

## 6. Recommendations

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### 6.1 Mission Statement

The purpose of a mission statement is to state the ideas, beliefs, and values that govern the way in which an agency, organization, or company conducts its business. The Town of Warwick's Recreation Commission currently does not have a mission statement. The role of the Commission, as was discussed in Section 3.13.1, is to coordinate field usage and report directly to the Town Board on park-related issues.

*A mission statement should be developed.* The mission statement, while acknowledging the Commission's primary role, should also incorporate the idea that provision of parks, recreational facilities and programs, and open space is an essential service that contributes directly to quality of life. As such, it is a valid public function that should be appropriately supported and funded. For any community to be considered a desirable place to live, work, or play, it must have a variety of active and passive recreational resources. As telecommunications infrastructure enables more people to work from home and more companies to settle outside of major urban areas, these quality of life aspects are taking on more significance.

In addition to formalizing the scope of the Recreation Commission's activities, the Town of Warwick must step in to reclaim "ownership" of the Town's municipal parks and recreational facilities. There is a perception among various park users that user groups have co-opted several of the facilities and take a proprietary stance over resources. These "turf wars" have had negative impacts within the community. *The Town should coordinate a public relations campaign to dispel these misconceptions.* Developing a consistent marketing or branding of all the community's parks (Town and Villages) would serve to inform residents and visitors of the park system's unified presence. Another way to increase a sense of community and to help the parks function as positive resources would be to accommodate special events and other appropriate activities.

While private sponsorship of resources is one way to maintain the resources, not allowing other groups/individuals access is counter to the intent of creating public parks. *Any sponsorship agreements established in the future between the Town and any of its Villages with private or non-profit entities must clearly identify expectations regarding municipal parklands and resources.*

### 6.2 Recreation and Open Space Goals

To assist the Parks and Recreation Commission, Department staff, and other local agencies and officials proactively address Warwick's recreation and open space needs, the following goals have been identified:

Goal 1: Create and maintain a park and recreation system that provides all Town of Warwick residents with quality parks and recreational facilities.

Goal 2: Through efficient and collaborative park planning, provide Warwick residents with safe, attractive, and diverse parks and facilities.

Goal 3: Offer a variety of structured recreation programs, both active and passive activities, designed to meet customer needs and interests.

Goal 4: Create an efficient and responsive park and recreation department that provides quality resources and user-friendly customer service, ensuring timely responsiveness and safe provision of recreational facilities.

Goal 5: Follow adopted Town policies to the extent possible and practical to establish parks and recreation as a premier community service.

Goal 6: Provide an adequate level of funding and consider alternative sources of funding for planning, acquiring, developing, enhancing, and maintaining recreational resources and open space.

### **6.3 System-wide Improvements**

Throughout the planning process, many expressed concern over the inadequate maintenance efforts of some of the parks located within Warwick. To address these concerns, the following structural and organizational changes are recommended:

#### **6.3.1 Structural Improvements**

- SI 1. *Create an independent Parks and Recreation Department, under the direction of a fulltime Parks Director and fulltime staff as needed.*
- SI 2. *Investigate establishing an inter-municipal cooperation mechanism between the Town of Warwick, the Village of Warwick, the Village of Greenwood Lake, and the Village of Florida. Intermunicipal Service Agreements are one method by which communities can resolve to share resources, staffing, and equipment.*
- SI 3. *Develop mechanisms for improved communication between the future Parks and Recreation Department, the Recreation Commission, the Town Board, the Village Boards, and the local School Districts to ensure Warwick residents' needs are met.*
- SI 4. *Explore using partnership agreements to formalize cooperation between the local municipalities and the local school districts to ensure residents' recreational needs are being met. Right of First Refusal agreements can be established that, should any of the school districts opt to sell any of their facilities, the community will have the option of acquiring it and maintaining them as publicly available resources. In addition, existing school facilities can potentially be used to offset many of Greater Warwick's recreational facility deficits—as long as they are available to residents.*

