

**Hartford Parks and Recreation Commission**

**Thursday April 07, 2022**

**5 pm**

**Hartford Town Hall**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Commission Members in Attendance:** Brett Mayfield, Tom McCleary, Michael Vanasse, Allison Childs, Nikki Boyle

**Commission Members Absent:** David Crocco

**Others in Attendance:** Mary Erdei, Selectboard Liaison, Scott Hausler, Director, Jon Bouton, Town of Hartford Conservation Commission member

Meeting called to order: 5:03 pm by Brett Mayfield

The March minutes were approved.

**Citizen Comments:** none

**Commission Member Comments:** Allison commented on how hard everyone in Recreation Department works and on Scott's praise for the Department's employee's hard work, in his director's summary.

**Gate Opening – Kilowatt Field-** Scott commented about calls received from folks on gate not being opened to road leading down to Kilowatt field. This gate is normally kept closed during winter months as Town does not plow and liability concerns. Folks, birders, inquired why gate could not be opened sooner then beginning of April, if snow is gone. Gate is not usually opened until boat launch is ready, but there is no set date for opening. Scott thought gate could be opened sooner, weather permitting.

**Jon Bouton's Presentation on Town of Hartford's Tree Cut Plan**

Jon Bouton member of the Town of Hartford's Conservation Commission provided overview of the plan for doing selective harvesting of trees in the town forest.

Best forestry practices for the health of the forest, better habitat for animals and birds, carbon sequestration, education and wood products for the community were all stressed (see Town Forest Management Plan).

Tree Board approves of the Tree Cut Plan.

Plan for tree cut has yet to be approved by Selectboard.

### **Old Business –**

1. Discussion about use of the Departments Goals and Objectives Plan and Strategic Plan as a tool for improving the overall Recreational Department program. Scott cited pool project as example of how Plans used as a tool for Program improvement. In Strategic Plan, Strategy 1 (p.5): *Initiate participation in community needs survey*, pool project done partly in response to answers from a town wide survey.
2. Suggestion: A new group; Friends of Pool, like Friends of Barwood Arena, could be formed to support the new pool operations.
3. Scott reviewed the changes to the BOR, combining two locker rooms into one, etc., and reviewed remaining work to be done, upgrading of the HVAC system, etc.
4. Mike made a motion to accept the Strategic and Goals Strategies and Actions Plans. Allison seconded. All approved
5. Allison made a motion to accept the Program Plan 2022-2026, Tom seconded. All approved.
6. Scott briefly reviewed Proposed Plan for the summer.
  - a. VINS after school program.
  - b. Lego Club on Monday
7. A new position, Recreational Specialist has been approved and budgeted for. Specialist will run after school program and summer program. Position is currently being advertised for.
8. Pool project progresses. Pouring for concrete deck started 4/7/22.  
Second week of June – projected pool opening date.  
Ribbon cutting ceremony in July.  
Scott getting word out that life guard positions are vacant, need filling. Contact made with Hartford HS track coach and others.  
Pool Supervisor has been hired – Abby Roulliard  
Shane and Jay both passed pool operator certification. Also, certified to do staff safety training.  
Scott is working on update to Pool Management Operations manual.

**New Business –**

Comments on Community Center – none

Motion to adjourn and all accepted.

Meeting adjourned at 6:24 pm.

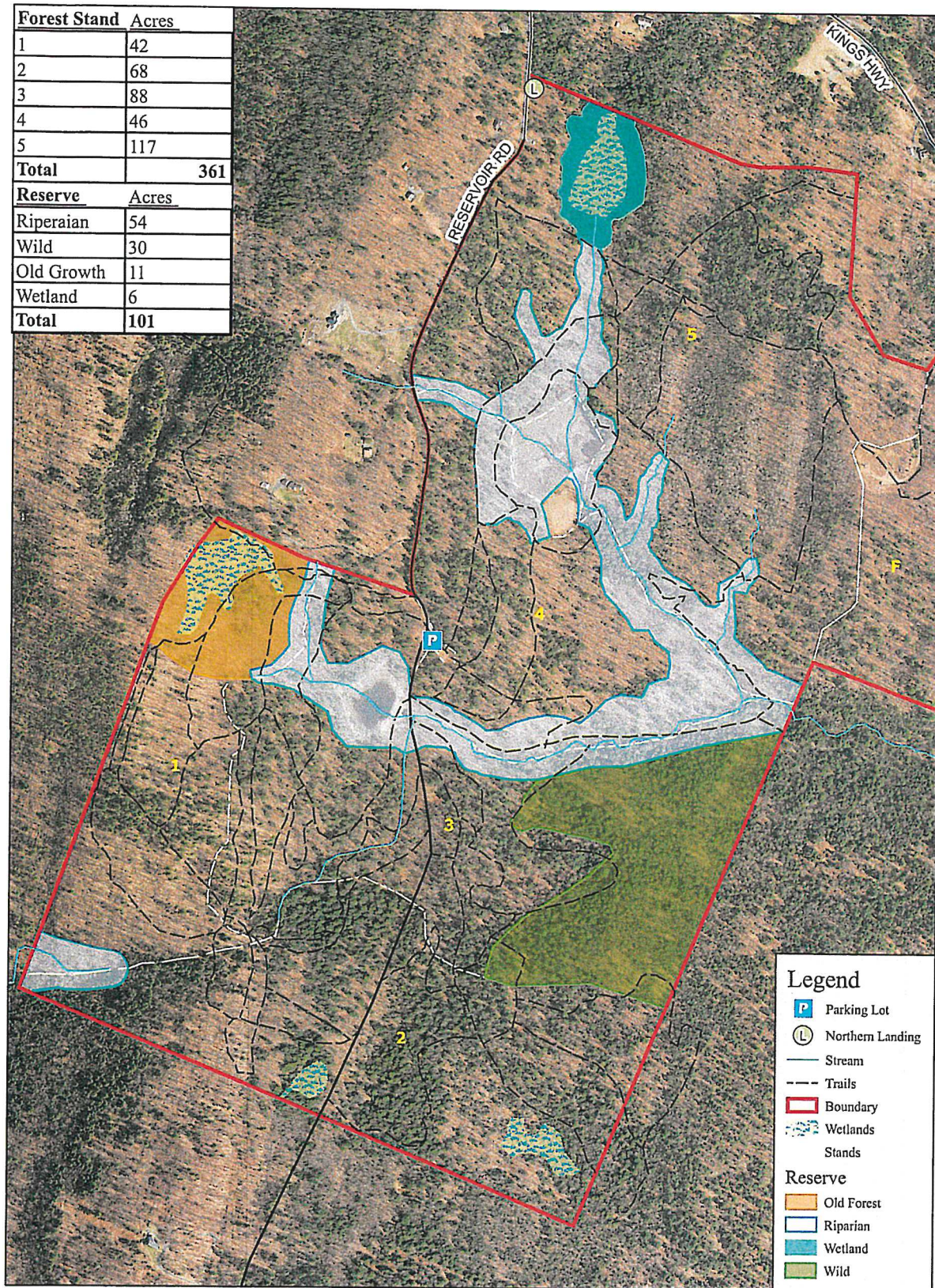
Next Meeting May 12, 2022, at 5:00 pm

Respectfully submitted: Tom McCleary, Commission Secretary

Signed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_



Forest Stand	Acres
1	42
2	68
3	88
4	46
5	117
<b>Total</b>	<b>361</b>
Reserve	Acres
Riparian	54
Wild	30
Old Growth	11
Wetland	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

