



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION, PARKS & OPEN SPACE PLAN

Berks County, Pennsylvania

February 2024



Washington Township Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan

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The Study Committee for the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan consisted of five members who provided guidance on overall Plan direction, themes, and stakeholder and public outreach methods.

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This Plan has been developed over 12 months by YSM Landscape Architects and Recreation and Parks Solutions, working in concert with the Plan Study Committee.

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CHAPTER 1:

Introduction

Introduction

Plan Purpose

Washington Township decided to prepare a Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan to guide decisions the Township will make concerning parks, trails and greenways, recreation facilities, financing, recreation programming, management, open space preservation, and related planning efforts over the next 10 years. The Plan builds upon the existing framework of parks and recreation services with recommendations that target enhancements that are needed in the Township and desired by residents. The Plan sets direction for decisions but supports flexibility as trends, resources, and opportunities change.

Implementation of this Plan will: support the health and well-being of residents, ensure universal access to parks, recreation facilities, recreation programs, preserve natural resources, protect the environment, and improve the parks and recreation system thus ensuring it meets residents' desires today and provides a legacy for future generations.

This Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan is a powerful tool in the Township's efforts to continually build and support a quality parks and recreation system. This Plan serves as a valuable resource in the following ways:

- **A Guideline for the Future** – The vision and recommendations presented in this document offer a clear direction for planning of future parks and recreation initiatives. The wide scope and range of strategies assist in realistic planning for implementation of the Plan and assist in setting financial goals and the appropriate allocation of municipal financial support. The Plan should be reviewed annually, prior to budget season, with Township funding for parks and recreation based on its recommendations. As the Plan is implemented, residents can look forward to a future in which recreation facilities are added and renewed, community recreation programs are offered, connections with the natural environment are strengthened, and parks are safe for everyone.
- **A Public Relations Tool** – This Plan offers accessible and understandable information for the public and urges involvement of park users, community groups, neighbors, and other stakeholders in the Township parks and recreation system. Ongoing communication of the benefits of parks and recreation is a critical piece of success for this Plan. Public support of and advocacy for the parks and recreation system will allow for continued investment of financial resources.
- **A Living Document** – The Plan provides a solid foundation upon which to base local planning and management decisions regarding parks and recreation. Key components can be used by the Township to garner support for proposed projects or future funding assistance from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, federal grant programs, local businesses, and foundations.

The Planning Process

The planning process began in late October 2022 and had six major components:

- A resident outreach and public engagement process to determine community needs, interests, and values, which includes Study Committee meetings, public meetings, stakeholder interviews, and on-line opinion survey
- Inventory and assessment of existing park areas, trails, recreation facilities, recreation programs, governance, financing, personnel, and maintenance operations
- Analysis to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement of the parks and recreation system
- Mission and vision statements to provide strategic direction for the parks and recreation system
- Recommendations which reflect community values captured from the public engagement process, evaluation of current conditions, analysis of existing facilities and programs, and consideration of trends
- Action plan with time frames over the short-, medium-, and long-term through 2034 to address the Plan's recommendations



Important Benefits of Parks and Recreation

When people think of parks and recreation, they envision playgrounds, swimming pools, sports leagues, and summer camps, but parks and recreation are so much more. Parks are a home base, a refuge, and a place to gather with friends and family.

Local parks and recreation services are at the core of what defines a healthy, prosperous, and connected community. Demographic, societal, and technological changes are heightening the need for parks and recreation; namely, being an important contributor to health and wellness, providing communal places where people of all ages and social strata can interact with each other, and providing places that protect and preserve high-priority conservation areas. Local parks deliver affordable opportunities for play and physical activities, promote mental and spiritual well-being, provide a sense of place and a gathering space, and are the heart of a community. Public parks and recreation amenities have a distinct value in the way they build community identity, cohesion, and pride.

Top Issues for the Plan to Address

After careful listening and evaluation, issues concerning parks and recreation were identified. It is essential that the Township, along with community partners, address these issues over the next 10 years to develop a parks and recreation system that will meet the needs of residents.

