

Open Space Questions

What's protected and what's not and how does Acton compare to other towns?

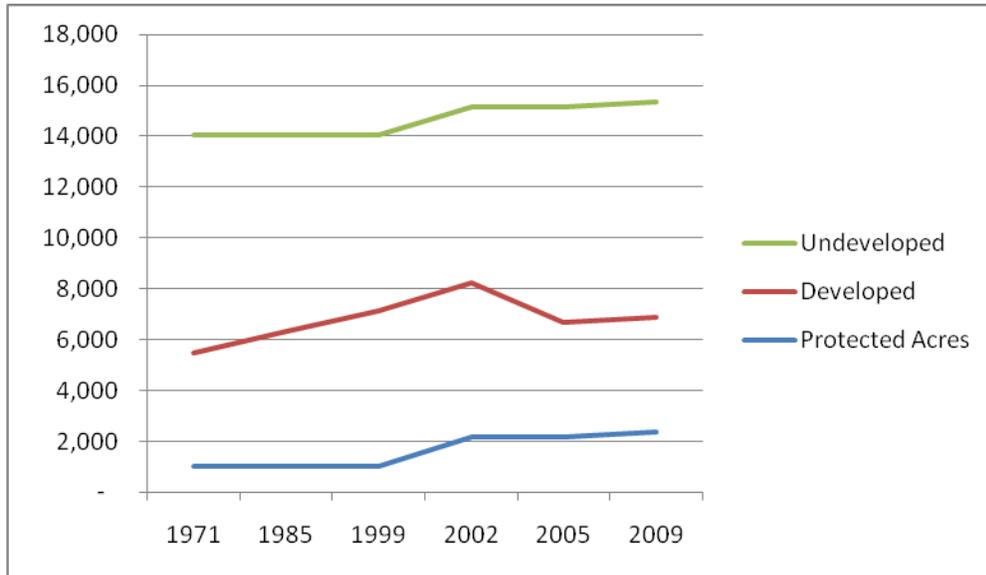
	Acton	Concord	Carlisle	Westford	Maynard	Stow	Littleton
Protected acres	2,328 (169)	4,910 (74)	2,698 (149)	2,055 (189)	1,081 (263)	1,883 (198)	1,040 (267)
Percent Protected	17.9% (176)	29.7% (68)	27.2% (89)	10.2% (264)	31.5% (57)	16.4% (194)	9.3% (275)
Protected acres/capita	.11	.28	.55	.09	.10	0.28	.12
1971 IEI	0.19 (250)	0.24 (226)	0.39 (136)	0.23 (229)	0.19 (244)	0.38 (140)	0.22 (231)
2005 IEI	0.09 (256)	0.16 (198)	0.24 (155)	0.10 (251)	0.14 (212)	0.23 (160)	0.11 (246)
% Loss in IEI 71-05	49.3% (62)	30.5% (172)	40.0% (117)	57.4% (13)	25.8% (200)	39.0% (123)	51.1% (50)

IEI = Index of Ecological Integrity (Massachusetts Audubon Society, [Losing Ground](http://www.massaudubon.org/losingground), 2009 www.massaudubon.org/losingground)

Rank in relation to other towns/cities is shown in parentheses.

There are 351 towns/cities in Massachusetts

What is the trend?

