

4. Comments (Optional):

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ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	blah blah
2	anonymous	Playgrounds NOT on school grounds would be wonderful.
3	anonymous	The Pump Track is a hidden gem.
4	anonymous	Access to Crocker pond is too restricted. The gate should not be locked at all. Its a total pain and makes the area less usable than it should be. Why do we need parking stickers for this but none of the other areas in town? Why is the guard house manned with sticker checkers? And lastly, who dolls out the locations where you can chain your canoe. I put mine there for several years but finally got tired of always having a crappy spot near the parking lot to drag a big canoe and pleas to the gatekeepers were useless. So I don't go there much any more, which is a shame. The frequently locked gate and other policies are ridiculous.
5	anonymous	Would love to see a public playground that can be used during the school year (and not primarily by the school)
6	anonymous	We need a soccer facility with at least 2 fields in Westminster. Ashburnham has Landry field which is incredible. OR help out the Outlaws take care of the field across from the brewery for the town travel soccer.
7	anonymous	I think a lot of "new" people to the area don't know what's available to them or where to even go and find the other recreational areas. Not everyone reads the newspapers but I think maybe a flyer once a year outlining what the town has to offer might be a nice thing to have. Or, if not that, maybe a bulletin board somewhere in town that would highlight the areas.
8	anonymous	The town should not limited the use of recreation. Hunting and fishing should be allowed.
9	anonymous	I feel there is a need for more fields and parks for the youths to be able to use in our town. I wish there were a bike trail similar to the one on 140 Gardner/Winchendon.
10	anonymous	We need more athletic fields in town outside of the school baseball fields. Sports like lacrosse and football do not have adequate field space.
11	anonymous	I haven't yet been to Hager Park, but it's definitely somewhere I want to

ID	Name	Responses
		explore.
12	anonymous	Walking tracks - are there any?
13	anonymous	More open space instead of more houses. It seems our open space is disappearing with all the developments going on especially in the center of town.
14	anonymous	The best thing about living in the hills is roaming the hills. Please protect our land. Stop/put limitations on new housing developers!
15	anonymous	I just stumbled across Hagar Park. A better map and trail maintenance is needed, but am excited to have learned of an additional recreational area. This survey is the first time i have heard of the Whitman River Trail and the Westminster State forest. I will have to research both.
16	anonymous	I don't even know where some of these areas are! Would be nice to have a flier made up and mailed to all residents since housing seems to be main objective in town
17	anonymous	baba booeey
18	anonymous	Trails need clean up & maintenance. Longer hours of operation into the year for all to enjoy multiple seasons of New England.
19	anonymous	Way too crowded!!!
20	anonymous	I don't use many of our facilities now but have in the past
21	anonymous	Definitely used all of these a lot MORE before COVID-19 impacted "stay at home" rules!
22	anonymous	I didn't know all these facilities were available. We used some of them when the kids/grand kids Were younger
23	anonymous	I think Westminster is lucky to have these. I also think it's vitally important to make sure that they remain available for the next generations to come.
24	anonymous	Im new to Westminster (3years) and didn't know about this stuff!! Mostly I wish there were sidewalks or a railtrail!!!!
25	anonymous	The volunteers do an amazing job managing the trails More bike paths Dog park swim area at Crocker pond to be able to bring dogs

ID	Name	Responses
26	anonymous	I wish you were more open to mountain biking.
27	anonymous	This list is great....I did not know about most of these hiking and conservation areas!!
28	anonymous	These questions are all geared to recreation and not really to open space as other than recreation.
29	anonymous	Not sure if town has trails for biking
30	anonymous	Wish I knew more about these areas.
31	anonymous	I found it difficult finding out about some of these opportunities. Over time neighbors introduced me to them. Not sure if the town website has a section that could list all of the above and a little info about them. It didn't several years ago.
32	anonymous	This year I have spent a lot of time out of state taking care of my mother after her stroke, so my answers on frequency of use may not be too representative.
33	anonymous	Have only used the Meeting House Playground
34	anonymous	Town needs young children playground and more fields for all sports. Long over due.
35	anonymous	We horseback ride weekly on Wachusett Reservation & the surrounding area. We wish it were safer & the Massachusetts State Horse Law was posted & perhaps enforced by Police. Hikers, bicyclists, runners & walkers are at risk in the area.
36	anonymous	Enjoy the Mid State trail very much-
37	anonymous	Rarely use facilities.
38	anonymous	I wasn't aware of some of these! Good to know. Perhaps more information on the town website and better signage at trailheads would be helpful.
39	anonymous	Have not used any of these area in the past 6 years but my family has lived in the area for 40 yrs.
40	anonymous	We need a real park. With a play ground for our kids.
41	anonymous	I don't know what "open space" means, but I do use and appreciate the variety

