail, so links two existing recreation areas; scenic beauty high for ridgeline; forest quality high; important for wildlife corridor north toward Valley Falls Park in Vernon; railroad history
73	Medium	Located above aquifer; forest quality high; could provide a partial link between land of Manchester Land Conservation Trust and Freja Park and so has greenway potential; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor;
74	High	Forest quality high; potential link between Manchester Land Conservation Trust and State Park Rail Trail; high recreational potential and potential as wildlife corridor; development potential high
75	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential both as partial link between Manchester Land Conservation Trust property and as part of large forested area; high development potential
76	High	Contiguous to land of Manchester Land Conservation Trust; located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as link between Freja Park and Manchester Land Conservation Trust; high development potential
77	High	Bordered on three sides by land of Manchester Land Conservation Trust; located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as link between Freja Park and Manchester Land Conservation Trust; high development potential
82	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; has greenway potential as part of a large forested area; high development potential
83	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest; wildlife corridor potential high; high development potential
84	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
85	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
86	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
87	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
88	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; high potential for development
89	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; high potential for development
90	High	Contains pond; located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor; high potential for development
91	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor

92	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
93	High	Located above aquifer; located in unfragmented forest so enhances wildlife corridor
94	High	(Former Drive-In site): contiguous to Freja Park and Bolton Notch Pond; development potential high; possible partnership; railroad history
104	High	Bordered on three sides by land preserved by State of Connecticut; recreation, wildlife corridor and greenway potential high as a link between preserved properties; good forest quality; railroad, Notch and quarry history
109	High	Contains substantial wetlands system; good forest quality; recreation potential high; development potential high; possible partnership potential; wildlife and greenway potentials high due to location near large tracts of undeveloped land
110	Medium	Recreation, greenway and wildlife corridor potential; development potential high due to location near large tracts of undeveloped land;
113	High	Working farm; scenic vista to east; highly visible “gateway” to center of town; high development potential; possible partnership; near Revolutionary Road
114	High	Contains marsh and portion of Blackledge River; scenic vista to east; high development potential; possible partnership; near Revolutionary Road
115	Medium	Good forest quality; good potential as recreational resource; high development potential; possible partnership
116	High	Working farm; contains pond and streams which may be the headwaters of the Blackledge River; scenic value high; visible “gateway” to center of town; development potential high; near Revolutionary Road
121	Medium	Working farm; contains ponds and stream which leads to Blackledge River; high scenic value; high development potential
130	High	Contains large section of Blackledge River; is contiguous to conservation easement to the south; high value for wildlife; greenway potential to link with already preserved areas south along the Blackledge River and with Gay City State Park; possible partnership; development potential high
131	Low	Forest quality good; near Blackledge River
132	Medium	Working farm; high development potential; possible partnership
133	Medium	Part of farm; wildlife value due to proximity to Blackledge River; high development potential
134	High	A portion is owned by Bolton Land Trust; contains large portion of Blackledge River; recreational potential high; wildlife and greenway potential high as a link with already preserved areas south along the Blackledge River and with Gay City State Park
135	High	Contains large portion of Blackledge River; recreational potential high; wildlife and greenway potential high as a link with already preserved areas south along the Blackledge River and with Gay City State Park; high potential for development
143	Low	Part of working farm; scenic; development potential high

