



Economic Benefits of Open Space to Massachusetts Communities

User Guide

The PowerPoint entitled “Economic Benefits of Open Space to Massachusetts Communities”, and an accompanying white paper and handout entitled “How Conserving Open Space Provides Economic Benefits to Massachusetts Communities” were developed by a working group of the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition in 2022, with the assistance of consultant Jessica Sargent from Primrose Research Group LLC.

These materials are intended for use by anyone who is interested in advocating for land conservation within their community. The primary intended audience is municipal decision makers who have a role in determining whether to invest in or support conservation of specific properties, whether that be by expending city or town funds, or signing a Conservation Restriction.

The materials focus on economic benefits because municipal decision makers are often understandably concerned about the fiscal impacts of local land use decisions. For similar reasons, the materials focus on economic impacts that accrue at the local level rather than more globally.

The following information is intended to help you make best use of the materials.

- The PowerPoint presentation can be delivered to a live or virtual audience, to one person or to many.
- You may wish to print the handout as a “leave-behind” to supplement your presentation, or email it to as a follow-up to a presentation.
- The PowerPoint is based on research summarized in the much longer white paper, which you may download and distribute freely. The PowerPoint includes a link to the webpage where viewers are also free to download it themselves. You may also choose to email it to your audience, either in advance or as a follow-up to your presentation.
- The PowerPoint covers benefits that relate to a wide range of conserved land. You can focus your presentation and make it briefer by de-emphasizing or even deleting slides that are not relevant to your community or the specific property you are focusing on.
- The PowerPoint is organized into three sections: Benefits to Residents (blue), Benefits to Local Businesses (brown) and Benefits to Municipalities (green). The first slide in each section is an overview slide, with details on each of the following slides.

- The text on most slides is kept to a minimum for ease of presentation, but each slide has accompanying PowerPoint notes which are viewable if you select “Presenter Mode” when running the slide show. It is important for you to familiarize yourself with those notes before giving the presentation, so that you can feel comfortable fielding questions you may get. It would also be a good idea to read the full white paper. The Notes pages include the most relevant citations for the information on each slide, and also mention the page number in the white paper where you can direct people for more information. The notes also provide some suggestions for where you might mention some specifics of your project or community.

To minimize distortion that might occur from downloading and running the slide show on a wide range of devices, nearly all of the PowerPoint slides are fixed and not editable. However, you can still customize the slideshow in the following ways before using it:

- If you’d like, feel free to insert your own logo or presenter info. on the cover slide, by placing a new text box or picture on top of what’s there, and adjusting size and font to suit.
- You can change the order of the slides by clicking and dragging them into new positions, from PowerPoint’s home screen or Slide Sorter view.
- Similarly, you can hide any slides that are not relevant to your community or subject property. To do this, from the home screen or Slide Sorter view, right click on any slide and select “Hide” from the drop-down menu. The slide will then appear to be “greyed out” and will not show if you run the presentation. To “unhide” it, click the “Hide” button again.
- The third slide includes a table with the heading “How land conservation can help address community concerns”. In this position at the beginning of the presentation, this slide can serve as something of an overview of the material you will be covering. This table is fully editable, so you can edit the text to suit.
- Depending on your level of comfort with PowerPoint, you could overlay any of the images in the slideshow with images of your own that may be a better fit for your community or project, sizing them to fit.
- The last slide before the acknowledgement slides is a conceptual bar chart that functions as something of a summary of all the material presented, and encourages the audience to consider *net* fiscal impacts of conserving a parcel of land. We have found that some people find this slide helpful, while others do not. If you would not be comfortable walking your audience through this slide and discussing how it might apply to your community or project, you may wish to hide it.
- These materials were created by the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition and Primrose Research Group LLC, based on specific research reviewed in 2022. We encourage you to add supplemental slides to make the presentation as relevant as possible to your specific needs, but please make a clear distinction between your materials and ours when doing so.
- If you are quite comfortable creating your own custom presentations, you may wish to draw information from these materials in a presentation of your own creation. In doing so, please refer your audience members to the white paper for additional information on any data that you cite. Materials can be found at massland.org/naturesvalue.