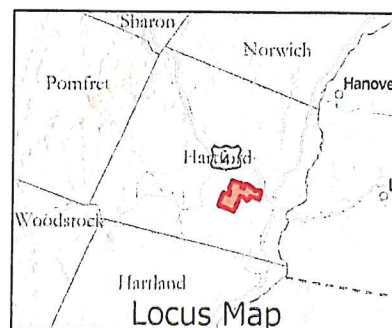


# Hartford Town Forest-423ac Hartford, VT

Scale: 1:7,500

0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet

Map created by: AJ Follensbee  
Date: 1-31-2022  
Map is for planning purposes only.  
It is not intended to convey ownership.  
Acres listed in acreage chart are mapped acres





## Hartford Town Forest Timber Sale (Appendix B)

Timber sale area 49.5ac (Includes Patch)

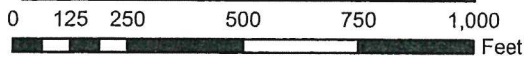
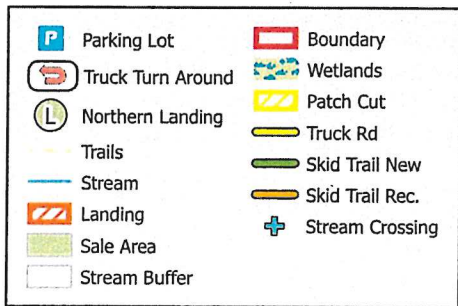
### Patch Cut Size 4.3ac

Scale: 1:5,000

Created by AJ Follensbee

Date: 8/30/2021

Map for planning purposes only





**Hartford Parks Recreation Department  
Spring/Summer 2022  
Proposed Programs**

<b>Youth Programs</b>	<b>Youth Programs</b>	<b>Toddler/Pre-school Programs</b>
Track & Field Youth Baseball/Softball, Youth Tennis Comics Classes Youth Karate  Youth Cheerleading (fall) NFL Flag Football (fall) Soccer (fall) Field Hockey (fall)	April Camp Ventures Summer Camp Ventures Wicked Coll for Kids - STEAM Camps Sports Camps Lego Club VINS Afterschool Program Summer Soccer Youth Lacrosse Summer Flag Football	Quickball Little Sticks Lacrosse Pre-K Soccer (Fall) Quick Start Tennis Story Hour with Hartford Library at Watson Park
<b>Teen Programs</b>	<b>Teen Programs</b>	<b>Aquatic Programs</b>
Counselor in Training Tennis Solid Strength and Conditioning Golf Programs with Fore-U Vermont E-Sports League	Teen Adventure Getaways Hartford Performing Arts Camp Broadway Ventures Camp Summer Baseball	Swim Lessons Adult Swim Open/Family Swim Teen Nights
<b>Adult Programs</b>	<b>Adult Programs</b>	<b>Adult Programs</b>
Tennis Programs Softball League or Drop-in Play Card Making Classes Home Décor Classes 25+ Adult Open Basketball	Wednesday Hikes Maxfield Monday Walks Golf Programs Pickleball Women's Ultimate Frisbee	Senior Van Trips Fishing Clinics Women's Mountain Biking Clinics Bugbee Center Baseball Trip
<b>Special Events/Family</b>	<b>Special Events/Family</b>	<b>Special Events/Family</b>
Summer Concert Series Green Up Day Independence Day Celebration Egg Scramble Eggs in the Park	Hurricane Hill 5k/10k Movies in the Park (3) Valley Quest Let's Go Fishing Block Party with HCC	Family Entertainment Series July - Parks & Rec Month Activities Hunter Safety Course Theme Park Ticket Passes
<b>Club Sports</b>		
Lacrosse Minicanes Cal Ripken Baseball		

**Parks & Recreation Department  
Significant Activity Report  
March 18th, 2022  
Respectfully Submitted By: Scott Hausler, Director**

**Program and Park Highlights**

- Our registration for summer camp opened up on March 13<sup>th</sup>. We took 588 registrations in the first 2 days. We have less than 100 slots available for the summer camp.
- Spring sport registration is open as well. Currently we are recruiting coaches and finalizing the planning for the programs.
- Boys Lacrosse Camp started on March 14<sup>th</sup> with 49 participants. The program is held at the Hartford High School where they have been outside using the tennis courts and going into the gym if needed.
- Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) and Hartford Parks & Recreation After School Program started on March 17<sup>th</sup> with White River School. We will be offering this program at the other elementary schools as well. We have 13 children enrolled in the program and a waitlist of 8 which shows the need is there. Parks & Recreation picks up the participants at the school and transports them to VINS. Parents pick up the participants at 5:30pm. This is a collaborative program between VINS and Parks & Recreation.
- Our first Ice Out Skate Party was held on March 12<sup>th</sup>. The event took place during our regular public skating at the WABA Arena. DJ Zack Davis performed music and provided lighting for the skate party. We also serviced refreshments.
- The Department continues to promote several seasonal jobs for the summer. We still have many openings for Camp Ventures and for the Sherman Manning Aquatic Facility. The Department is close to securing an individual who will become our Pool Supervisor. We are excited about this hire and look forward to having this individual managing the pool this summer.
- Work continues on the pool project. SSG is near completion with the plumbing work in the pump house. We are hopeful for continued warmth so Bread Loaf can begin the process of pouring the deck and plastering the pool. Amenities still need to be installed along with fencing and site work later in the spring.
- Our Spring and Summer Program Guide will be sent to the printer for publication. We will post the on-line version starting next week on hartfordrec.com and social media platforms. The printed version will be distributed through the schools in the coming weeks.
- The Wendell A Barwood Arena will host the Pot of Gold Tournament this weekend with games starting at 12 noon on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Games will continue throughout the weekend. Ice out procedures will begin Sunday night after the last game. The Pot of Gold Tournament is organized by the Woodstock Youth Hockey Association. This tournament hosts teams from all over New England and games are played at WABA, Union Arena in Woodstock and Champion Rink in Hanover.