- SI 5. *Explore the option of creating an independent non-profit organization to function as an umbrella to oversee the development of new parks and new facilities.* For example, the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Urban Parks Initiative (launched in 1994) resulted in local public parks agencies and nonprofits partnering to create new parks and renovate existing parks in 11 U.S. cities. Key considerations to be evaluated in developing such an arrangement include structure, control, assets and liabilities, and risks.<sup>7</sup> In developing shared service arrangements, the creation of "stand-alone entities" and strong governance structures (including user departments and service-level agreements) are regarded as two best practices leading to success.<sup>8</sup>
- SI 6. *Pursue opportunities to collaborate with the Palisades Intrastate Park Commission to develop desirable resources at the waterfront parcel of Sterling Forest State Park located in the Village of Greenwood Lake.*
- SI 7. *Pursue opportunities to collaborate with Orange County on the development of new resources at Orange County Hickory Hill Park.* The County is in the beginning stages of an effort to identify ways to develop more active recreation at its parks, like Hickory Hill. Ideas suggested for Hickory Hill include two multi-use playing fields as well as a nature walk/hiking trail. However, additional parking must also be incorporated into the site plan. The County has existing agreements with other municipalities for resources such as picnic pavilions.

### **6.3.2 Organizational Improvements**

- OI 1. *Provide adequate financial resources to staff the Parks and Recreation Department for oversight and coordination activities.* This is needed to ensure that park resources, such as the ball fields and tennis courts, are sufficiently open and available for "pick up" play, and are not monopolized by leagues and organized teams.
- OI 2. *Develop a parkland/open space acquisition program by which the Town will be able to purchase additional lands as needed in the future.* These lands may be purchased through fee simple acquisition or through purchase of development rights.
- OI 3. *Explore the option of developing a program whereby volunteers can "adopt" a specific park or facility to maintain.* Such a program can effectively channel a stronger commitment from volunteers than system-wide maintenance projects because they focus their energies and take pride in being responsible for a designated area.
- OI 4. *Update the Parks and Recreation Plan at regular intervals as a tool for staff to understand changing goals and objectives.*

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<sup>7</sup> Nonprofits, according to Chris Walker, are regarded as strong partners because they can involve the community of park users directly in park design, construction, programming, and management. Membership organizations are often able to mobilize volunteers and monitor their work more easily than parks agencies can.

<sup>8</sup> "Driving High Performance in Government: Maximizing the Value of Public Sector Shared Services." Accenture.

### 6.3.3 Financing Improvements

There was much consensus that the resources allocated to parks maintenance, in general, are woefully insufficient. To address this, the following recommendations are made:

- FI 1. *The Town should regularly check with the Orange County Planning Department to keep apprised of the average recreation impact fee amount.* The Town's current recreation impact fee of \$2,500 is comparable to the amount collected by many of its neighboring communities. The County surveys local municipalities to find out how much is presently being charged.
- FI 2. *Examine the recreation impact fee law and, if necessary, modify it to allow the Town flexibility to invest the monies collected (if appropriate to do so) and to limit funds expenditure to acquisition and capital improvements.* As currently drafted, the law is sufficiently open ended so that the funds could be used for salaries or maintenance costs.
- FI 3. *The Town should look for sponsorship opportunities to help defray the costs of park rehabilitation.* For example, by working with local landscape designers and landscapers, the Town may be able to defray costs of site design and field and grounds maintenance. However, such relationships should be limited; private entities should be provided with free advertising opportunities, not exclusive use agreements for any of the parkland resources or facilities.
- FI 4. *Explore the option of creating an independent non-profit organization to provide a resource for corporate fundraising to support the growth and enhancement of the Town's parks.* A Friends of Warwick Parks organization could assist the Town with activities such as fund-raising, community awareness, grant writing, and other constituent-based park and recreation advocacies. The private sector should be tapped for support as they too have a vested interest in maintaining the community's quality of life as a competitive resource to attract qualified workers and patrons.
- FI 5. *Investigate providing Town-run concession stands in each of the Town's community parks to provide the Town Parks and Recreation Department with an additional revenue source.*
- FI 6. *Investigate other leasing or franchising agreement opportunities.* Union Corners, with three other regional parks, is a part-time home to the Skyland Disc Golf Club. The park hosts the club's Warwick Ice Bowl, Skylands Classic, Animal Fest, and Animal Doubles events. As an example of a potential lease agreement the Town might consider, there may be interest in developing a privately owned/operated Disc Golf Pro Shop at Union Corners. The pros of developing such a facility (leasing costs, sales tax revenue, increased visitation) would have to be weighed against the cons (loss of open parkland, more tournaments, more use by specific group). Disc Golf tournaments can also provide a positive economic impact to the host community through events or user fees.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "Flying Saucers: Disc Golf Can Bring Personal and Community Benefits to Rural America." Jason Siniscalchi, Look Smart, 2005. While not every event will have such an impact, the economic gain

