

# Open Space and Recreation Master Plan Mount Holly, New Jersey

Adopted August 18, 2014



Prepared By:



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# 1. Introduction

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## Need and Purpose of Report

The character of a community depends in part on the quality and quantity of parks, open space, recreational opportunities and facilities available to residents. These factors promote increased health, aesthetic value, tourism, economic development, cultural awareness and overall quality of life. One of Mount Holly's greatest strengths is its system of interconnected waterways, open spaces and streets. The Township is committed to preserving and enhancing these assets as an environmental resource and as a signature gateway feature.

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) states that the recreation element of a master plan should show a comprehensive system of areas and public sites for recreation. The Township has not yet undertaken a Recreation and Open Space element of the Master Plan. In past plans, recreation issues have merely been a footnote in the overall context of the plans.

According to past planning documents, the parks and recreation facilities have been in need of improvement for over 15 years. The 2000 Comprehensive Master Plan set forth recommendations within the Land Use Element to improve the quality of the Township's recreation amenities. In the past, as an austerity measure, Mount Holly had eliminated its Recreation Commission and had performed limited maintenance on its recreation resources. It was recommended that the reestablished Recreation Commission should then prepare an inventory of existing facilities to determine whether or not the existing facilities properly serve the recreational needs of Township Residents.

The recommendations from the 2000 Master Plan continued through the 2007 Master Plan Re-examination as well. The Re-exam indicated that Township and County facilities and greenways along the Rancocas Creek should be identified on a map and studies should be conducted to determine whether further bikeways can be provided through the Township to park sites and other destinations. Through meetings conducted with Township officials and the Recreation Advisory Committee,

participants identified the parks system as a key area of concern as a community asset, an environmental resource and as a signature gateway feature.



With the development of an Open Space and Recreation Element, the Township will be afforded the opportunity to long range plan for the improvements and maintenance of existing and future parkland. This Plan will ensure that the Township's

vision for open space and recreation is met by providing a comprehensive analysis of land within the Township and recommendations for the future.

#### Scope and Organization of Report

The intent of this Plan is to guide the planning and interconnection of the Township's open space. This Plan is organized in such a manner to describe the types of open space and park land in the Township as well as available funding from the private, State and Federal entities. Also included is an inventory and general description of the Township's parkland. Each description includes a SWOT analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of each entity. This SWOT analysis was used to form recommendations for the parks and open space of the Township.

#### Township Overview

Mount Holly is a 2.9 square mile town serving as the Burlington County seat. The Township is bordered by four other municipalities: Westampton Township to the north and northwest, Eastampton Township to the east, Lumberton Township to the south and Hainesport Township to the west.

According to the 2010 Census, the population was 9,536, a decrease of 1,192 people or 11.1% since 2000. This is the lowest total population since the 1950's. Burlington County, by contrast, gained 6% in population during the same period. Accompanying Mount Holly's dip in population was a 9% decrease in total housing units within the Township.

Median household income in Mount Holly increased from \$43,284 to \$53,841 between the 2000 and 2010 Census'. However, adjusting for inflation using the Bureau of Labor Statistics online calculator, income actually dropped by over \$2,800, or 5% in 2010 dollars. This continues the falling trend from the decade before.

## 2. Framework

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### Open Space and Recreation Defined

According to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), “open space” is defined as “any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space;



provided that such areas may be improved with only those buildings, structures, streets and off-street parking and other improvements that are designed to be incidental to the natural openness of the land.”

Recreation is not defined in the MLUL, but according to *The Illustrated Book of Development Definitions* by Harvey Moskowitz and

Carl Lindbloom, a recreational facility is defined as “a place designed and equipped for the conduct of sports and leisure-time activities.”

For the purposes of this study, both definitions are adopted and accepted as a means of providing an overall framework for the drafting of this Element of the Master Plan.

In addition to the above two definitions, it was felt that a definition of certain additional terms needed to be formulated and adopted. There are three distinct types of recreational activities that should be planned for in Mount Holly—active recreation, passive recreation, and what it has come to call “alternative recreation.”