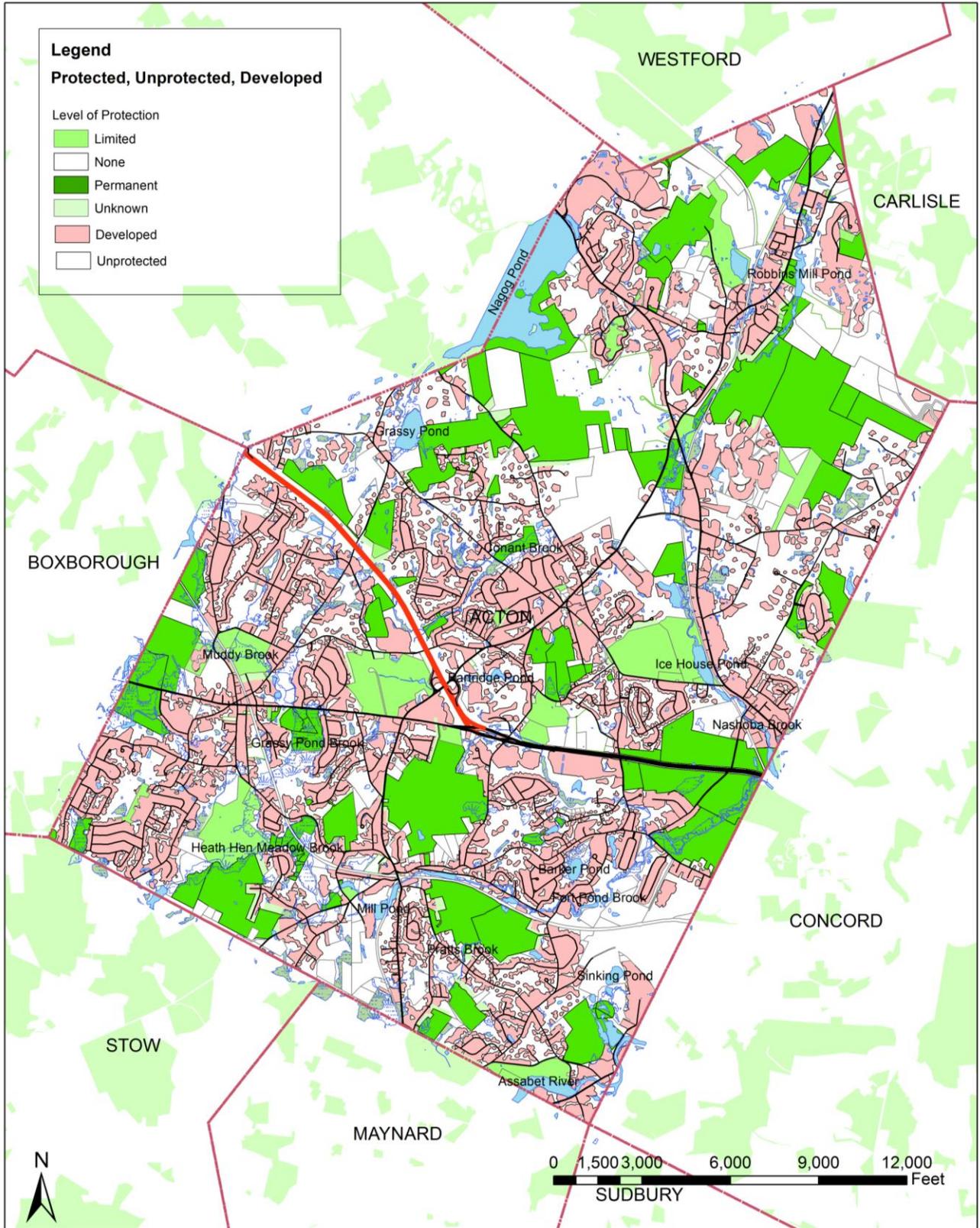


Note: MassGIS changed its method of interpreting land use data in 2005. It is not credible that the amount of developed land decreased between 2002 and 2005. We are trying to determine the cause of this discrepancy and rectify it.

Trend in Open Space Protection & Development						
	1971	1985	1999	2002	2005	2009
Protected Acres	1,040 ¹	?	?	2,159	?	2,347
Developed	4,434	5,314	6,078	?	4,521	?
Undeveloped	8,554	7,674	6,910	?	8,467	?

¹ approximate protected open space in 1975

Source: MassGIS Historic Land Use Data.



Protected, Developed, Unprotected Land 2008

Acton has a total of 12,989 acres

Summary of Land Use

	Mass GIS 2005	Acton Assessors/ Acton GIS
Total Agriculture	331	242
Total Forest	7,128	6,828
Open Wetlands	404	473
Total Residential	3,389	6,353
Total Commercial	458	313
Total Office	included in commercial	154
Total Industrial	203	276
Other Developed	241	

What is happening to unprotected open space in Acton?

Conversion of Natural Land to Development

	acres	rank
Forest converted (1999 to 2005)	92	115
Farmland converted (1999 to 2005)	33	116
Other open land conversions (1999 to 2005)	16	
Total conversions (1999 to 2005)	141	136
Housing units built (1999 to 2005)	460	171

Massachusetts Audubon Society, Losing Ground, 2009 (www.massaudubon.org/losingground)

Land Use Change 1971 to 2005

	1971 acres	%	1985 acres	%	1999 acres	%	2005 acres	%
Agriculture	830	6.4%	621	4.8%	582	4.5%	372	2.9%
Forest	6,839	52.7%	6,266	48.3%	5,530	42.7%	7,128	54.8%
Open Wetlands	378	2.9%	370	2.9%	380	2.9%	408	3.1%
Recreation, open, golf	371	2.9%	279	2.1%	287	2.2%	487	3.7%
Residential	3,291	25.4%	3,941	30.4%	4,801	37.0%	3,388	26.1%
Commercial	225	1.7%	263	2.0%	331	2.6%	459	3.5%
Industrial	185	1.4%	360	2.8%	458	3.5%	203	1.6%
Public/Institutional	225	1.7%	300	2.3%	198	1.5%	166	1.3%
Water	201	1.6%	212	1.6%	210	1.6%	254	1.9%
Other	419	3.2%	354	2.7%	187	1.4%	192	1.5%