- FI 7. *Investigate the organization fee structure currently in place in the Town to determine whether the amounts should be increased, or modified to reflect residential participation in the organizations.*
- FI 8. *The Town should investigate levying a Recreational User Fee Program for appropriate resources. Seasonal passes are currently required for the Town Beaches; the Town may want to institute a similar membership program if it develops a Community Center or other type recreational activity center.*

### **6.3.4 Planning and Resource Development Improvements**

As Greater Warwick's population continues to grow, the Town should have a system in place to examine its existing park resources and identify ways to develop additional resources to meet increasing need and make existing facilities more accessible.

- PRD 1. *Examine existing municipally-owned parcels that are presently underutilized and may be redeveloped into parks or permanently preserved as open space. One resource mentioned as a potential park is the Village of Greenwood Lake's property on Continental Road in the Town.*
- PRD 2. *The Town should proactively look for opportunities to acquire field space as parkland dedication when approving large-scale subdivisions.*
- PRD 3. *Develop a Recreational Facilities Capital Improvement Plan to ensure additional resources are added and improvements are made in a timely fashion. The procedures for decision-making should include a transparent review process that considers the number of park users to benefit from expenditures and clarifies full carrying costs, i.e., not just capital costs but also yearly maintenance and operation costs as well as replacement costs. [A Draft Recreational Facilities Capital Improvement Plan priority list was developed for this plan using the feedback obtained through the public outreach process. This information, included \_\_\_\_\_, should be used as a starting point for evaluating priorities for programming improvements.]*
- PRD 4. *Develop an open space priority inventory so that the Town is prepared to acquire quality open space parcels as they become available.*
- PRD 5. *Provide park and recreation information online via the Town's website. In addition to information on locations, hours, amenities, parks, and accessibility, the website should also provide information on scheduling use of pavilions and fields, possibly an interactive calendar scheduling mechanism. Use the Internet to solicit recreation users' opinions on community resources and parks.*
- PRD 6. *Develop a Warwick Recreation and Trails Map. An online version should be made available from the Town's website.***

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estimated from Augusta, Georgia's hosting of the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) disc golf championships is \$1.8 million.

### 6.3.5 Site Design Improvements

A number of stakeholders indicated the need for the parks in Warwick to be professionally site planned to ensure the lands are used efficiently and effectively. Dependent upon the individual park characteristics, it may be appropriate to incorporate the following changes at each of the Town's existing and future parks. These recommendations are listed below:

- SD 1. *Develop uniform park signage to identify the park entrances, parking areas, and rules and regulations.*
- SD 2. *Add additional seating, picnic areas, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, lighting, and other amenities to the Town's parks.* Approximately 5.3% of survey respondents identified a desire for more picnicking opportunities.
- SD 3. *Evaluate internal circulation with consideration of ease of access, ease of maneuverability, and pedestrian and cyclist safety.* Develop separate pedestrian/bike paths where possible and post and enforce internal road speed limits.
- SD 4. ***Develop permanent restroom facilities that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Ranking second behind trails, 13.3% of survey respondents indicated a need for park restrooms.***
- SD 5. ***Discourage motorists from parking on park fields by posting highly visible "Do Not Park on Grass" signs. In areas where this may be a recurring problem, bollards should be considered.***
- SD 6. *Develop landscaping plans for each park.* To enhance the park's summertime use, shade trees should be added around play structures and near benches and sitting areas. Design and spatial configuration should consider not only attractiveness and ease of maintenance, but also visibility and safety.