While there is some degree of overlapping of recreational activities across these three definitions, and while most parks and open spaces provide for two and sometimes all three forms of recreation within a single space, nevertheless the distinctions are useful to ensure proper planning and inclusion within the Plan.

The three definitions are as follows:

**Active Recreation.** Leisure-time activities, where some level of physical exertion is required, and occurring in a formal, organized manner, on spaces designed and improved for specific active recreational pursuits. Active recreation typically involves organized sports, requiring the use of equipment and occurring in prescribed places such as fields, courts, or in designed facilities such as soccer, baseball/softball, football, lacrosse, basketball, volleyball, tennis and hockey.

**Passive Recreation.** Leisure-time activities that are relatively inactive or requiring less physical exertion. Passive recreational activities are typically more self-directed, whether for individuals or groups, and usually occur within more natural environments and relatively undisturbed open spaces, such as walking, picnicking, nature- or bird-watching, dog walking, fishing, kite-flying and community gardening.

**Alternative Recreation.** Leisure-time activities, also involving some degree of physical exertion, but occurring in a more informal and less organized manner. Alternative recreation is also typically individually-oriented and occurs on open fields or along walkways, paths or streams, such as hiking, biking, jogging, skating (inline skating, rollerskating and skateboarding), Disc Golf, Frisbee and canoeing.

#### Legal Framework and Funding

The determination of how parkland can be utilized and developed by a municipality in New Jersey is dependent to a large extent upon the Green Acres regulations which are promulgated by the State— even in those cases where the municipality has acquired or developed such parkland without Green Acres funding. These distinctions, which provide the legal and economic framework in which open space, recreational facilities and programs can be planned and developed, are discussed in greater detail below.

## 1. Green Acres Regulations

### ***a. Funded Parkland***

“Funded parkland” means parkland that a local government unit or nonprofit organization has acquired or developed with Green Acres (State) funding. Under the current regulations that govern the use of parkland, if a property has been purchased partially or wholly with Green Acres funds, the local government unit or nonprofit organization which owns such land must ensure that such funded parkland is open and provides reasonable public access to all New Jersey residents, not just to those who are living within the jurisdiction in which it is located.

<b>Table 1: Funded Parks and Open Space</b>				
<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Block</b>	<b>Lot</b>	<b>Size (in acres)</b>
Chestnut Court	Along Rancocas Creek	134	8.01, 9.01 & 10	7.02

A local municipality may, however, charge a reasonable fee for the use of funded parkland, provided those fees are then used for the maintenance, development or programming of the funded parkland. The fees can be assessed by time (yearly, seasonally, monthly, weekly, daily, hourly, or even for a single use); by user (individual, group, team or family); or by resident or non-resident status, as long as the charge for non-residents is not more than twice that charged to residents. Finally, fees may be differentiated on the basis of affiliation or by special interest group (seniors, disabled, children or students); and/or by organization (nonprofit, for-profit or corporate).

Furthermore, a municipality may restrict or schedule the use of a funded facility to accommodate organized sports or other recreation or conservation purposes, provided the public is not denied reasonable access to the use of the facility.

### ***b. Unfunded Parkland***

“Unfunded parkland” refers to parks and open space that are neither acquired nor developed through the use of Green Acres (State) funding, but that are

being held by the Township for recreation and conservation purposes at the time Green Acres Funding is received. Unfunded parkland is also subject to Green Acres Regulations and may only be used for recreation and conservation purposes. Unlike “funded parkland,” however, a municipality has nominally greater discretion and control over the use of recreational facilities located on unfunded parkland in that it may regulate its use based on residency, provided it does so in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory way. Therefore, it cannot fully restrict its use to Mount Holly residents. Table 2 provides a list of Mount Holly’s unfunded parks and open space.