ID	Name	Responses
		of trails in town either on my bike or with my dogs. I feel they are one of the biggest benefits of living in Westminster.
42	anonymous	We have only lived in town for a year.
43	anonymous	I only moved to Westminster in August, so I know of and plan to go to more of these places but haven't because I've either been busy with moving and Zoom work or hiking elsewhere nearby
44	anonymous	Need far more options in this town. Not enough to do, we don't spend any of our "free" time here and its likely why we will be moving in the next year or two after only living here for 2 years. We'll be heading east to westford, so much more there for families.
45	anonymous	Would love more info on what is offered at these places. Hiking, picnicking, etc.
46	anonymous	The town needs a PUBLIC playground. When school is in session the playgrounds are off limits. Something with a picnic area, playground, basketball court, etc. would be great. Although I am all for preservation of old buildings, I believe tearing down the old town Hall would be extremely beneficial to the town in terms of a playground/picnic area. It is right across the street from the library that many families frequently visit.
47	anonymous	Where is Westminster state forest ?
48	anonymous	I haven't heard of or visited a few of these places but now will have to visit sometime.
49	anonymous	It would be nice to cultivate hager park more
50	anonymous	We need parks
51	anonymous	I wish the Muddy pond area was cleaner, the road was paved, and there was more "security" in that area, as I've heard many things about drug dealing in that area. I feel unsafe to be in the area alone, which is why I don't go there as often as I'd like, as I live closer to it than I do Mt. Wachusett.
52	anonymous	What about Westminster Pump track
53	anonymous	we need a playground besides the ones at the school

10. Comments (optional):

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ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	yes
2	anonymous	it feels the town is being raped by developers
3	anonymous	Too much building, bad for ecology and town infrastructure. We don't need more people.
4	anonymous	Westminster is blessed with ample open space, plenty of hiking, skiing, biking and dog walking areas etc.
5	anonymous	Would love to see more recreational areas, preserve farmlands and more hiking areas. So much development for housing...need to preserve some parcels rather than develop them all. Once we build houses on these properties they're gone forever.
6	anonymous	While conserving/protecting open space is very important i feel that there are two areas of recreation that are not represented at all. Hunters/Fisherman and people that want to ride off road vehicles (4 wheelers, utv's, dirt bikes and snowmobiles). A lot of westminster residents enjoy the outdoors by hunting, fishing and riding off road vehicles
7	anonymous	Limit annual new housing permits
8	anonymous	Hunting and fishing is not even considered as an option and provides the greatest source of funding for conversation.
9	anonymous	Protect shoreline of Wyman by enforcing no wake and limiting horsepower to 25 and banning jet skies
10	anonymous	Just in the five years since we moved here, the look of Westminster has changed drastically and in a way that is very disappointing and unappealing. Land is being cleared and multiple houses are being built on the lots. All of the new houses look the same. What was once a quiet small town that felt established and surrounded by nature now looks like a planned community of mass produced houses that don't fit the former character of the town. Anything that we can do to slow the destruction of the forests and fields in Westminster and to preserve the old character of the town would be very welcome.
11	anonymous	It seems to me that after living here for 35 years houses are being built where we were told were wetlands near ponds lakes did our building codes change for developers
12	anonymous	We live here to be in the woods and in a rural, small town community. Apparently everyone else wants to live here as well, making it no longer woods, and no longer a small town.
13	anonymous	This town should carefully evaluate what it wants to be in the next 10-20-50 years. The inherent charm of a small community is fast going away and being replaced by over-production of cookie-cutter, boring-as-heck homes indiscriminately placed on whatever sort of buildable

lot can be scraped together for the lowest cost and fastest turn possible. While it's easy to understand the motivation for this in terms of residents and developers looking to individually make a quick buck or out of towners moving into a cute small town, there's very little benefit to the current residents or the town itself to keep developing land to serve the needs of residential expansion. This process will, in the reasonably short term, completely wash away whatever charm remains here and replace it with a generic and cloying facade of 21st century suburbia. I grew up here and came back to live here (in a pre-existing home) and have been horrified to see the changes that have happened over the past 20 years and even the last 5.