The following is a summary of the top issues (not in order of importance):

- Trails are needed both in parks and to connect the parks in order to address the desire of residents for close-to-home walking opportunities.
- The parks target the recreation needs of youth and youth sports organizations. Currently, soccer fields dominate Washington Township Park.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations are missing from the parks.
- The Recreation Advisory Committee has recently been reestablished and its responsibilities are not well defined.
- Routine recurring tasks, preventative maintenance requirements, and maintenance standards for park areas and recreation facilities are not outlined in a written schedule.
- There is a lack of community recreation programs and special event opportunities in the Township for all ages.
- Plans for recently acquired parkland are not yet in place.
- Collaboration with neighboring municipalities for parks and recreation services is lacking.

The Future of Washington Township Parks and Recreation

The Washington Township mission statement, vision statement, and core goals for parks and recreation have been prepared to guide development, operation, and programming of the Township parks and recreation system over the next 10 years.

The mission statement defines the Township's purpose for its parks and recreation system, while the vision statement presents the Township's desire for its future. The core goals are guiding principles that directly support the mission and vision and define and prioritize the work required to implement this Plan.

Mission Statement – We focus on preserving our natural resources and providing parks, trails, and recreation activities for residents to enjoy the outdoors, connect with others, make memories, and improve health.

Vision Statement – Our safe and accessible parks and recreation system inspires all residents to be active outdoors and involved in the community.

Core Goals – The Plan sets out five core goals to support the Township's mission and vision for parks and recreation.

Core Goal 1 – Renewal, Investment, and Stewardship – We will address the maintenance and improvement needs of parks, trails, and recreation facilities to protect the environment and keep amenities in top shape for safe and enjoyable use.

Core Goal 2 – Recreation for All – We will ensure the right of all people to play, learn, and explore outdoors by removing barriers to participation and fostering an inclusive culture.

Core Goal 3 – Health and Wellness – We will promote outdoor physical and social activity by providing safe and welcoming recreation places, spaces, and programs.

Core Goal 4 – Relationship and Capacity Building – We will collaborate with neighboring municipalities, partners, and residents to provide exceptional parks and recreation opportunities for our community.

Core Goal 5 – Awareness – We will do everything possible to make our parks, natural areas, and trails better used tomorrow than they are today.

Recommendations are based on the Plan’s five core goals. The Plan recommendations provide Washington Township with the tools that will lead it to do the best job possible to sustain its parks and recreation system, provide memorable special events and programs that bring the community together, and celebrate the Township’s natural and cultural heritage.

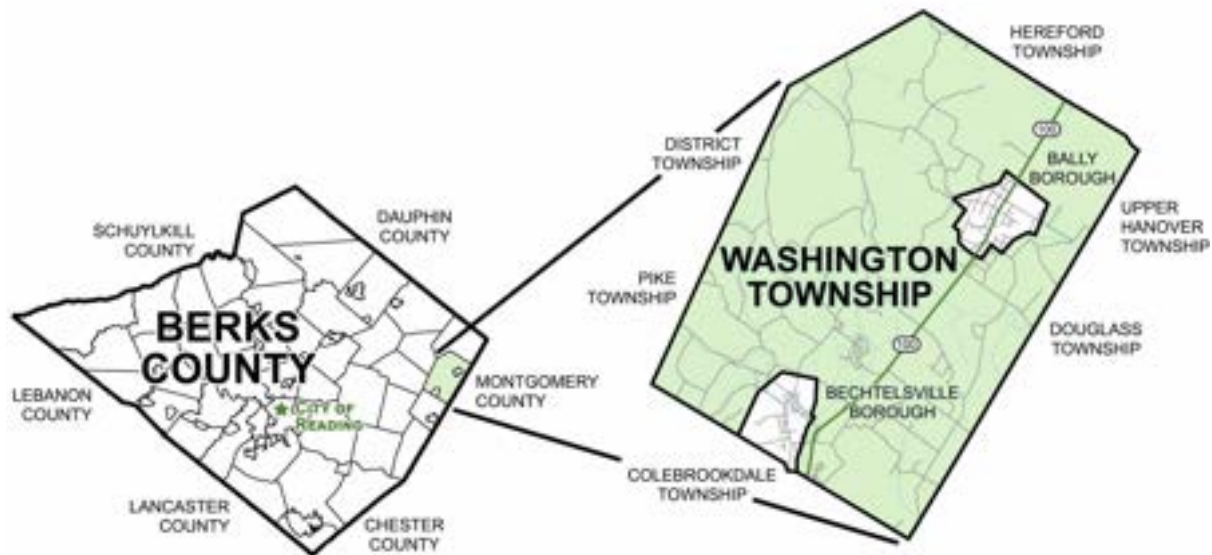
Implementation will require focused energy, commitment, support, and resources of Township elected and appointed officials, staff, community organizations, and residents.