<b>Table 2: Unfunded Parks and Open Space</b>				
<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Block</b>	<b>Lot</b>	<b>Size (in acres)</b>
Creek Island Park	South of Rancocas Creek, between Madison Ave and Pine Street	102 72 73	50 4 2	54.6
Ironworks Park	North of Wollner Drive	115	1.01	27.73
Woolman Lake Park	Surrounding Woolman Lake, Buttonwood Lake and Upper Lake.	125	2 & 2.01	9.9
The Mount	South side of Evergreen Street	15	26	12.5
Monroe Street Park	South of Mill Race Village	83	15, 43, 48	8.0
Mill Dam Park	South of Mill Street	86	1, 24	10.5
Carlton Avenue	25 Carlton Avenue	67	17	.35

## **2. Funding**

Municipalities primarily acquire and develop open space through three sources: (1) from general municipal revenues; (2) from out-right grants, matching grants and/or loan programs, provided by County, State and Federal government; or (3) through dedication or donation by the private or non-profit sector.

### ***a. Private and Nonprofit Funding***

Funding for open space and recreation projects can come from both the nonprofit and private sectors. Private sources typically include developers, corporations and residents.

## ***b. Public Funding***

### *(1) Garden State Preservation Trust*

In June 1999, the New Jersey Legislature passed the “Garden State Preservation Trust Act,” which laid out the framework for the annual distribution of a \$98 million trust fund for open space, farmland and historic resources. The Green Acres program established as part of that Act provides low-interest (2%) loans and grants to municipal and county governments to acquire open space and develop outdoor recreation facilities. Green Acres also provides matching grants to nonprofit organizations to acquire land for public recreation and conservation purposes. There are also tax exemptions from local property taxes available to eligible nonprofit organization that own recreation or conservation lands and permit public use of their private lands. In 2011, an additional \$157 million was appropriated into Green Acres.

### *(2) Planning Incentive Program*

More recently, the acquisition of open space and the development of parks and recreation has been enormously aided by a program known as the Planning Incentive Program (PIP). The Planning Incentive Program in New Jersey provides grant and loan funding to qualifying local governments provided they have undertaken two important steps: first, that they have enacted an open space tax; and second, that they have adopted an Open Space and Recreation Plan. A qualifying local government must have established, and be collecting, an open space tax. For this to occur, the open space tax must be approved by voter referendum. Municipalities may assess a tax for one or more of the following purposes, as determined by the local government:

- (a) Acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (b) Development of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (c) Maintenance of lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes;
- (d) Acquisition of farmland for farmland preservation purposes;

- (e) Preservation of historic properties, including the acquisition of such properties for historic preservation purposes; and/or
- (f) Payment of debt service on indebtedness issued or incurred by a local government for any of the purposes stated in (a), (b), (d) or (e) above.

*(3) Federal Funding*

There are also various grants available through the federal government. However, these grants are extremely competitive and are generally geared towards large-scale or high-profile projects.

### 3. Goals and Objectives

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- a. *Goal: Provide a sufficient number and variety of facilities to meet the present and future active, passive and alternative recreational needs of all Mount Holly Residents.*

#### **Objectives**

1. Expand park lands with recreation facilities to meet the present and future needs of Mount Holly as articulated by various organized sports groups, Township Recreation Advisory Committee and recreation standards.
2. Investigate potential locations for a centralized recreation center.
3. Adequately maintain existing facilities to provide for long term use of existing facilities.
4. Promote recreational activity with appropriate and adequate access by all age and user groups throughout the Township.
5. Periodically survey and update the recreation inventory to anticipate needs rather than react to deficiencies.
6. Develop linear linkages between parks and from residential neighborhoods that promote alternative transportation.
7. Promote recreational activity with appropriate and adequate access by all age and user groups throughout the Township.
8. Foster continued cooperative use of facilities and open space with the Mount Holly Board of Education.

- b. *Goal: Preserve and enhance the social and ecological environment for the residents of Mount Holly Township*

#### **Objectives**

1. Develop recreational facilities for both active, passive and alternative activities and all user age groups to maximize social interaction, community pride, and leisure activities.
2. Carefully consider the impacts of recreational development relative to natural ecosystems and the sustainability of these areas.
3. Design and construct all recreation development according to all required environmental regulations and practices appropriate to

preserve environmentally sensitive areas and maintain or enhance environmental quality.