### 6.4 Recommendations to Meet Warwick's Active Parkland Needs

Some stakeholders identified a desire for new parks within a safe walking distance to existing residential areas. Currently, many areas of Town do not have parks within walking distance. Further, lack of separate pedestrian/bike trails prevents most parks—except those located within the three Villages—from being pedestrian accessible. This factor should be considered as the Town moves forward on plans to create new parks. Greater Warwick must review the results of this study and use this information to proactively work to ensure that recreational resources and parks are equitably distributed and conveniently provided throughout the community.

- AP 1. *Develop additional Playlots as needed.* As indicated below, the combined deficit of small play lot type parks in Greater Warwick stands presently at an estimated 66.8 acres. Projected population growth will increase this deficit to –72.6 acres by 2010. As play lots can be between 1 and 2 acres, the development of such facilities do not require substantial land set asides. Substantiating the need for such parks, it should be noted that 4.9% of survey respondents indicated a desire for more playgrounds for children aged 6 to 12, while 2.5% would like more totlots for children aged 2 to 5. As these playlots would be neighborhood-based attractions, the Town should work with neighborhood

associations to develop such parks on any appropriate available lands (municipally owned, resident association-owned, or utility set asides). The Town should encourage developers to incorporate such facilities into their subdivisions. The need for such facilities is more acute in Study Area 3, the Warwick Valley School District area.

<i>Play lots</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
<b>2000</b>	-9.7 acres	-13.3 acres	-38.6 acres	-61.6 acres
<b>2005</b>	-10.6 acres	-13.8 acres	-42.4 acres	-66.8 acres
<b>2010</b>	<b>-11.6 acres</b>	<b>-14.8 acres</b>	<b>-46.2 acres</b>	<b>-72.6 acres</b>

AP 2. *Develop additional Pocket Parks/Mini Parks as needed.* As indicated below, the combined deficit of pocket parks in Greater Warwick stands presently at an estimated 7.3 acres. Projected population growth will increase this deficit to –8.0 acres by 2010. As Pocket Parks can range in size between ¼ acre to ½ acre, they do not require much land. In addition to playgrounds and picnic areas, they can house single use activities such as basketball or tennis courts. Consideration should be given to developing such parks on vacant and underutilized public lands. Park/plaza areas can also be encouraged as new commercial or mixed use projects are developed in the Town.

<i>Pocket Parks/ Mini Parks</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
<b>2000</b>	-1.2 acres	-0.7 acres	-4.8 acres	-6.7 acres
<b>2005</b>	-1.3 acres	-0.7 acres	-5.3 acres	-7.3 acres
<b>2010</b>	<b>-1.4 acres</b>	<b>-0.8 acres</b>	<b>-5.8 acres</b>	<b>-8.0 acres</b>

AP 3. *Develop additional Neighborhood Parks as needed.* As indicated below, the combined deficit of neighborhood parks in Greater Warwick stands presently at an estimated 8.2 acres. Projected population growth will increase this deficit to –11.1 acres by 2010. As neighborhood Parks range in size from 4 acres to 7 acres, the communities would most likely have to look to acquire land if they do not presently have appropriate surplus land available. The need is limited currently to Study Area 3.