CHAPTER 2:

Public Engagement

Public Engagement



Washington Township is in eastern Berks County, Pennsylvania located east of the City of Reading. The Township borders Upper Hanover and Douglass Township in Montgomery County to the east, Hereford Township to the north, District and Pike Townships to the west, and Colebrookdale Township to the south. Washington Township area is bisected by State Route 100, a north-south connector between Allentown and West Chester.

Washington Township

Settlers arrived in the early 1730's in the Colebrookdale and Hereford region. Washington Township, incorporated in 1839, is named after the nation's first president and was formed out of Colebrookdale and Hereford.

The draw of the area's rich natural resources allowed the successful operation of a large variety of mills, furnaces, and forges. The area's first furnace was built at Mount Pleasant in 1737. A foundry in the area manufactured cooking and heating stoves. The waterpower was also used to prepare whetstones, run a tannery, and distill oils. The iron industry made the area one of the busiest sections of the county. Later, agriculture became the Township's main industry. Early villages included Barto, laid out in 1869.

Washington Township today is primarily a residential community with an ever-increasing population located in the primary corridor between more urbanized areas of Pennsylvania-Lehigh Valley to the north, Philadelphia to the south, and Reading to the west. Washington Township is part of the Boyertown Area School District. The Boyertown Area School District includes Colebrookdale Township, Douglass Township (Berks), Earl Township, Washington Township and the Boroughs of Bally, Bechtelsville and Boyertown in Berks County and the townships of Douglass Township (Montgomery), New Hanover Township and Upper Frederick Township in Montgomery County.

Municipal Government

Washington Township is a Township of the Second Class. It is governed by a three-member Board of Supervisors, each appointed for a six-year term. The Board of Supervisors appoints the Township Manager, Township Solicitor, Township Engineer, and Code Enforcement and Zoning and Building professionals. Additionally, the Board of Supervisors appoints municipal representatives to the Environmental Advisory Council, UCC Board of Appeals, Agricultural Advisory Council, and Recreation Advisory Committee. The Recreation Advisory Committee has five members.

Demographics

Washington Township is a small rural community with a 2020 population of 4,443 residents. While Pennsylvania grew by 2.4 percent from 2010 to 2020, Berks County had a larger increase of 4.2 percent. Washington Township experienced significant growth of 16.6 percent.

	2010 Population	2020 Population	Numeric Change 2010 - 2020	% Change
Pennsylvania	12,702,379	13,002,700	300,321	+ 2.4%
Berks County	411,442	428,849	17,407	+ 4.2%
Washington Township	3,810	4,443	633	+ 16.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, P1: RACE 2010 and 2020 DEC Redistricting Data

Population Projections

The Berks County Planning Commission has developed population projections for municipalities. Table 2-2 presents population projections for Berks County as well as Washington Township through 2030. The County is projected to increase population by almost nine percent. Washington Township's projected growth has a larger projected increase of 21.8 percent. This suggests the need to maintain existing parkland and recreation amenities in good working order to continue to meet residents' needs, while investing in undeveloped parks and acquiring additional parkland.