4. Minimize the clearing of sustainable woodland and trees for recreation development by situating facilities in open areas.
5. Promote respect and knowledge of the Rancocas Creek and its importance to the community.

c. *Goal: Balance the provision of open space with other land uses.*

**Objectives**

1. Reinforce the planning efforts of Township, County, and State Master Plans.
2. Balance open space and recreation facilities throughout the Township relative to neighborhoods to provide adequate access and opportunity to all people of the Township, and enhance the welfare of residents.
3. Foster cooperative efforts to preserve regionally significant areas with the County and adjacent municipalities.

d. *Goal: Integrate “green” stormwater infrastructure as a form of open space.*

**Objectives**

1. Evaluate flood prone areas throughout the Township to determine appropriate green stormwater infrastructure locations.
2. Acquire properties, without the use of eminent domain, that are located within floodplains to be preserved as open space.
3. Promote the preservation and improvement of the Rancocas Creek by limiting the amount of non-point source pollution.
4. Develop a Stormwater Management Plan to set forth green stormwater infrastructure initiatives.

e. *Goal: Develop a cultural identity for the Township.*

**Objectives**

1. Construct facilities such as band stands and amphitheaters to promote a music and/or arts culture.
2. Evaluate the potential to develop arts and music festivals to encourage people to visit the parks system and Downtown.

- f. *Goal: Develop a means of supplemental funding for recreation development and maintenance.*

**Objectives**

1. Pursue grants and other funding opportunities to develop and maintain the parks and recreation system.
2. Develop long term park maintenance programs and budgets based upon the present inventory and anticipated growth of the park system.
3. Foster positive community input and support for recreation development near residential neighborhoods.
4. Develop a more symbiotic relationship between the Township and the organized sports groups to help plan and fund the future development and maintenance of recreation facilities.

- g. *Goal: Create linkages between recreation uses to form a comprehensive open space network.*

**Objectives**

1. Design and implement linkages for bicyclists and pedestrians.
2. Improve wayfinding between recreation facilities.
3. Consult County planning documents to determine potential regional linkages for bicyclists and pedestrians.

## 4. INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

This section of the Open Space and Recreation Plan inventories the parks and open space land in the Township of Mount Holly as depicted on the Open Space Inventory Map located within Appendix A of this Plan.

### 1. Parks

Creek Island Park	
<b>Location</b>	South of Rancocas Creek, between Madison Avenue and Pine Street
<b>Description</b>	This 54.6 acre park is heavily wooded, and is broken up into two sections by the Rancocas Creek and bisected by the Mount Holly Rail Trail which exits the park at both Madison Avenue and Pine Street. At the Madison Avenue entrance is a former train station building which is currently vacant, though it formerly served as a restaurant.
<b>Facilities</b>	- Entrances to Rail Trail
<b>Strengths</b>	- Size/ Large Area, spans several neighborhoods - Natural beauty of thick woods and of creek - Rail Trail
<b>Weaknesses</b>	- Density of woods creates safety concerns – users feel too isolated/secluded - Inadequate signage
<b>Opportunities</b>	- Opportunities for improvement and expansion of rail trail as County invests in extending rail trails and creating Rancocas Greenway area - If county follows through with rail-trail expansion, the former train station on Madison Avenue could be promoted as a potential outdoor-sporting goods retailer, or could meet other needs of trail users. - Installation of a disc golf course as a means of alternative recreation.
<b>Threats</b>	- Lack of funding and utilization will continue to decrease the feeling of safety within the park



Iron Works Park	
<b>Location</b>	Wollner Drive, east of Pine Street, south of Mill Dam Park
<b>Description</b>	Ironworks park contains three baseball fields and a football field, in addition to a paved path that circles the two inner baseball fields and the football field, over a 24.6 acre area. The park is connected to Mill Dam Park to the north, by two pedestrian bridges, including a bridge crossing over Mill Dam. The park is immediately across Wollner Drive from the John Brainerd Elementary School.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 Baseball Fields</li> <li>- 1 Football Field</li> <li>- 2 Sheds</li> <li>- Picnic Benches</li> <li>- Pedestrian paths</li> <li>- Paved loop</li> <li>- Boat launch</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connected to Mill Dam Park.</li> <li>- Regular use from elementary school.</li> <li>- Accessible to nearby residences</li> <li>- Paths, recreational fields, and open space permit a range of activities</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Damage from flooding, poor drainage.</li> <li>- Perceived as unsafe due to distance from heavily trafficked roads.</li> <li>- Sidewalk does not connect along Wollner Drive.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Linkage to other parks by a multi-modal exercise trail.</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of funding and maintenance.</li> </ul>