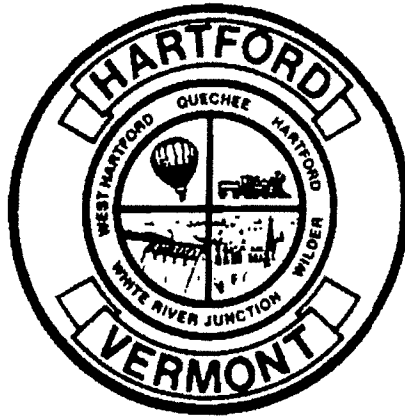
**Parks & Recreation Department**  
**Significant Activity Report**  
**April 4th, 2022**  
**Respectfully Submitted By: Scott Hausler, Director**

**Program and Park Highlights**

- Our office has received multiple scholarship requests through the Brian Hanson Scholarship Program. Scholarships are available for youth programs and pool passes for the summer.
- The Parks & Recreation Program Guide was delivered and distributed through the school system. A digital version of the guide can be found here <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/5798/Spring-Summer-2022> The guide is put together internally. Karen McNall, our Administrative Assistant does a great job putting the brochure together and we appreciate her hard work and efforts.
- Park permit requests continue to be submitted for the summer season. Several permit requests are under review. To understand the type of use the parks system receives outside of leisurely user by residents the following permit request have come from: Pearson Soccer Academy, Lightning Soccer Club, Upper Valley United F.C., Special Needs Support Center (2), Paul Mahoney dba Great Bay Tai Chi, White River Indie Films, Hartford Community Coalition, Bugbee Senior Center, Nancy Ray, Quechee Garden Club and Catherine Arcona.
- WABA Arena hosted the season ending Pot of Gold Tournament. Teams from all over New England visited the facility. Staff received multiple positive complements on the facility, its accommodations, cleanliness and provided great feedback. The facility is in the process of transitioning from an ice rink to home for Spring sports practices and summer camps. The ice is out and the facility is hosting High School Spring Sports. This is also the time that the staff re-paint the lobby, locker rooms, bathrooms and hallway areas and complete a deep clean from the winter season.
- The Department is starting to open the parks and doing initial cleanup from the winter season. We anticipate having most all the park locations and gates open for use. Amenities like the tennis courts and full-service bathrooms at Maxfield may take another week or two to get operational. Spring cleanup also includes installation of playground swings, playground safety checks, installation of nets.
- The Department completed the hiring process for the new part time Administrative Assistant. We are awaiting pre-employment screenings and will be making an announcement soon.
- Staff attending the Hartford High School H-Block to visit with students about summer employment opportunities this summer. We will continue visiting the school a few days a week prior to April Vacation. Staffing levels for the summer remain extremely low for the summer camp and the pool operation.
- The pool construction has geared back up. The pool deck pour is scheduled to start on Monday April 4<sup>th</sup>. Staff met with the IT Director and a few vendors to discuss communications and monitoring technology for the pool operations.



**HARTFORD, VT**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**DEPARTMENT**



**2022 Department Goals & Objectives**  
**Town Master Plan**  
**Goals Strategies & Actions**

“Our mission is to serve the needs of the community by offering  
lifelong learning through recreational and educational programming  
utilizing existing parks and facilities”

Updated 2003 – 2010   Updated 1/24/2011   Updated 1/5/2012   Updated 1/10/2013  
Updated 1/15/2014   Updated 1/31/2017   Updated 10/14/2019   Updated 11/12/2019  
Updated 3/11/2021   Updated 3/23/22

**Goal #1:**

Continue with CAPRA Reviews of various policies and procedures for 2025 Re-Accreditation. **In Progress**

**Objective:**

- Review consistently and train new staff on the process.
- Assign reviews according to the Plan Review Schedule.

**Goal #2:**

Keep key aspects of the office up to date and operations working with the MyRec System and other software components.

**Objective: In Progress**

- Require review of software and operations to be sure we are on the cutting edge of technology.
- Develop new pass system using bar codes for WABA, Pool and Rec Programs.
- Increase digital marketing by developing TikTok videos, Instagram and other Social Medial Platforms.

**Goal #3:** Keep the community continuously updated about programs and services. seek specialized training to enhance our offerings and improve our services.

**Objective: In Progress**

- Attend trainings and seminars. All staff participation. Achieve 20 CEU's for CPRP certifications.
- Send staff members to Certified Pool Operator Course to be certified in pool operations.
- Collaborate with other agencies in the area on programs to enhance our offerings.

**Goal #4: In Progress**

Continue to offer quality programs and events that meet the needs of our community that promote healthy lifestyles, community and wellness.

**Objective:**

- Work with groups, organizations and individuals developing programs offerings. Focus on sponsorships that help offset the cost of the programs.
- Utilize the needs assessment results to guide decisions.

**Goal #5:** Ensure the wellbeing of staff, advocating for and allocating resources in a sustainable manner. **In Progress**

**Objectives:**

- Continue to evaluate the capacity of the Department (Staff/Volunteers) in the programs we offer and facilities that we operate.
- Complete evaluations with employees and have employees evaluate supervisory staff.
- Support leadership team staff by offering training opportunities and then work to support their efforts in providing leadership support to staff.

**Goal #6:** Maintain and develop parks and facilities to best serve the needs of the community in collaborative, efficient, productive and economic manner. **In Progress**

**Objectives:**



- Continue to use the past needs assessment results while investigating alternate uses of parks and green spaces.
- Work with organizations and businesses in collaborative ways that support parks.

Goal #7: Improve the clear expectations and guidelines for the users of athletic fields and parks. **In Progress**

Objectives:

- Continue to improve existing application forms through on-line pdf fillable options.
- Develop post use report for small and large functions.
- Report out results of each permitted usage to assure guidelines are met.
- Develop and put into use a post usage survey for permit users.

Goal #8: Work on development of a community wide needs assessment survey in 2025.

Objective:

- Distribute various surveys specific to needs identified in previous needs assessment.
  - Community Center specific survey to identify what a community facility might look like within the community. .

Goal #9: Promote scholarship program within the community. **In Progress**

Objective:

- Continue to collaborate with the Hartford School District, HCRS, and Upper Valley Haven to identify those individuals who may benefit from the Brian Hanson Scholarship Fund.
- Direct marketing for the Brian Hanson Scholarship Fund will occur on a quarterly basis. In-direct marketing will occur on a weekly basis. This would include advertisements in our Constant Contact campaign, hartfordrec.com, and school fliers.
- Brian Hanson Scholarship Fund Application may be downloaded at <https://www.hartford-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/4861/Brian-Hanson-Scholarship-Application>
- Upon request, hard copies of the Brian Hanson Scholarship Fund Application will be mailed, along with a self-enclosed stamped envelope.
- Continue working with the Hanson Family and the Chamber of Commerce for the fundraising support for the scholarship program.