	2010 Population	2020 Population	2030 Population	Numeric Change 2010 - 2030	% Change 2010 - 2030
Berks County	411,442	428,849	448,095	36,653	+ 8.9%
Washington Township	3,810	4,443	4,642	832	+ 21.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, P1: RACE 2010 and 2020 DEC Redistricting Data, Berks County Planning Commission

Race and Ethnicity

Washington Township is a mostly homogenous community with Caucasian residents making up about 95 percent of the population. In the Township, the population includes less than one-percent African Americans, less than one-percent Asians, two-percent Hispanic ethnicity residents, and two-percent residents of two or more races.

Age

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the median age for Berks County is 40.2 while the median age of Washington Township is 54.5. Over the past decade, all younger age cohorts of 0-64 years old have decreased while the 65-85+ years old age groups have grown significantly in the municipality. This indicates a need to enhance the quality of life in the community, including access to parks, to retain young families, and to provide recreation opportunities that residents can enjoy throughout their lifetime.

Table 2-3 Washington Township Age of Population 2010-2020		
Age Group	2010	2020
Under 5 yrs.	4.5 %	2.6 %
5 - 24 yrs.	27.1 %	16.0 %
25 - 44 yrs.	23.3 %	19.6 %
45 - 54 yrs.	16.6 %	12.9 %
55 - 64 yrs.	17.2 %	16.3 %
65 - 74 yrs.	8.7 %	19.5 %
75 - 84 yrs.	1.9 %	8.4 %
85 yrs. +	0.6 %	4.8 %
Median Age	43.5	54.5

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, S0101: AGE AND SEX 2010 and 2020 ACS 5-year Estimates

Education

Roughly 16.4 percent of the residents, 25 years and older, in Berks County have a bachelor's degree. Professional or graduate degrees are held by 9.5 percent of County residents.

Income

The median household income in the year 2020 in Washington Township was \$77,826 which is higher than Berks County at \$68,658.

Housing

The median value of a house in Berks County in 2020 was \$220,900 and rent was \$1,031 per month. Over 94 percent of the housing stock is owner-occupied.

Public Engagement

Public engagement was the foundation of the planning process to assess the opportunities and challenges as well as resident needs and preferences associated with parks and recreation in Washington Township. Input from residents was sought throughout the planning process through four engagement strategies: 1) working with a Study Committee, 2) conducting key person interviews, 3) conducting an online survey, and 4) holding a public meeting.

Study Committee

A Study Committee was established to guide the planning process, review materials and findings of project tasks, and provide feedback. The Study Committee was comprised of representatives of the municipality to include members of the Recreation Advisory Committee and the Township Manager. The Study Committee met eight times throughout the Plan development to discuss project findings and planning considerations and to review the draft report.

Key Person Interviews

The consultant team conducted interviews with key stakeholders to gain additional insights about recreation needs and opportunities, current practices, and community background. Interviewees were provided with a brief background on the project and asked questions relevant to their interests in parks and recreation. Interviewees included maintenance personnel, PARRC Director, and others.

Online Public Comment Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was developed to explore residents' opinions regarding parks, recreation facilities, and how they would like to spend their leisure time in Washington Township. The online questionnaire was available for 232 days and 185 people logged onto the survey to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire included 17 questions including four demographic questions and three open-ended questions. The results of the online questionnaire provided a sense of resident preferences for recreation but cannot be considered statistically valid. A summary of the online questionnaire results is provided in Appendix A.

Public Meetings

A public meeting was held to share the mission, vision, goals, and recommendations of the draft Plan. The consultant team presented this information and opened the meeting for public comment. Discussion centered around the timeframe for implementation of the plan recommendations.

Public Engagement Findings

The findings of the public engagement tasks are summarized below.

Parks – The two developed parks are similar with active park improvements. The parks lack diversity of recreation opportunities and there are few facilities or activity areas for families. Residents want to be able to take their dogs to the parks.

