

## **Preparing for a Hike**

*Before visiting one of the Town's open space areas for a walk or hike, a certain amount of preparation is needed.* You won't be entering a wilderness area, but you will be using trails with variable surfaces and topography. You'll be walking over rocks and roots and, in most of the areas, you'll be walking through the woods. So you need to think about what you wear, what you should bring with you, what the weather forecast is, what time the sun is going to set, and all of the other things that it's wise to think about in order to have a safe and enjoyable experience.

*Remember that you walk slower on a trail than on pavement.* In the woods, it might take you an hour to walk 1½ to 2 miles, compared to walking on a road where you might be able to cover 2 to 3 miles in an hour. Plan your time accordingly and don't bring young children with you until you're familiar with the trail. When walking, think "pick up your feet" to avoid tripping on rocks or other obstacles, including obstacles that might be covered by leaves.

Wear sturdy, good-fitting shoes and expect to get your feet wet during and after it rains. For long walks, you may want to bring along a light backpack with such items as dry clothes (socks, for example, and rain gear), plenty of drinking water, snacks, flashlight, pocket knife, compass, insect repellent, sunscreen, map, and perhaps a first-aid kit. A camera or binoculars may add to your enjoyment, and you should have a cell phone and whistle in case of an emergency. *Dress appropriately for the weather and time of year.*

Also, be sure to *use good judgement when parking.* Designated off-street parking is available at some of the areas, but at others, you will have to park carefully along the side of the road. Read the sections on access and parking for each open space area. Park with care. Don't interfere with private driveways and use the designated points of access.