<i>Neighborhood Parks</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
<b>2000</b>	+1.5 acres	+3.1 acres	-10.1 acres	-5.5 acres
<b>2005</b>	+1.0 acres	+2.8 acres	-12.0 acres	-8.2 acres
<b>2010</b>	<b>+0.5 acres</b>	<b>+2.3 acres</b>	<b>-13.9 acres</b>	<b>-11.1 acres</b>

AP 4. *Develop additional District Parks as needed.* The combined total deficit of District Parks in Greater Warwick is 66.8 acres. This deficit will grow to 72.6 acres by 2010. District parks range in size from 20 acres to 100 acres. One parcel of municipally owned land that might be conducive for conversion to parkland is the Village of Greenwood Lake’s Continental Road parcel in the Town. Conversion of the 14.7-acre site would actually eliminate this need for this type of park in Study Area 2. While all Study Areas in the Town need District Parks, the need is especially acute in Study Area 3.

<i>District Parks</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
<b>2000</b>	-9.7 acres	-13.3 acres	-38.6 acres	-61.6 acres
<b>2005</b>	-10.6 acres	-13.8 acres	-42.4 acres	-66.8 acres
<b>2010</b>	<b>-11.6 acres</b>	<b>-14.8 acres</b>	<b>-46.2 acres</b>	<b>-72.6 acres</b>

AP 5. *Develop additional Community Parks as needed.* The presence of the 112- acre Union Corners Park Complex in Study Area 1 (Florida Union Free School District) offsets needs in the other two study areas. Despite this, since District Parks and Community parks play similar roles (Community Parks can range from 50 to 100 acres), the resultant needs should be evaluated in conjunction. While Study Area 1 continues to show a sufficient amount of District/Community Parks, the deficiency of Study Area 2 and Study Area 3 is acute.

<i>Community Parks</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
<b>2000</b>	+88.0 acres	-33.2 acres	-25.2 acres	+29.6 acres
<b>2005</b>	+85.7 acres	-34.4 acres	-34.7 acres	+16.6 acres
<b>2010</b>	<b>+83.2 acres</b>	<b>-36.9 acres</b>	<b>-44.3 acres</b>	<b>+2.0 acres</b>



## 6.5 Recommendations to Meet Warwick's Recreational Needs

Approximately 67% of the residents that responded to the Park and Recreation Survey indicated a need for additional active recreation resources. (See Chapter 5.) Many residents participating in the public outreach efforts indicated a desire for a community center and more recreational programming.

To address these needs, the following is recommended:

- RN 1. *Develop a centrally located, integrated community center with year-round activities and resources to appeal to youths, adults, and seniors.* Desired facilities include basketball courts, racquetball courts, and volleyball courts as well as a teen fitness center.
- RN 2. *Work jointly with adjacent communities to develop new and improve existing recreational programming for all age groups.*
- RN 3. *Develop a multi-use Performing Arts Center or theater.* An outdoor amphitheater could provide the community with an excellent resource for hosting outdoor plays, concerts and performances. Potential locations include the Greenwood Lake Beach and Lions Park. This might also present an opportunity for the community to partner with a local cultural arts group on facility operations and maintenance.
- RN 4. *Develop additional volleyball courts in existing and future parks.* Per NRPA guideline standards, 1 volleyball court should be provided for every 5,000 residents of a community. There is presently one in-park court (at the Village of Warwick's Stanley Deming Park) and one at each of the two Town beaches. With the total resident population of about 30,000, the Town should have at least six (6) volleyball courts available to residents. Further supporting this need, is the fact that 26% of survey respondents indicated that either they or someone in their household plays volleyball either sometimes or often.
- RN 5. *Investigate developing a dog run area in the Town.* Approximately 6.0% of survey respondents identified this as a recreational need. Currently, local ordinances (in the Town of Warwick) prohibit dogs from running unrestrained off owner property.

RN 2. *Investigate developing additional fitness/exercise trails.* Pine Island Park is the only park with a perimeter trail. Approximately 18.4% of survey respondents indicated a desire for more multi-use trails in the community, while 6.0% want cross-country ski trails, and 2.7% would like to see more equestrian trails. Throughout the public outreach process residents stated a desire for more perimeter trails and running tracks, as well as "vita life" trails with fitness stations for exercises (i.e., warm up, flexibility, strength, cool down) installed at intervals. As the parks within the community are upgraded, consideration should be given to incorporating such facilities where possible. The Town may want to consider a multi-use trail design that accommodates both a bike lane and a pedestrian lane.