14 anonymous Balance is key in everything. We need to keep our recreation areas but at the same time not shoot our selves in the foot financially by not allowing growth either

15 anonymous As a child in town, I had so much forest and open land to explore. I've seen it disappearing slowly but surely as developers buy up beautiful spaces to bulid ugly housing. They also take historic sites that we all thought were ours to enjoy forever. It has got to stop under directed review and supervision.

16 anonymous Maintaining woodland areas and not overcrowding the town with development is vital to maintaining the beauty and peacefulness of our town.

17 anonymous The town should build sidewalks in many places. Also why isn't the town pursuing adoption of the Community Preservation Act? Where's the leadership on this?

18 anonymous Due to change in zoning laws, too much open land is being sold off for housing development.

19 anonymous The recreation areas I have explored are nice but some have awful signage making walking/hiking more difficult...

20 anonymous See above comment at #8

21 anonymous Open space is part of what our family loves about Westminster.

22 anonymous Farmland should be the top priority! Once it's gone, you can't get it back.

23 anonymous protect what we have but not necessarily invest in new open space depending on cost and availability of funds without raising taxes. Be careful of mandating rules on homeowners or builders. If someone owns land they should be able to do what they see fit as long as it meets current zoning regulations and building codes. Landowner rights are important.

24 anonymous Especially dismayed over the building of those 2 houses on Stonehill Road. Right at the entrance of the Mid State trail- What was the purpose of that. Really.

25 anonymous Protecting Westminster's open spaces and natural resources is critical as they are a primary reason that our town is a desirable place to live and visit.

26 anonymous Stop cutting down areas for new homes when lots are available give better Incentives for people to fix up a home for sale vs building on lots that need to be cleared

27 anonymous We need a park and a playground in town

- 28 anonymous We need to put a halt to building new homes! Or at least put a maximum number on how many can be built in one year. And make that maximum number low enough to lessen the impact on our schools, highways, roads, police and fire departments!
- 29 anonymous You could have forced our deceloper to add land instead of shoving as many houses in as possible and ripping down so many trees. We'll havs spend about 3 thousand dollars putting trees back onto our lot, ridiculous & not good for the environment
- 30 anonymous Watch the homes being built. Losing tons of forest and we aren't getting the infrastructure to support new dwellings
- 31 anonymous The town should also consider that much of the land that is maintained by the state is paid for on the backs of hunting and fishing licenses and sportsmen should have as much of not more consideration than others.
- 32 anonymous The historical, as well as agriculture portion of this town must be protected and preserved at ALL COSTS.
- 33 anonymous Stop all the house building!
- 34 anonymous Bike paths with access to Gardner, and the Gardner/Winchindon bike bath.
- 35 anonymous The town is allowing too much new building with houses on top of each other. Example - 2 big brand new houses on Stone Hill Rd. What happened to zoning?
- 36 anonymous Open space is essential to preserve. Once land has been developed it cannot be replaced. In addition it makes Westminster a more desirable place to live.
- 37 anonymous Gather people groups to volunteer and help clean and protect the land from developments build walking ADA paths easily accessible
- 38 anonymous It is concerning that building has taken off as fast as it has, as good as it is for the real estate market. We will quickly lose what we have here in this town if we do not make changes, or take steps to protect the green spaces, wooded areas, and scenic spots, that make Westminster the town it is.
- 39 anonymous Less houses going up, preserve the natural areas! It's getting overcrowded.
- 40 anonymous We really need a park to go to in town - the school parks are closed during schools and also not very good for little kids
- 41 anonymous As we continue to keep growing as a community, we are going to start losing the land that the town has worked hard on conserving. One of the greatest things about Westminster, is that it is not so overrun with houses, facilities, etc, that we lose the beautiful nature you'd expect to see in rural Massachusetts. I would prefer to see rundown places/buildings, or places already full of development take on the need for extra recreation facilities. It's one of the great joys to be able to go from hiking Mt. Wachusett to being at Dunks in 5 minutes, but they are so separated, you don't ruin one type of area with the other.
- 42 anonymous We need another multi use park.