Recreation Facilities – The municipal parks are developed to target the needs of youth and youth sports programs. Residents desire more diverse opportunities in the parks to serve other age groups and target different recreation interests. Soccer fields dominate Washington Township Park. The playgrounds are basic and do not inspire extended play. Trails are limited to a single segment in Barto Community Park. There are no trails in Washington Township Park.

Spending Time Outdoors and Enjoy Nature – Residents want opportunities to spend time outdoors to enjoy time with family and friends. The online questionnaire found interest in conserving open space and natural resources and developing trails.

Trails – There is significant interest in the municipality for trail development to provide safe areas for walking and biking. The online questionnaire found that walking on trails was the most popular experience respondents were looking for when visiting parks.

Programs, Special Events and Services – Residents get recreation programs from a variety of sources and do not expect the Township to provide recreation programs. There is interest in Washington Township holding special events. Survey respondents are open to the possibility of cooperation between Washington Township and neighboring municipalities for increased grant opportunities to enhance and expand community recreation facilities and recreation programs in the region.

Maintenance – Residents are satisfied with the cleanliness and overall maintenance of park areas and recreation facilities.



CHAPTER 3:

Parks & Recreation Facilities

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Parks and Recreation System Inventory

Table 3-1 inventories municipal parks, open space, and schools in Washington Township.

Table 3-1 Washington Township Park and Recreation Land Inventory			
Parks	Acreage	Characteristics/Facilities	Comments
Neighborhood Parks			
Community Parks			
Barto Community Park	19.497	Playground, youth baseball field, basketball court, trail, football field, pavilion, indoor community room	Adjacent to Township Building
Washington Township Park	37.455 (38.655)	Playground, pavilion, soccer fields (8), concession building	Sewage treatment plant (1.2 acres)
Naigle Nature Preserve and Woodlands	38.25	Undeveloped open space. Includes Reserve at Bally Spring.	3 parcels include Hoffman Estates Open Space
Natural Resource Area/Preserve			
Forgedale Open Space	0.44	Undeveloped open space – no public access	Along West Branch Perkiomen Creek
Cobbler Court Open Space	1.54	Undeveloped open space	
Total Township Parkland	97.182		
Schools			
Washington Township Elementary School	20% (2.8 acres)	Playground, basketball hoops, baseball field	
Brookeside Montessori School	4% (0.11 acres)	Playground	Private
Total Schools Recreation Lands	2.91		
Other Public, Quasi-Public, Protected Lands/Parks			
PA State Game Lands #315	152	Natural area	
Berks Nature		2 Easements	
Bally Borough	19	Undeveloped parcel on Crow Hill Road in Township	
National Center for Padre Pio	54.57	Radio-controlled airplane area	Private
Berks Nature Agricultural Conservation Easements	322	4 Properties	Private
Hunter Access Cooperator Lands	310	3 Properties	Private
Total Other Lands	857.57		

There are five parks owned by Washington Township encompassing 97.182 acres. Of the five parks, only two, Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park, are currently developed and available for public recreation. Parks are located on the Park Inventory Map on page 3-24. Table 3-1 also contains information about school sites which contain recreation facilities and other public or quasi-public recreation sites.

Different types of parks provide diverse opportunities for visitors. Table 3-2 presents a typical Park Classification System. It shows the range of park types, their benefits, typical facilities, and the maintenance levels appropriate for the park type.