Woolman Lake Park	
<b>Location</b>	Surrounding Woolman Lake, Buttonwood Lake, Upper Lake. Sunset Drive to the East, Park View Drive to the North, Mill Street East to the South, and Lake Drive and Branch Street to the West.
<b>Description</b>	Park contains small pockets of passive open space surrounding three lakes. There are two pedestrian bridges crossing the lakes, including one connecting Sunset Drive to Moore Drive, and one connecting Sunset Drive to Newcomb Drive. The park is small, containing only 9.9 acres.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pedestrian Bridges</li> <li>- Picnic Tables</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In close proximity to residential neighborhoods</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing condition is poor.</li> <li>- Underutilized.</li> <li>- Lake must be dredged and cleaned out.</li> <li>- Poor access to park from northwest neighborhoods.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Add facilities such as picnic tables, grills, fishing docs or tot lots to encourage more frequent usage of the park.</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued lack of maintenance and funding.</li> </ul>



<b>Mount Holly Mount</b>	
<b>Location</b>	This park is located on the south side of Evergreen Street, and east of High Street, and west of the Mount Holly Cemetery. Entrances are at the end of Prospect Street, and along Hillside Road, Evergreen Street, and Mountain View Avenue
<b>Description</b>	The Mount is a thickly wooded area covering 12.5 acres, traversed by pedestrian trails.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trails</li> <li>- Benches</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preserved natural features</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> <li>- Natural diversity</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disconnected from other parks and recreation facilities</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fitness trail</li> <li>- Improved signage</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invasive species damaging existing plant and wildlife</li> </ul>



<b>Mill Dam Park</b>	
<b>Location</b>	South of Mill Street, east of Pine Street, with the main entrance on Wall Street.
<b>Description</b>	Mill Dam Park sits across the Rancocas River from Iron Works Park, and is connected to Iron Works by two pedestrian bridges, including one passing over Mill Dam. Over a 10.5 acre area, the park contains playground facilities, basketball courts, a baseball field, and a hockey rink. It also contains public restrooms, a parking lot, picnic tables, and an unused garden. It is important to note that new facilities are currently under construction at the development of this Plan.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3 basketball courts</li> <li>- 2 tennis courts</li> <li>- 2 tot lots</li> <li>- Walking trail</li> <li>- Proposed splash park</li> <li>- Proposed comfort station</li> <li>- Proposed pavilion</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has received funding and facility updates</li> <li>- Diverse facilities, enjoyable across a range of age groups</li> <li>- Accessibility</li> <li>- Connection to Iron Works</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None immediately apparent due to ongoing improvements to the park.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Install a band-stand for performances.</li> <li>- Well defined exercise trail connecting to Iron Works and/or other parks, like Monroe Street Park.</li> <li>- Proposed splash park, comfort station and pavilion.</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None immediately apparent</li> </ul>



<b>Monroe Street Park</b>	
<b>Location</b>	South of Mill Race Village, and immediately north of the Rancocas Creek. The park is directly accessible from Bispham and Monroe Streets, as well as from an entrance on Pine Street
<b>Description</b>	Monroe Street Park contains five baseball fields, a concession stand, a field house, and a tot-lot over eight acres.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 5 Baseball fields, ranging in size</li> <li>- Tot-lot</li> <li>- Field house</li> <li>- Concession stand</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Riverfront access</li> <li>- Easily accessible from Mill Race Village</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Located within a floodplain and has experienced serious flooding events.</li> <li>- Limited visibility of entrances</li> <li>- Visibility concerns create a sense that the park is unsafe</li> <li>- Poor signage.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Well defined exercise trail connecting to Iron Works and Mill Dam Parks</li> <li>- Use Stormwater Best Management Practices to beautify the park and reduce flooding</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued risk of flooding</li> </ul>