- 43 anonymous I think if we maintain the spaces we have now, there are plenty of natural resources
- 44 anonymous Too many single family homes being built here now that needs to stop

12. Comments (Optional):

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ID Name Responses

1	anonymous	Playgrounds outside of school property, and bike paths /bike lanes.
2	anonymous	The town should not raise taxes for recreational areas. Manage the ones you have better. Do not fund historic preservation with my taxes, since that is Betsy Hanula's personal fiefdom. She can pay for it not my taxes. She could not even protect a "historic" house on the green from demolition that she said was "gifted" to hysterical society. While your at it, tear down Upton building before someone gets hurt there and throw out all the crap she's packed into it. Same with old town hall which you should turn into parking lot or community garden or sell it to Joe build a community theatre if he has the means, but don't fund that project with my taxes either.
3	anonymous	If town taxes are utilized or you are looking for donations, trail access or manpower to maintain recreational areas i believe all types of recreation should be represented. I believe if you are all inclusive than you will have better luck getting people involved to help.
4	anonymous	All uses should be looked at. Do not limit forrest management.
5	anonymous	I don't feel part of what happens in town. I feel like it is a closed group of a few who want to get their way and other be "darned"
6	anonymous	Recreation areas are not nearly as important to me as getting land in to conservation and protecting the land that is already in conservation.
7	anonymous	Better Maintenance and Map of Hagar Park. Better advertising of existing recreational options. Disc golf course. Dog friendly places.
8	anonymous	Maintain yes create depends where and cost to taxpayers as town has many retired taxpayers on fixed income don't drive us out!

ID	Name	Responses
9	anonymous	I love the recreation areas we have, although we're still learning about the resources we have. People aren't aware of what we have, so spreading the word might be an improvement.
10	anonymous	The town should provide more activities for older residents such as pickleball courts. The basketball court in town can be a shared space for pickleball and basketball.
11	anonymous	Sports facilities and playgrounds are crucial for successful youth development.
12	anonymous	For long term enjoyment of any recreational area, ongoing maintenance is imperative. Maintenance requirements may vary across the type of area but its funding to do so should not be overlooked during planning stages.
13	anonymous	We need to improve/renovate Hagar Park. Great walking trails but they haven't been maintained
14	anonymous	Most folks could use more exercise, outdoors is the best.
15	anonymous	Priority should be given to those recreational activities that will benefit the most people and to those that will give our children meaningful unstructured activities to engage in while building community; like outdoor (free!) ice skating or cross country skiing (also free!) in the winter, and additional swimming/kayaking opportunities in the summer.
16	anonymous	I have seen the degradation of water quality in Westminster's waters within my lifetime due to development in watersheds. I consider Crocker Pond to be at risk due to lack of land protection in the watershed and poor enforcement of WPA. We are also losing forested land and street trees at an alarming rate; this affects air quality, temperature, and water quality. The OSRP is an important tool to preserve town character and quality of life for all residents of Westminster when combined with thoughtful local code and Boards/Committees willing to enforce the law.
17	anonymous	They should maintain those that we have, but we don't need to creat new ones.
18	anonymous	maintain what we own as part of normal budget process without raising taxes. Continue to accept bequests and donations. Try to coordinate with State owned property for land swaps to connect Town owned spaces
19	anonymous	We should consider cluster housing surrounded by large areas of open space