Goal #10: Develop and implement pool opening plan and operation. **In Progress**

Objective:

- Opening spring of 2022 with a community celebration
- Provide a positive aquatic experience for the community through successful operations through staffing and community use.
- Market and promote this community facility success.

Goal #11: Implement a comprehensive recycling and composting plan/program for HPR sponsored events and for HPR operated facilities. **In Progress**

Objectives:

- Utilize best management practices to design a plan/program

- Design a public awareness raising campaign to educate users and permittees of the program and their responsibilities
- Identify groups/organizations that can assist in implementation/facilitation of plan/program during HPR events

## **Town of Hartford – Master Plan - Parks & Recreation**

### **A. Organizational**

**Goal 1: Continue collaboration and adapt to the community's cultural and demographic make-up. In Progress**

**Strategy 1: Maintain a variety of recreational opportunities for all residents.**

Actions:

- Continue to collaborate with special interest groups to provide recreation programs and special events; Polar Express, Covered Bridges Half Marathon, Balloon fest and Special Events.
- Continue to explore the possibility of constructing a river trail from Downtown White River Junction to Ratcliffe Park, which is part of the Latham Works Community Group.
- Continue relationships with the Lebanon/Mascoma Trail Network to connect with White River Junction.

**Goal 2: Secure a plan that will guarantee funding to maintain our existing recreational programs, resources and facilities. In Progress**

**Strategy 1: Develop financial giving opportunities and establish secure funding resources.**

Actions:

- Establish a capital reserve fund to secure funds in the operating budget to go toward existing capital maintenance and repair of existing facilities.
- Develop a give a gift catalog that shows images and descriptions of park and recreation related items that the Department can use through a donation.
- Establish a revolving fund for recreation programs.
- Identify cost-saving maintenance practices and landscaping options for parks and public spaces.

**Goal 3: Implement or participate in a community-wide needs assessment, maintaining a 4 to 5 year cycle. Completed in 2021 – New Survey in 2026**

**Strategy 1: Initiate participation in community needs surveys or develop internally to collect data on a 4 to 5 year cycle.**

Actions:

- Continue to demonstrate through evaluation of community need through needs assessment and program evaluations for desired new programs and facility offerings.

**Goal 4: Create a sub-committee consisting of a variety of vested interests to establish a community center. In Progress with Rec Commission**



**Strategy: Meet with community partners and stakeholders to identify a vested need for a community indoor recreation facility.**

Action:

- a. Create a steering committee to focus on the feasibility of developing a community center for the Town of Hartford. Look at developing in collaboration with the Bugbee Senior Center.

## **B. Programs**

**Goal 1: Have services and facilities meet the community's cultural and demographic make-up. In Progress**

**Strategy 1: Maintain a variety of recreational opportunities for residents of all ages, cultural diversity, and abilities to advocate and promote a healthier community population.**

Actions:

- a. Plan and implement town-wide indoor and outdoor active-living programs for families and adults.
- b. Maintain community wide events by enhancing its program through collaborations with other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Merchant Associations.
- c. Continue participation in the Hartford Community Coalition.

**Strategy 2: Facilitate intergenerational social awareness and diversity. In Progress**

Action:

- a. Create and implement two intergenerational art/music programs per year (cooking, quilting, knitting and card making).

**Strategy 3: Meet the programming logistics of working parents through a more on-line presence. In Progress**

Actions:

- a. Continue to engage in social media outlets to promote further programs and offerings.

**Strategy 4: Build on existing coalitions within the community and identify new opportunities. In Progress**

Actions:

- a. Continue to collaborate with special interest groups to provide recreation programs and special events: Polar Express, Covered Bridges Half Marathon, Balloon Fest and other special events.
- b. Continue to explore the possibility of constructing a river trail from Downtown White River Junction to Ratcliffe Park with the Latham Works Community Group.
- c. Continue relationships with the Lebanon/Mascoma Trail Network to connect with White River Junction.

**Strategy 5: Continue to promote programs that create one-town awareness versus a one-**

**village image.**

**Actions:**

- a. Program activities that create visitation to each village (Valley Quest, Tree Walk tour and fun run/walk events)
- b. Maintain the Parks & Recreation motto of five villages, three rivers, one town.

**Goal 2: Secure a plan that will guarantee funding to maintain existing recreational programs, resources and facilities. Not Initiated**

**Strategy 1: Develop financial giving opportunities and establish secure funding resources.**

**Actions:**

- a. Establish a capital reserve fund to secure funds in our operating budget to go toward existing capital maintenance and repair of existing facilities.
- b. Develop a give a gift catalog that shows images and descriptions of park and recreation related items that the Department can use through a donation.
- c. Establish a revolving fund for recreation programs.
- d. Identify cost-saving maintenance practices and landscaping options for parks and public spaces.

**Goal 3: Provide and maintain desired and high-quality programs and services.**

**Strategy 1: Create short-term and long-term measurable assessments of Parks and Recreation services and facilities.**

**Actions:**

- a. Use evaluations at the end of every recreational program to identify what worked, didn't work and desired new programs.
- b. Maintain the Survey Monkey online program and apply the data to evaluation summaries.
- c. Implement or participate in a community wide needs assessment and program evaluations, every 4 to 5 years.

**Goal 4: Evaluate the need for a community indoor recreational facility.**

**Strategy 1: Engage community partners and stakeholders in the process.**

**Action:**

- b. Create a steering committee to focus on the feasibility of developing a community center for the Town of Hartford. **In Progress with Rec Commission**
- c. Consider collaboration with the Bugbee Senior Center.

**Goal 5: Integrate Town and School Services and Facilities**

**Strategy 1: Have department youth & adult athletics become an integral part of developing an entire town/school sport programs and facilities.**

**Actions:**

- a. Maintain relationship with Hartford High School Athletics using their system to aid in the development of the youth sport and recreation programs.



- b. Maintain representation on the Hartford Field Facility Use Committee.