146	High	Eastern border is near Blackledge River and abuts a conservation easement; development potential high; value as greenway and wildlife corridor high; historic school site
150	High	Eastern portion contains wetlands associated with Blackledge River; contiguous to conservation easement to the north; greenway potential as a link with already preserved areas north along the Blackledge River and with Gay City State Park and development potential high
151	Medium	Contains a portion of the Blackledge River; is contiguous to Gay City State Park; development potential high; possible partnership
152	Medium	Contains some wetlands; contiguous to Gay City State Park; a portion is a working tree farm; development potential high; possible partnership
153	Medium	Contiguous to Gay City State Park; a portion is working tree farm; development potential high; possible partnership
154	High	Part working farm; contains pond; located in large unfragmented area of forest; high potential for development; high value for wildlife corridor and greenway
155	High	Across old road from Gay City State Park; contains stream; high value for wildlife corridor and greenway as a potential link between Tinker Pond and Gay City State Park; located in large unfragmented area of forest
156	Medium	Contains a portion of Blackledge River; contiguous to Gay City State Park; has wildlife corridor and greenway potential as a link between preserved areas to the north along the Blackledge River and Gay City State Park
157	High	Contiguous to Gay City State Park; contains stream; high value as wildlife corridor and greenway as a link to Gay City State Park; located in large unfragmented area of forest; high development potential
159	Medium	Part working farm; scenic vista to east; contains pond; high development potential
185	Low	High development potential due to location on Route 44 and front portion of property being in commercial zone; possible partnership
186	Low	Portion of working farm; high development potential
187	Medium	Working farm; scenic vista to and from Valley View Farm; development potential high
188	Medium	Portion of working farm; contains long section of Bolton Pond Brook; development potential high; possible partnership
189	Low	Contains a portion of Bolton Pond Brook; good forest value; partnership possible
191	Low	Part farm land; development potential high; possible partnership
206	Low	development potential high
207	Low	Contains stream
208	High	Contains two tributaries to Hop River and marsh; contiguous to Camp Johnson and State Park Rail Trail; located across railroad bed from Valley View Farm; high recreation and greenway potential to maintain a buffer along the railroad bed; railroad history
209	Low	Located across rail trail from Valley View Farm; high recreation and greenway potential to maintain a buffer along the State Park Rail Trail; contains stream that leads to Hop River; has frontage along railroad bed

210	High	(Camp Johnson): currently in use as Cub Scout camp; has large amount of frontage along the State Park Rail Trail; greenway potential high to maintain a buffer along the railroad bed and to continue preservation trend along the Rail Trail; contains two ponds and stream leading to Hop River; value as part of wildlife corridor high; is across rail trail from preserved open space; railroad history
211	Low	Contains a portion of Johnson Swamp and Hop River
213	Medium	Contains large section of Johnson Swamp and Hop River; Old Boston Turnpike history
242	High	Contains historic house in center of town; contiguous to Rose Farm; recreation value high; development potential high; scenic vista toward Valley View Farm and Hop River Valley; potential for partnership; high value as municipal land to expand town hall site; near Revolutionary Road
247	Medium	Southern boundary is Old Bailey Road (part of Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Road); historic value high; recreation potential high; previously had subdivision approval (lapsed); development potential high; located in large unfragmented forest area so enhances wildlife corridor
901	Low	(four lots reviewed together): back portion of lots contains portion of Warner Swamp; has subdivision approval and contains existing house; back portion valuable as wetland wildlife habitat

This Plan was prepared by the Town of Bolton Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Committee, whose members are: Richard L. Barger, Chairman; Gwen E. Marrion, Vice Chairman; Mary K. Radion, Rodney E. Parlee, representing the Conservation Commission, Mike Harrison and Mike Bonanno. Former Member Ken Geisler contributed to much of the drafting and prepared the maps.

Adopted by the Board of Selectmen on \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix 1

#### Resources Regarding the Economic Basis for Preserving Open Space

1. Geisler, Kenneth, Cost of Community Services Study, Bolton Connecticut (February,

- 1999).
2. American Farmland Trust, Fact Sheet, Cost of Community Services Studies (Washington, D.C., November, 2002).
  3. City of Middletown, Connecticut Cost of Community Services Analysis (Middletown, February, 1999).
  4. American Farmland Trust, The Costs of Community Services in Hebron, Connecticut (Northampton, MA, October, 1986).
  5. The Trust for Public Land, Development and Land Conservation in Connecticut, Thinking Through the Impacts on Local Property Taxes (New Haven, CT, May 1995).
  6. Lerner, Steve and Poole, William, The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space, How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line (San Francisco, 1999).
  7. Brighton, Deb, Community Choices, Thinking Through Land Conservation, Development, and Property Taxes in Massachusetts (Boston, 1999).
  8. Brabec, Elizabeth, “The Economics of Preserving Open Space”, in Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character, by Randall Arendt (American Planning Association: 1994).
  9. Ronald F. Van Winkle, “Budget Busters”, The Hartford Courant (May 11, 2003), sec. C, p. 4.