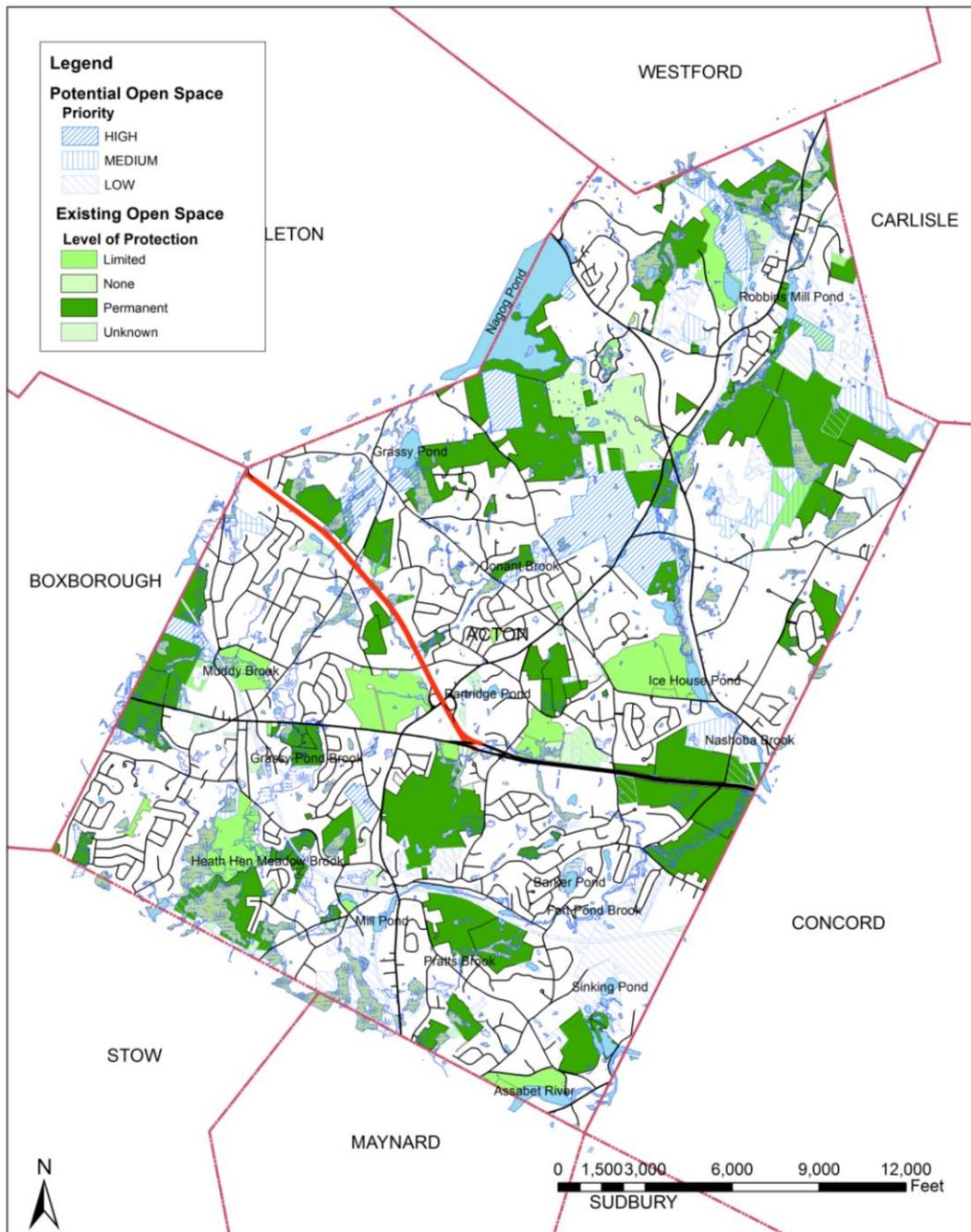
Source: MassGIS

Note: Problem with the MassGIS data for 2005.

Open Space Target Areas

The Conservation Department has prepared a prioritized list of target open space additions based on three criteria:

- Preservation of the remaining elements of Acton's rural character
- Environmental significance
- Recreational potential



Potential & Existing Open Space