**Goal 6: Maintain the rural character of our community landscape.**

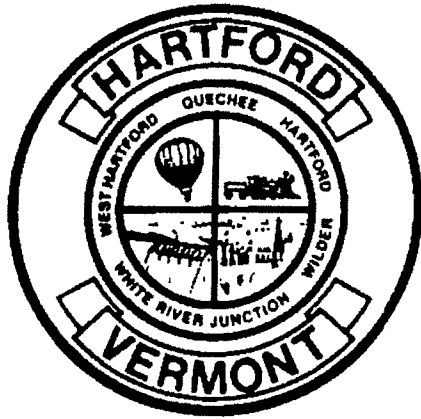
**Strategy 1: Facilitate community appreciation of preserving opens spaces and forested areas as recreational resources.**

**Action:**

- a. Schedule community conservation/environmental educational programs over the course of a year working in partnership with the Hartford Conservation Commission.



**HARTFORD, VT  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
DEPARTMENT**



**Strategic Plan**

**2020 - 2025**

“Our mission is to serve the recreational needs of the community by offering lifelong learning through recreational and educational programming utilizing existing parks and facilities.”

Adopted by the Hartford Parks and Recreation Commission May 13, 2004  
Updated and approved at Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, December 2006  
Updated and approved at Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, December 2011  
Reviewed objectives at Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting December 2012, 2014  
Updated by Parks and Recreation and Staff December 2015  
Updated by Parks and Recreation and Staff April 12, 2018  
Updated by Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting, March 14, 2019  
Reviewed by Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting April 7, 2022

## **Hartford Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Plan**

### **Introduction**

The Hartford Parks and Recreation strategic plan is an effort by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Department staff to prepare for the long-range future of the department from 2018 through 2023.

This strategic plan is an attempt to follow the adopted vision and mission statements of the department and to establish a path of direction for the department. This strategic plan will give the necessary direction to the staff in developing programs, short and long term capital projects, addressing social community needs and managing our natural resources.

Several of the goals and objectives mirror revised 2018 Town Master Plan (Parks and Recreation sections) and the department administrative yearly goals and objectives. This strategic plan was developed utilizing the strategic plan model outlined in the book “Management of Parks and Recreation Agencies,” NRPA Publication 1999.

The components of the strategic plan consist of:

- The Vision Statement
- The Mission Statement
- Environmental Scan (SWOT analysis)
- Goals
- Objectives (action plan)
- Time Line of Action Plan

### **Vision and Mission Statements**

#### **Vision:**

Something for Everyone – where the citizens of Hartford and surrounding communities recognize the vital necessity of recreation through diverse programs that reach all, regardless of age, gender, race and economic backgrounds. A department that cooperates with all community groups to bring a variety of recreation opportunities to the citizens of Hartford. The parks and facilities are maintained at the highest quality and improved on a regular basis to meet the future needs of the community.



**Mission:**

Our mission is to serve the recreational needs of the community by offering life long learning through educational programming utilizing existing parks and facilities.

**Environmental Scan (SWOT analysis)**

The Environmental Scan is a “look” at the department and the Town of Hartford community through the process of a SWOT analysis. The analysis encompassed the reviewing of the Department’s and Community Trends, Issues, Opportunities, Strengths and Weaknesses/Threats.

**Trends:**

- Individual awareness of health and wellness.
- Increase in community conservation / environmental activities.
- Youths specializing in one specific sport year round.
- Increased demand (higher expectations) on facility / park amenities and types of activities provided at facilities / parks to citizens.
- Loss of outdoor pool venue for community.
- Growing population and growing diversity of population make-up.
- Increase in the lack of outdoor experiences and increase in obesity.
- Increase in activity focused on community collaboration/cooperation – partnerships.
- Needs/demands of older adults (55 years and over) increasing.
- Increase in social networking services and use of the internet.

**Issues:**

- Quality of Life (maintaining)
- Obesity – people are overweight - creating health concerns.
- Five village town (transportation challenges and lack of one location for all activities)
- Lack of consolidated Park Division storage.
- Maintaining current facilities before building new.

**Opportunities:**

- Strong presence of community / civic activities (STORM, Youth Sports Clubs, active Chamber of Commerce, environmental groups and Lions/Rotary/Kiwanis clubs, Hartford Community Coalition)
- Utilization of Maxfield property
- Continued Master Plan development of Kilowatt Park
- Diversity of the demographic makeup of the five villages and potential connecting trail system
- Replacement of the Sherman Manning Pool through a community driven process.

**Strengths:**

- Professional staff
- Quality programs
- Park system
- Volunteers (individual and groups)

**Weaknesses/Threats:**

- Overall park athletic field and facility maintenance awareness to keep the properties in excellent condition (example: WABA / Pool / Maxfield)
- Tax base and constraints on Town budget to fund Park and Recreation delivery of services.
- General economic development of region and local area.
- Not prepared for the influx of an older population and increase in the general population.

**Recreation**

**A. Organizational**

**Goal 1: Continue collaboration and adapt to the community's cultural and demographic make-up.**

**Strategy 1: Maintain a variety of recreational opportunities for all residents.**

**Actions:**

- a. Continue to collaborate with special interest groups to provide recreation programs and special events; Pol Express, Covered Bridges Half Marathon, Balloon fest and Special Events.
- b. Continue to explore the possibility of constructing a river trail from Downtown White River Junction Ratcliffe Park, which is part of the Latham Works Community Group.
- c. Continue relationships with the Lebanon/Mascoma Trail Network to connect with White River Junction.

**Goal 2: Secure a plan that will guarantee funding to maintain our existing recreational programs, resources and facilities.**

**Strategy 1: Develop financial giving opportunities and establish secure funding resources.**

Actions:

- a. Establish a capital reserve fund to secure funds in the operating budget to go toward existing capital maintenance and repair of existing facilities.
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**Goal 3: Implement or participate in a community-wide needs assessment, maintaining a 4 to 5 year cycle.**

**Strategy 1: Initiate participation in community needs surveys or develop internally to collect data on a 4 to 5 year cycle.**

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**Strategy: Meet with community partners and stakeholders to identify a vested need for a community indoor recreation facility.**

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## **B. Programs**

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- c. Continue participation in the Hartford Community Coalition.

**Strategy 2: Facilitate intergenerational social awareness and diversity.**

Action:

Hartford Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan

- a. Create and implement two intergenerational art/music programs per year (cooking, quilting, knitting and card making).

**Strategy 3: Meet the programming logistics of working parents through a more on-line presence.**

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**Strategy 5: Continue to promote programs that create one-town awareness versus a one-village image.**

Actions:

- a. Program activities that create visitation to each village (Valley Quest, Tree Walk tour and fun run/walk even
- b. Maintain the Parks & Recreation motto of five villages, three rivers, one town.