ID	Name	Responses
		and woods. I would love to see the Town support more and better sidewalks. There are few roads in my neighborhood that I feel safe walking or biking. There isn't even a complete sidewalk on Academy Hill Rd with crosswalks to WES!
20	anonymous	Would love to see another playground option. Unable to use school playgrounds when school is in session. Have always thought an ice skating rink in place of the old town hall would be a nice addition to our town. Expensive to take a family skiing, skating is a much less costly option.
21	anonymous	Build more fields and a kids park.
22	anonymous	The Mt. area needs more supervision especially now that the Pandemic has brought more people here. Traffic control as well as littering needs to be addressed.
23	anonymous	Maintain existing before creating anything new
24	anonymous	Maintain recreational areas. Taxes are high, don't want anything that will raise taxes.
25	anonymous	I would really like to see a playground within walking distance of our downtown, preferably with shade and a fence. A splashpad next to the playground would be awesome! Re the tax question below - I would absolutely support a progressive tax in our town to support these initiatives.
26	anonymous	A monthly e-mail to citizens of Westminster would be a wonderful addition to town information. Letting us know the hours, fees and seasons these places are open and where to park. Basic list of what we can find there and what we might need to bring with us. Pictures of others enjoying the area. Most importantly what classes are offered at the conservation/recreation sites. Having no town news paper is troubling. Many of us do not trust face book so don't count that as a means of distributing information. Also wondering how do you get to page 2 on the early voting information site.
27	anonymous	Focus should be on acquiring additional open space and maintaining what is already present. Team sport areas are very low priority.
28	anonymous	We need athletic fields
29	anonymous	We need to take immediate actions to slow housing growth or all of our open space and farmlands will be gone within the next couple of years!

ID	Name	Responses
30	anonymous	Use the land we have. There are many spaces in town that could be used better. The senior center is a beautiful building that is rarely used. It has a larger parking lot and plenty of land out back. Perhaps that could be used as a better picnic area and space for the whole town not just the senior citizens.
31	anonymous	I strongly feel that all members of the town should be represented in this conversation about recreation and open space. A large percentage of townspeople own off road vehicles such as ATV'S and dirt bikes and have nowhere to legally ride them. Outdoorsman such as hunters and fisherman should be included in the conversation as well as there are a large number of them in town and they are often excluded from involvement. I see a lot of different groups represented in this survey but not either of these two, which again I feel are underrepresented and a good percentage of the towns population.
32	anonymous	Can we get a REAL softball field please? Our softball teams have been incredible for decades using a baseball field. Give the girls an actual softball field
33	anonymous	No opinion, they would be nice but not necessary for this town.
34	anonymous	We need a public playground, one that's accessible during school hours for children who aren't in school yet. Prior to covid, I often found myself traveling to Gardner or Leominster for their playgrounds. I would frequently get lunch afterwards, meaning that I'm spending money in other towns that I would spend at Westminster businesses if I were able to stay in town to visit a playground.
35	anonymous	Waking and BIKE TRAILS. Please!!
36	anonymous	The main attractions for people moving here are the small town atmosphere, the good school system, and the many recreational things the town has to offer so maintaining these areas is very important. Limiting the number of permits for new building is also very important.
37	anonymous	The town needs a playground
38	anonymous	Families need a place to enjoy outdoor activities. It is a good way for children to get exercise and to spend time learning team sportsmanship.
39	anonymous	Recreational facilities that are open all year long to the public
40	anonymous	Most towns that are similar to Westminster have at least one community

ID	Name	Responses
		<p>playground and park area that is separate from the schools. It is very surprising that we do not have any. Walking trails would also be something that would benefit the community, that should be maintained even in winter when people have limited access to outdoor activities. We have friends who live in Minnesota and they maintain walking paths and trails throughout the entire winter, where they get way more snow than we do. It promotes a greater appreciation for the land and resources, physical health, mental health, and community involvement.</p>
41	anonymous	<p>Would love a town pool and playground for the kids!!</p>
42	anonymous	<p>I'd like to see the town maintain the areas that we have and lessen the amount of land they allow developers to buy. It's so disheartening to see all these beautiful areas get destroyed and little cookie cutter houses get put up. I get the need for more housing, as more people are moving out of the "cities" to be here, but once everyone wants to move back, we're going to be stuck with all these houses and our beautiful rural town destroyed.</p>
43	anonymous	<p>As we grow as a town we still have no playground for children to use when school is session. How is that attractive for young families, a demographic you want to attract?</p>
44	anonymous	<p>Our playgrounds are horrible & other than the school there's not much for kids to do but get in trouble?</p>