

PUBLIC LIBRARY

Built in 1910, the Lane Memorial Library was expanded in 1957 and was completely renovated in 1985. The 1957 addition was torn down and a new, larger addition was built. The original building was completely renovated. The addition added 13,500 square feet of new space and gave the library four times more space. With a population of approximately 12,000, the library's present size (15,730 square feet) will successfully meet the needs of the Town well into the future.

The library's location in the center of town is ideal and there is ample parking available across the street in the Town Office lot. The present library staff consists of 5 full-time and 6 part-time employees.

- The library should update its reference section.
- The library should expand its role as an information center for the Town.
- The library should expand its role in providing public information concerning Town activities.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The Town contains 23 acres of local park and recreation facilities distributed on eleven parcels of land. Present town recreational facilities include:

- Academy Avenue Playground;
- Five Corners Playground;
- Locke Road Playground;
- Tuck Field: 3 baseball and 1 softball diamonds
4 tennis courts
1 soccer and 1 football fields
picnic tables
Historic Museum
- Founders Park
- Marelli Square
- Bicentennial Park
- Joe Billie Brown Park
- Ruth G. Stimson Park
- Eaton Park - located next to Tuck Field
- Hampton Beach Playground

Tuck Field, at 12 acres, is the main recreational area in Hampton. Since 1985, it has undergone many improvements including the installation of a drainage system and regrading and re-seeding the playing fields. Even with these improvements, Hampton needs new recreational facilities for areas of town that have experienced development in recent years. Hampton has less than two acres per 1,000 year-round residents, far below recognized standards.

Each of the four schools has recreation areas, and the school district also owns 33 acres of land near Batchelder Pond which is a natural area used for passive recreation.

Along Hampton's ocean shoreline are three state parks. They cover a total of about 100 acres and form an important part of the Town's recreational facilities. In 1992 the Hampton Beach State Park added sites for recreation vehicles (RV's) to park overnight.

Additional recreational facilities need to be built by the Town of Hampton for children and residents of all ages. A recreation hall could meet the needs of many residents. Children could meet there for recreational activities after school and during the summer. Senior citizens could use the facility as a much needed meeting place in the mornings. As Hampton's growth continues, additional parks and recreational areas will be needed to serve the year-round residential development in outlying areas.

The amount of open space in Hampton is dwindling with each passing year. Most of the Town-owned land is already developed in some way. The largest amount of open space is the 216 acre State-owned saltmarsh located north of Taylor River, between Route 1 and the railroad track. In addition, about 75 acres of land in the western section of town is owned by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests.

No plan exists for the orderly acquisition of additional open space, conservation or recreation land to meet future needs. Donations and part of the Conservation Commission's budget for land purchase are the only sources of land acquisition that the Town has to increase open space. Steps should be taken to address these open space deficiencies in order to provide for wildlife protection, recreation, natural resource conservation, and education.