**Goal 2: Secure a plan that will guarantee funding to maintain existing recreational programs, resources and facilities.**

**Strategy 1: Develop financial giving opportunities and establish secure funding resources.**

Actions:

- a. Establish a capital reserve fund to secure funds in our operating budget to go toward existing capital maintenance and repair of existing facilities.
- b. Develop a give a gift catalog that shows images and descriptions of park and recreation related items that the Department can use through a donation.
- c. Establish a revolving fund for recreation programs.
- d. Identify cost-saving maintenance practices and landscaping options for parks and public spaces.



**Goal 3: Provide and maintain desired and high-quality programs and services.**

**Strategy 1: Create short-term and long-term measurable assessments of Parks and Recreation services and facilities.**

Actions:

- a. Use evaluations at the end of every recreational program to identify what worked, didn't work and desired new programs.
- b. Maintain the Survey Monkey online program and apply the data to evaluation summaries.
- c. Implement or participate in a community wide needs assessment and program evaluations, every 4 to 5 years.

**Goal 4: Evaluate the need for a community indoor recreational facility.**

**Strategy 1: Engage community partners and stakeholders in the process.**

Action:

- b. Create a steering committee to focus on the feasibility of developing a community center for the Town of Hartford.
- c. Consider collaboration with the Bugbee Senior Center.

**Goal 5: Integrate Town and School Services and Facilities**

**Strategy 1: Have department youth & adult athletics become an integral part of developing an entire town/school sport programs and facilities.**

Actions:

- a. Maintain relationship with Hartford High School Athletics using their system to aid in the development of the youth sport and recreation programs.
- b. Maintain representation on the Hartford Field Facility Use Committee.

**Goal 6: Maintain the rural character of our community landscape.**

**Strategy 1: Facilitate community appreciation of preserving open spaces and forested areas as recreational resources.**

Action:

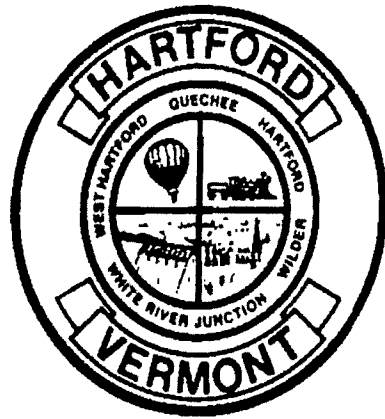
- a. Schedule community conservation/environmental educational programs over the course of a year working in partnership with the Hartford Conservation Commission.

**Time Line**

The time line is a matrix showing anticipated schedule when objectives / actions will be implemented and/or the start of an objective. The time line activities will vary due to the budget constraints, staff ability to accomplish tasks, political climate and community/economic development. (see attached matrix)

	Based on a calendar year				
Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Organizational</b>					
1a. Collaborate on special events	x	x	x	x	x
2a. Plan to maintain existing facilities (WABA / Pool / Maxfield)	x	x	x	x	x
2b. Continue Trail Projects and Maintenance of Trails	x	x	x	x	x
2c. Community Center Specific Feasibility Study	x	x			
3a. Needs Assessment				x	
4a. Give a Gift Catalog	x	x			
5a. Continue collaboration with School on Programs and Projects	x	x	x	x	x
5b. Establish field usage committee with organizations using parks		x	x		
<b>Programs</b>					
1a. Enhance adult program offerings for elder citizens	x	x			
2a. Re-establish a Glory Days Festival		x	x	x	x
2b. Continue program partnership with HCC	x	x	x	x	x
3a. Maintain Survey Monkey	x	x	x	x	x
4a. Enhance youth program offerings	x	x	x	x	x
5a. Enhance programming, including turf program at WABA			x	x	x
<b>Social</b>					
1a. Two intergeneration programs	x	x	x	x	x
2a. Visibility in each village	x	x			
2b. Branding of Dept. through promo materials	x	x			
3a. Conservation and environmental education		x	x		
<b>Prepare for 15 CAPRA review</b>	x	x	x		

**HARTFORD, VT**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**DEPARTMENT**



**PROGRAM PLAN**  
**2022-2026**

“Our mission is to serve the recreational needs of the community by offering lifelong learning through recreational and educational programming utilizing existing parks and facilities.

Updated 10/05   Updated 4/7/22  
Updated 10/08  
Updated 3/09  
Updated 10/12  
Updated 1/14  
Updated 2/19

# **Hartford Parks and Recreation Department**

## **Program Plan**

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Updated 10/05   Updated 4/7/22  
Updated 10/08  
Updated 3/09  
Updated 10/12  
Updated 1/14  
Updated 2/19



## **I.      Introductory**

The Hartford Parks and Recreation Department's Program Plan contains program management objectives and strategies for programs and services for the years 2018-2022. The plan is reviewed and edited on a bi-annual basis. The purpose of the plan is to document the services and programs offered in an effort to continuously seek improvements and meet the changing recreation needs of the community. Recreation services and programs are provided by the Recreation Division. All of the areas offer fee based and free programs. Typically, the fees charged are to off-set any expenses. The Recreation Division is also responsible for many special events including: Independence Day Celebration, Glory Days Festival, Valentine's Day Dance for Daughters, Trunk or Treat, Egg Scramble, Let's Go Fishing Clinics, Hurricane Trail Race and an Ice Fishing Derby to name a few.

## **II.     Vision**

The residents of Hartford and the surrounding communities recognize the vital importance of natural places and recreation. Through diverse programming that aims to reach all, regardless of age, gender, race, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background, the Hartford Parks & Recreation Department cooperates with community groups to bring a variety of recreational opportunities to local residents. The department is committed to maintaining the highest quality parks and facilities while dedicating itself to improving its program offerings and practices to meet current and future needs.

## **III.    Mission**

Our mission is to serve the recreational needs of the community by offering lifelong learning through recreational and educational programming utilizing existing parks and facilities.

## **IV.    Market**

The Hartford Parks and Recreation Department offers programs that fit into one or more of the following Primary Objectives: Health / Fitness, Cooperative Awareness, Leisure Time (educate for leisure). The Hartford Parks and Recreation Department serves all ages.

Through these programs, several opportunities and involvement levels can be obtained. Opportunities include; Physical, Intellectual, General and Creative. Participant's involvement levels are broken into two areas: Physical Recreation and Intellectual Recreation. Physical Recreation can be either strenuous or low key. Intellectual Recreation could be challenging or sedentary.

## **V. Goals and Objectives**

The goals and objectives are developed by the Recreation Commission and Department Staff utilizing the Town Master Plan, the department's Strategic Plan and program evaluations, along with community trends and opportunities.

The department has yearly goals, along with short- and long-term goals which are outlined in both the Strategic plan (short term 3-5 years) and the Town Master plan (long term 5-10 years) See Appendix: Program Design Goals and Objectives Matrix.