Memorial Park	
<b>Location</b>	Southeast corner of the Ridgley Street and High Street intersection
<b>Description</b>	Memorial Park is a small park dedicated to fallen heroes
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walkways</li> <li>- 2 benches</li> <li>- Memorial monument</li> </ul>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Well maintained</li> <li>- Proximate to many neighborhoods</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Located at a busy intersection, can be noisy.</li> <li>- Limited number and variety of option for interaction within park.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nearby numerous residential subdivisions, a commercial shopping area, and a middle school.</li> <li>- Located immediately adjacent to an Urban Enterprise Zone.</li> <li>- Open, unimproved space creates opportunities for flea markets, fairs, theatrical and musical productions, and other small events.</li> </ul>
<b>Threats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None immediately apparent</li> </ul>



## 2. School Facilities

Folwell Elementary School	
<b>Location</b>	Fronts CR 628, by the intersection with Ridgeway Street; south of Stevens Street and Thornton Pl
<b>Description</b>	The recreational space attached to Folwell contains approximately 9.76 acres of active recreational space, including two baseball fields, a general athletic field, and a playground.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 Baseball fields</li> <li>- Athletic Field</li> <li>- Parking</li> <li>- Playground</li> </ul>

### John Brainerd Elementary School

<b>Location</b>	Brainerd Elementary is located on Wollner Drive, immediately south of Iron Works Park; East of Pine Street
<b>Description</b>	The approximately 1.8 acre yard associated with Brainerd Elementary contains a single playground and open space. The school is immediately across Wollner Drive from Iron Works park, which contains additional active recreational facilities.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Playground</li> <li>- Open Space</li> </ul>

### Holbein Middle School

<b>Location</b>	Fronts Levis Drive, west of High Street; South of Regency Park, North of Bartram Avenue.
<b>Description</b>	Covers an area of 10.8 Acres, containing two baseball fields and general active recreational space containing soccer nets.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 Baseball fields</li> <li>- General Recreational Space</li> </ul>

### Rancocas Valley Regional High School

<b>Location</b>	Across CR 628 from Folwell Elementary; South of Walton Rd; East of Front Street
<b>Description</b>	Approximately 7.7 acres, including track and football facilities, two baseball fields, and five tennis courts.
<b>Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Football field, surrounded by track</li> <li>- 2 Baseball fields</li> <li>- 5 Tennis Courts</li> <li>- General athletic fields</li> <li>- Bleachers</li> </ul>

### 3. Other Open Space

#### Curtis Lane Tract

<b>Location</b>	This open space lot abuts Curtis Lane, Park Ridge Drive, and Cr 621, on Block 125.12, Lot 1
<b>Description</b>	This 2.5 acre parcel is a wooded lot classified as recreational open space according to Mod IV data. The parcel does not contain any permanent structures, and all but approximately 0.4 acres is densely wooded. The parcel does not contain any significant environmental constraints.

#### Chestnut Court Tract

<b>Location</b>	Chestnut Court is composed of several parcels bounded by Chestnut Street and Arch Street to the South, and the North Branch of Rancocas Creek to the North.
<b>Description</b>	Chestnut Court is comprised of approximately 15 acres of thickly

	wooded, unimproved land abutting the Rancocas Creek. Approximately 10 of the 15 acres consist of deciduous wooded wetlands. The Tract is located across the North Branch from the Mt. Holly Public Works Garage, which is a CEA Groundwater Contamination Area. The western extent of the Tract is also less than 300 feet from a Known Contaminated Site, the Eagle Dyeing and Fishing Company site. It is also a State designated endangered species habitat for Bald Eagles.
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<b>Carlton Avenue Tot Lot</b>	
<b>Location</b>	25 Carlton Avenue
<b>Description</b>	Approximately .35 acre parcel at the terminus of Carlton Avenue. This property is listed on the State Registered Open Space Inventory as a tot lot; however, the property is currently vacant.
<b>Facilities</b>	- None apparent

## 5. Recommendations

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These recommendations represent the local government's preferences for addressing the Open Space and Recreation needs and goals based upon the opportunities presented and fiscal constraints. Many recommended actions may simply involve plan or policy modifications that will not incur significant costs relative to the typical costs of land acquisition or recreation development. Recommendations are divided into the general categories utilized throughout this Element.