Suggested locations for perimeter trails/running tracks include:

- Helen Kelly Park in Greenwood Lake.

- Lions Park in Greenwood Lake.
- Stanley Deming Park in the Village of Warwick.
- Veterans Memorial Park in the Village of Warwick
- Airport Park in the Town of Warwick.

Nature trails were suggested for:

- Glenmere Lake Park in the Village of Florida.
- Wickham Lake Park in the Town of Warwick.

**RN 6.** *Develop additional ball fields as needed.* Throughout the public participation process, both residents and stakeholders identified a need for more fields. Lack of adequate field space has resulted in Greenwood Lake’s Girls Softball League playing games at Legion Field, which is adjacent to an active driveway. This shortfall in field space appears to be across the board as there has been an expressed need for more baseball/softball fields, football fields, soccer fields, and lacrosse fields. Installing lights for nighttime play may extend the daily usage of existing fields but by 2010 the forecasted need for field area will stand at 84 acres. More fields are needed to prevent the continual overuse of existing fields. An inventory of field space is included in Table \_\_\_\_\_.

<i>Game Fields</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
2000	0 acres	-16 acres	-51 acres	-67 acres
2005	-2 acres	-16 acres	-57 acres	-75 acres
<b>2010</b>	<b>-3 acres</b>	<b>-18 acres</b>	<b>-63 acres</b>	<b>-84 acres</b>
<b>School Districts</b>	8 fields	4 fields	15 fields	27 fields

**RN 7.** *Develop additional tennis courts as needed.* About 30% of survey respondents indicated that they or someone in their household currently plays tennis either frequently or sometimes. Pine Island Park houses the Town’s only two tennis courts. Installing lighting to the existing courts for nighttime play may help, but additional courts should be developed.

<i>Tennis Courts</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
2000	-2	-3	-8	-13
2005	-3	-3	-9	-15
<b>2010</b>	-3	-4	-10	-17
<b>School Districts</b>	0	0	7	7

RN 8. *Develop additional basketball courts as needed.* By 2010, the shortfall for basketball courts will be 13. Improved accessibility to the School Districts’ facilities may alleviate some need, but the need for advance scheduling is counter to the pick-up games many teens and youth enjoy. Of the eight basketball courts located in Greater Warwick parks, only the one at Stanley Deming Park is lit for nighttime play. Installing lighting to some of the remaining courts may help, but additional courts should be developed.

<i>Basketball Courts</i>	<i>Study Area 1: Florida UFSD</i>	<b>Study Area 2: Greenwood Lake UFSD</b>	<b>Study Area 3: Warwick Valley SD</b>	<b>Greater Warwick Total</b>
2000	-1	0	-8	-9
2005	-2	0	-9	-11
<b>2010</b>	-2	-1	-10	-13
<b>School Districts</b>	2 indoor	1 indoor 1 outdoor	8 indoor 2 outdoor	12 indoor 2 outdoor

## 6.6 Recommendations to Meet Water Recreational Needs

Many stakeholders indicated a need for more year-round activities to be available. To address this need, the following is recommended:

**WR 1.** *Investigate opportunities to develop more swimming opportunities.* The Warwick Valley High School pool is open once a week for public swim. Despite this, 11.5% of survey respondents indicated they would like a swimming pool in the Town. The availability of the High School pool should be promoted more so that more residents are aware of this. However, evaluating the Town’s swimming pool facilities according to NRPA standards