The determination of which programs to offer comes from previous program evaluations along with community trends. The Director and Superintendent of Recreation Programs presents the Parks and Recreation Commission a list of proposed programs for the upcoming seasons. This is done in July (Fall and Winter) and January (Spring and Summer). The Department works with a number of volunteer run, non-profit organizations including Hartford Hoops Foundation, Hartford Baseball and Softball Association, Hartford Youth Football, Upper Valley Hockey Association, Hartford Youth Lacrosse Club, and Hartford Soccer Club.

## **VI. Operations**

The Hartford Parks and Recreation Department core make up of facilities, staffing and program opportunities allows for a good mixture of programming ideas and safe areas for recreating. The following lists the physical inventory of the department.

### **Facilities:**

- Wendell A Barwood Arena
- Sherman Manning Aquatic Facility (Operates Mid-June through the end of August)
- 13 Established Parks
- Maxfield Outdoor Sports Complex
- Several trails for hiking, mountain biking, or cross-country skiing
- Park shelters and bandstands

**Staffing:**

- 6 Full time and 2 part time year-round staff members
- 25-30 Seasonal staff members
- Many, many volunteers

**Program Opportunities:**

- Youth Athletics and Programs
- Camps
- Cultural Programs
- Family Events
- Adult Athletics
- Educational Programs
- Special Events

Full time and seasonal employees, as well as volunteer coaches, follow some national standards for their specific areas. Some of these are as follows:

- American Heart Association
- NAYS (National Alliance For Youth Sports).
- Upper Valley Recreation Association Youth Sport Standard/Guidelines
- NRPA/CAPRA Standards
- New England Park and New England Sports Turf Guidelines

**VII. Program Segmentation / Program Opportunities**

The Hartford Parks and Recreation Department reaches out to all of our community members with programming for all ages; from athletics, to health and fitness, cultural and educational programs, and leisure activities using our facilities to ensure that everyone has the opportunity for recreation and leisure. The department makes available program equipment and other resources to help promote the healthy living lifestyle.

**IX. Recreation Programming Selection and Planning:**

There are multiple ways to begin program planning. Often, new program and service ideas are a result of citizen request, colleague recommendation, survey, best practice, or field trend. Staff may look to needs assessments, census data, trends, similar programs at other agencies, or talk with the intended audience

to begin the planning process. A community inventory is also taken to avoid duplication of service or to look for ways to partner. Once the idea has emerged, the HPRD Staff follows the steps below:

- Step 1: A staff member (typically the Superintendent of Recreation Programs) is assigned to research and begin work on the Program Plan Outline. The staff member reports back to their direct supervisor. The initial Program Plan Outline work includes name of program, date, time, location, supplies, staffing, volunteers, target audience, and expenses.
- Step 2: The outline is next discussed with the Recreation Director to determine viability. If the program is to proceed, the staff member completes the Program Plan Outline. Marketing efforts are coordinated with the Administrative Assistant and materials are prepared. Program details are entered into the online registration system, the HPRD website, and social media. Print materials may also be distributed.
- Step 3: The program or service is offered to the public via HPRD staff, program volunteer or recreation contractor.
- Step 4: The program is evaluated by the participants and staff. Evaluation results are discussed, and results are considered for the next offering.
- Step 5: Under the Superintendent of Recreation Programs and the Recreation Director's approval, the program is amended, accepted, or canceled.

#### **X. Participant Involvement:**

The HPRD highly encourages and seeks participant input in recreation programming. Typically, ideas and suggestions are provided via the website, social media, staff and participant and/or parent conversation, surveys, needs assessment, and telephone calls.

#### **XI. Program and Service Determinants:**

The HPRD uses the following determinants in the planning process and evaluation of programs and services:

- Conceptual foundations of play, recreation and leisure
- Organizational agency philosophy mission, vision and goals and objectives
- Constituent interests and desired needs
- Creation of a constituent-centered culture
- Experiences desirable for clientele
- Community opportunities



- Facility or space availability

Often, not all determinants are met with the initial implementation of a program or service. HPRD carefully evaluates each program to determine sustainability and desired outcomes.

## XII. Partnerships:

Partnerships are vital to the success of many programs and events. Partnerships come in many forms including: instruction and facilitation, marketing, facility usage, volunteers, financial or material, and planning. The HPRD has numerous partners in the community including: hospitals, schools, higher education institutions, youth associations, businesses, individuals, non-profits, municipalities, and other parks and recreation agencies. The HPRD utilizes partnerships as a way to reach as many citizens as possible. Programs like Splash Night with the Upper Valley Aquatic Center, Elves Workshop with the Youth in Action, and Polar Express with The White River Junction Rotary Club. These examples of programs are just a few of the many different groups with which we have a working relationship.

## XIII. Time Line

	Based on a calendar year				
Action	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>Organizational</b>					
1a. Collaborate on special events	x	x	x	x	x
2a. Plan to maintain existing facilities (WABA / Pool / Maxfield)	x	x	x	x	x
2b. Continue Trail Projects and Maintenance of Trails	x	x	x	x	x
2c. Community Center Specific Feasibility Study	x	x			
3a. Needs Assessment				x	
4a. Give a Gift Catalog	x	x			
5a. Continue collaboration with School on Programs and Projects	x	x	x	x	x
5b. Establish field usage committee with organizations using parks		x	x		
<b>Programs</b>					
1a. Enhance adult program offerings for elder citizens	x	x			
2a. Re-establish a Glory Days Festival		x	x	x	x
2b. Continue program partnership with HCC	x	x	x	x	x
3a. Maintain Survey Monkey	x	x	x	x	x
4a. Enhance youth program offerings	x	x	x	x	x
5a. Enhance programming, including turf program at WABA			x	x	x
<b>Social</b>					
1a. Two intergeneration programs	x	x	x	x	x
2a. Visibility in each village	x	x			
2b. Branding of Dept. through promo materials	x	x			

Hartford Parks and Recreation Department  
Program Plan

3a. Conservation and environmental education		x	x		
<b>Prepare for 15 CAPRA review</b>	x	x	x		

**X. Annual Review**

The program plan is reviewed bi-annually (Spring & Summer / Fall & Winter) and is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Recreation Programs. The Director and Superintendent of Recreation Programs develop and distribute program evaluations to all participants. Participants are the main feedback that is used for the future of that program, however other things like community needs surveys also provide essential feedback. Population's needs and demands and preferences of the community all play a part.