### General

1. Pursue various grants to fund improvements and upgrades to the park system.
2. Provide more recreation options for neighborhoods in the northern portion of the Township.
3. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between local parks and recreation facilities and regionally.
4. Continue to provide recreation opportunities for a range of ages.
5. Explore potential properties to acquire, without the use of eminent domain, for the use of open space and recreation.
6. Continue investigating opportunities to expand parks and recreation facilities.
7. Strategically design and acquire open space area to form a comprehensive network of open space with appropriate linkages between them such as sidewalks and bike lanes.

### Parks

#### *Monroe Street Park*

- Improve the entrance along Pine Street. There is currently no walkway from Pine Street. The current entrance leads pedestrians alongside private property without any barriers or differentiation.
- Construct a jogging path along the Rancocas River and improve connection to Mill Dam and Ironworks Parks.
- Integrate stormwater best management practices (BMPs) into the landscape to decrease the level of flooding during storm events. This includes but shall not

be limited to bioswales, riparian buffers, green parking design and rain gardens.

#### *Creek Island Park*

- Improve signage and entrances to the rail trail.
- Determine the probability of expansion of the rail trail throughout the County.
- Consider installing a disc golf course throughout the park. Retain an experienced consultant for the design and installation of the course.

#### *Ironworks Park*

- Continue sidewalk from Wollner Drive to other portions of the park to provide a safe path for pedestrians and joggers.
- Improve signage to make consistent with Monroe Street Park and Mill Dam Park.
- Improve wayfinding throughout park, especially near bridge to Mill Dam Park and Canoe/Kayak launch.
- Install facilities near Canoe/Kayak launch to cater to river paddlers.
- Install bandstand facilities for festivals and shows.

#### *Woolman Lake Park*

- Improve pedestrian access around the park by adding a jogging path.
- Expand picnic area with the addition of picnic tables, grills, gazebo, etc
- Improve access to and from neighborhoods on the northwestern portion of the park.
- It is recommended to clean and dredge the Lake.
- Improve facilities for fisherman to include docks, benches and waste cans.
- Pursue grant funding for improvements to Woolman Lake Park.

#### *Mill Dam Park*

- Continue to maintain and improve Mill Dam Park.
- Pursue additional grants/funding for improvements to Mill Dam Park.

### *The Mount*

- Install trail markers within the park and trail maps at the entrances.
- Improve connectivity from the Mount to other recreation facilities.

## **6. Conclusion**

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The Township of Mount Holly has many unique open space and recreational facilities throughout the municipality. These factors promote increased health aesthetic value, tourism, economic development, cultural awareness and overall quality of life. The goals, objectives and recommendations set forward within this Open Space and Recreation Plan will aid in the strategic planning and continued improvements to the Township's park and open space system. Through these ongoing improvements, the Township will be able to provide an ample amount of passive, active and alternative recreation for its residents.

## Appendix A: Open Space Inventory Map



# Mount Holly Open Space Inventory

Westampton Township

Eastampton Township

Lumberton Township



0 410 820 1,640 Feet

## Parks

- 4 Creek Island Park
- 2 Iron Works Park
- 10 Memorial Park
- 1 Mill Dam Park
- 3 Monroe Park
- 5 Mt. Holly Mount
- 9 Woolman Lake

## School Owned Recreation

- 7 F.W. Holbein M.S.
- 6 John Brainerd E.S.
- 8 Rancocas H.S.
- 14 Folwell E.S.

## Other

- 11 Chestnut Court
- 12 Carlton Avenue
- 13 Curtis Lane Tract

- Park
- School Rec Space
- Other Open Space

Canoe Launch

Mt. Holly Rail Trail