- (1 pool/per 20,000 residents), the Town does have outstanding need even with better promotion of the existing pool. Existing resources can be improved upon, such as providing swim lanes at Greenwood Lake beach and developing a beach for swimming at Cascade Park.
- WR 2. *Investigate opportunities to develop more boating opportunities.* The East Shore Beach and Cascade Lake Park were both identified as potential locations for an improved boating opportunities launch.
- WR 3. *Investigate opportunities to develop more fishing opportunities.* Exactly 7.2% of survey respondents indicated a desire for a fishing pier in the Town. One potential location identified by residents is Cascade Park.
- WR 4. *Investigate opportunities to develop more ice skating rinks.* Through the public outreach process, many residents indicated a desire for more ice skating opportunities. About 38% of survey respondents indicated that they or someone in their household currently ice-skates either frequently or sometimes.
- WR 5. *Install summertime water play features, such as sprinkler systems, in playgrounds.*

## **6.7 Recommendations to Meet Warwick's Open Space Needs**

Open space lands play an important role within a community. Open space lands serve an environmental purpose, an aesthetic purpose, and a psychological purpose. In addition, they result in little demand for municipal services and infrastructure. As development pressures have been growing in the Town of Warwick, as they have throughout Orange County, maintaining a healthy balance of open space requires effort and advance planning. Approximately 72% of survey respondents indicated a need for additional open space and passive parkland in the Town.

- OS 1. *Continue using existing planning techniques and funding mechanisms, such as the Town's Purchase of Development Rights program, to acquire properties for open space preservation or active parkland.*
- OS 2. *Use the Town's Recreation Impact Fee funds to create a revolving funding mechanism to acquire lands to add to the Town's inventory of both open space and active parklands.*
- OS 3. *Work with existing property owners to ensure that quality open space parcels, that is, those that provide habitat and house wetland resources, are preserved.*
- OS 4. *Require cluster-style development in environmentally sensitive or aesthetically valued areas including quality habitat areas, prime agricultural lands, wood lots, wetlands, and hillsides.*
- OS 5. *Develop and/or promote incentives, such as the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) or the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (480[a]) term easement program to encourage the preservation of open space.<sup>10</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup> **WHIP** is a voluntary program to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private land. The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service provides both technical

## 6.8 Recommendations to Improve the Trail Network

The Appalachian Trail traverses the Town in a north-south direction on the eastern side of the Town, running coterminous with the Sterling Trail. The Highlands Trail runs north-south to the east of the Appalachian Trail within the Sterling Forest State Park network. An on-road bike trail is in the process of being developed in the western part of Town, near Pine Island. As the Town has such a strong existing trail network, it should look for opportunities to enhance this network and develop both regional and local trail connections. Multi-use trails, with 18.4% of survey respondents indicating a need for them, ranked as a top priority in the Parks and Recreation Survey. In addition to more internal running tracks and fitness trails, residents want linkages connecting resources and existing trails.

- T 1. *Investigate acquiring easements along properties that can provide linkages between existing trails within the Town.* Suggested trail linkage possibilities include:
- The Village of Greenwood Lake with the Greenwood Lake Beach gazebo.
  - Cascade Lake park and Orange County Hickory Hill Park.
  - Orange County Hickory Hill and the Appalachian Trail.
- T 2. *Work with the NY-NJ Trail Conference on establishing the easements necessary to develop a comprehensive trail network.*
- T 3. *Pursue opportunities to develop additional bike trails along road right-of-ways as roads are upgraded.*
- T 3. *Provide sidewalks and on-road bicycle facilities as adjuncts to the Town's recreational trail system.* The customary reason for providing sidewalks is allowing people the option of walking between destinations. Without sidewalks it is often unsafe and impractical to travel by foot. Since there is an expressed desire for more multi-use trail linkages and pedestrian connectivity in the community, sidewalks or other pedestrian facilities should be considered when new development is constructed in areas where such facilities make sense (i.e., density of development is conducive to walking or cycling).
- T 4. *Investigate developing a Trail and Pedestrian Master Plan.* Such a plan would incorporate pedestrian facilities, cycling facilities, multi-use paths, and connectivity throughout the Town. The Town should look for opportunities to connect existing Town resources with regional resources in adjacent communities and with new facilities.

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assistance and up to 75% cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. WHIP agreements between NRCS and participants generally last from 5 to 10 years from the agreement date.