## Hartford Town Forest Resource Management Plan Update, April 14, 2020

A stated goal outlined in Hartford's Town Plan is to "maintain and enhance Hartford's heritage of working farm and forest lands as part of a sustainable, environmentally sound, resource based-economy. The plan encourages sound forest management practices for private and public owners including adherence to the State of Vermont Required Acceptable Management Practices to protect natural resources. The Hartford Conservation Commission (HCC), having been authorized by the Selectboard to manage the Town Forest recommends that the Town apply these management and conservation goals to the Town Forest.

The Town of Hartford owns and manages forest land in the Hurricane Watershed. This includes the 423-acre Hartford Town Forest (HTF) and the 142-acre Hurricane Forest Wildlife Refuge Park. The Hurricane Watershed will continue to be managed for a variety of uses including wildlife habitat, forest resources and recreation. Periodically, the Forest Management Plan for these properties is updated. The first Forest Management Plan, completed in 1984, was followed by a timber harvest. The Forest Management Plan was updated in 1998. Two small, selection timber harvests, including a salvage of windblown oak occurred in 2005 and 2008. The most recent update was completed in 2011. In addition, in 2002, the Town developed a Recreation Management Plan for the Hartford Town Forest to guide the increasing amount of recreation that occurs in the largest piece of Town-owned forestland and balance recreation with the natural resource qualities. Other studies commissioned by the HCC for the Hurricane Watershed include:

- ☐ Biological Inventory of Amphibians, 2010
- ☐ Forest Bird Habitat Assessment, 2010
- ☐ Habitat Assessment and Bat Inventory, 2011

The Hurricane Forest Wildlife Refuge Park will continue to be managed by the Hartford Recreational Department in a non-intrusive manner that does not include hunting and future tree harvesting. This will allow the Park to continue to naturally develop old forest characteristics. The Hartford Town Forest is managed by the HCC and in October 2019 the HCC approved a motion to update the existing 2011 Forest Management Plan including planning for a timber harvest in Section E of the attached map for the winter of 2021. Windsor County Forester, Mr. A.J. Follensbee, has agreed to review and update the Forest Management Plan and assist in the planning of the 2021 timber harvest.

### Purposes

The reasons for a timber sale are:

- ☐ **Increase Diversity:** Increasing the diversity of tree species and habitats will improve the forest's resilience to future disturbances such as climate change and natural disruptions (e.g. Emerald Ash Borer; windstorms; species migrations).
- ☐ **Wildlife:** To maintain diverse bird and wildlife habitat.

- **Education:** Public demonstration of sustainable forestry practices and local renewable forest products.
- **Income:** Any decision on income generated from tree harvesting will be made by the Hartford Selectboard. The HCC will recommend that funds be added to the Hartford Conservation Fund which is used on local Hartford conservation projects, such as trail maintenance, invasive species control and conservation of parcels to protect important natural resources.

**Proposed Schedule:** The proposed schedule below was developed in the winter of 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions. Since it is presently unknown when public meetings will be allowed, this schedule will need to be adjusted. Note that two primary requirements: public input will be solicited at least twice before the Resource Plan is finalized and any actual logging will need to be performed during the winter to minimize forest impacts.

To solicit resident input on the Hartford Town Forest Resource Management Plan the HCC is proposing the following public outreach and schedule.

- **Initial Public Meeting:** In late April to early May 2020 the HCC will host an initial public meeting in the HTF to present the purpose, scope, and schedule for the proposed plan update to obtain Hartford resident input.
- **Prepare Draft Plan:** May 2020 Mr. Follensbee prepares draft updated plan and harvesting documents.
- **June/July 2020:** A second public meeting to present the draft updated Resource Plan and tree harvesting documents.
- **Early July 2020:** Mr. Follensbee finalizes Resource Plan and harvesting documents.
- **Late July 2020:** Hartford Selectboard approval of Resource Plan and harvesting documents.
- **August 2020:** Timber sale is marked.
- **September 2020:** Logger bidding of harvesting.
- **Early to mid-November 2020:** Public meeting No. 3 on-site to present plan of apparent winning logger.
- **By November 30, 2020:** Approval of logging contract by Hartford Town Manager and awarding contract.
- **Jan-Feb 2021:** Logging performed, including on-site Public Meeting No. 4 showing the logging in progress.
- **March-April 2021:** Selected trees are sawn in a public demonstration by a local sawmill.
- **May – Summer 2021:** Some of the wood cut from the harvest is used by local woodworker(s) to build useful item(s) that are recognized as wood from the HTF and publicly displayed.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who is running this project?**

The HCC with assistance from the Department of Planning and Development Services manages the Town Forest and will manage this project. Technical assistance will be provided by the Windsor County Forester Mr. A.J. Follensbee whose responsibilities include assisting

municipalities with forest management in town forests. He has spent time in the Hartford Town Forest and has reviewed previous Forest Management Plans. He reports that white pine trees are developing internal damage from wounds and their vigor is low due to regional needle diseases. Now is a good time for the Town to open up the crowns to allow more air movement which can help needles escape being infected with fungal spores. Cutting would also harvest some trees before their value decreases because of internal discoloration and decay. Mr. Follensbee is willing to update the current Forest Management Plan and provide documents for a logger to perform a winter 2021 timber harvest.

**Can the public use the forest during the harvest?**

During the harvest some trails will be closed, but the majority of the forest will be available for public use.

**Will logging damage the forest?**

To limit impacts on the Town Forest, Mr. Follensbee suggested harvesting in the winter and using a forwarder instead of a skidder. A forwarder carries logs clear of the ground, which reduces soil impacts and damage to trees next to skid/logging roads.

**What can be done to limit the impact of the treetops that are cut? They can be messy.**

“Mess is best.” Leaving pieces of trees in the woods is good for the forest. Wildlife depend on woody structures of fallen branches and trees for cover, nesting, etc. Decay fungi and insects depend on dead wood and, in turn, are food for wildlife. Decayed wood also adds organic matter (like compost) to the soil, storing carbon while enriching the soil. The HCC can specify how the tops will be handled in the logger bidding forms and contract so most branches are removed from trails. However, trails will certainly have smaller pieces of wood from broken branches that will need to be removed by hand. The HCC will put out a call for volunteers to help with clean-up as needed to reopen trails and reduce impact on recreationists.

**Will the logging make money?**

Income generated by the harvest depends on the quality of the trees being harvested. Liquidating the accumulated timber value is not the primary goal for this harvest. While some very large trees will be harvested, the proposed harvest will cut many trees that compete for sunlight with well-formed, good-quality trees which will, in turn, respond with healthy growth. A subsequent harvest in about 20 years within this harvest area will yield higher value trees.

**Will there be a way for the public to submit comments in addition to the public meetings?**

Yes. Comments, concerns and questions should be sent via email to town planner Matt Osborn. [mosborn@hartford-vt.org](mailto:mosborn@hartford-vt.org)