Table 3-2
Washington Township
Park and Recreation Classification System

Type/Size/Service Radius	Definition	Benefits	Appropriate Amenities	Maintenance Level
Mini Park 0-5 acres ¼-mile service radius	Smallest park type, addresses limited recreation need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides close to home recreation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playground Benches, seating area 	High level of maintenance associated with well-developed park and playground, reasonably high visitation.
Neighborhood Park 5-10 acres minimum ½-mile service radius	Focus of neighborhood; in walking/biking distance of visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides access to basic recreation opportunities Contributes to neighborhood identity Establishes sense of community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play areas Ballfields Game Courts Picnic/Seating Pathways Community gardens 	High level of maintenance associated with well-developed park and reasonably high visitation.
Community Park 10-50 acres, preferably 50-80 acres 2-mile service radius	Large park for active & passive recreation; serves residents municipality-wide. Accommodates large groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of recreation opportunities for all ages and interests Space for organized, large scale, high participation events Family destination Fitness and wellness opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play areas Organized sports facilities Pavilions Permanent restrooms Lighting Amphitheaters Pools, Rinks Parking 	Moderate level of maintenance associated with moderate level of development, budget restrictions, inability to perform higher levels of maintenance. Potential for park “friends” or adopt-a-park partners.
School/Community Park Variable	Parkland adjoining a school used for both recreation and education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combines two public entities for expanded year round recreation. Maximizes public resources Expands recreation opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth-oriented game courts and ball fields Play areas Pathways Lighting Parking 	Moderate level of maintenance associated with moderate level of development, budget restrictions. Potential for cooperative agreement with school.
Sports Complex 30+ acres; preferably 50-80 acres	Consolidates sports fields and related facilities in a centralized location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economy of scale Improved management Municipal showcase Attracts visitors who stimulate local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball fields Lighting Spectator areas Restrooms, Concessions Landscaping Parking 	State of the art maintenance applied to high quality facilities. Associated with high visitation; revenue generating facilities, tourism.
Special Use Facility Variable	Facility for a single purpose use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides special focus recreation opportunities Contributes to community identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depends on purpose 	High level of maintenance associated with well-developed park and reasonably high visitation.
Greenways and Trails Variable	Tie park areas and community together to form a contiguous park environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects community Reduces auto dependency Improves air quality Contributes most desired recreation facility for people throughout their lifetime Attracts visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways – multipurpose Trailheads Support facilities Signage 	Lowest level of maintenance. Focus on trailheads and trail safety.
Natural Resource Area/ Preserve	Natural areas for protection and management of natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects resources Provides wildlife habitat Offers opportunities for environmental education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails Signage Support facilities 	Lower level of maintenance.

When the Washington Township Park and Recreation Classification System is applied to the municipal parks three parks are classified as Community Parks, none are classified as Neighborhood Parks, and two are classified as Natural Resource Areas/Preserves based on their resources, function in the Township, and their size. There are no Greenways and Trails in the Township.

Level of Service Analysis

How much parkland does Washington Township need to meet the recreation needs of residents? Washington Township has two developed parks which provide 53.40 acres of parkland. A population-based analysis is typically used to evaluate active public parkland. The population of a community drives the number of active park facilities, such as ballfields and basketball courts, that a community needs to meet the recreation demands of residents. As a community's population grows, so does the need for parkland. A population calculation that correlates to parkland acreage can readily be updated as a community's population increases or decreases.

Passive parks, greenways, trails, nature preserves, and open space parcels are not evaluated using a population-based acreage standard because the size of these park areas should be based on the site resources and the area necessary to protect and conserve the resources to make them available for public enjoyment. For this analysis, the Reserve at Bally Spring and the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands are not included. These properties include natural resource areas that will offer passive recreation opportunities. Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands is envisioned as a future community park with both passive and active facilities; it is not currently developed and available for public use.

The prevailing standard for active parkland acreage has been 10-acres per thousand population. This standard was first referenced in the 1969 National Park, Recreation and Open Space Standards, published by the NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association). Communities have continued to work with the 10-acre per thousand-population standard over the past 50 years as an easy default to evaluate if their community has sufficient parkland. But much has changed in sports, recreation, and the way we spend our leisure time since 1969. Consider the following factors that influence the amount of parkland needed to serve a community:

- There are new popular youth sports: soccer and lacrosse.
 - Youth soccer did not emerge as a major youth sport until the 1980's and 1990's. US Youth Soccer, the largest youth soccer organization in the U.S., has 3,000,000 members ages 5 – 19.¹
 - Lacrosse didn't emerge as a popular youth sport until the 2000's with "just over 250,000 players in 2001 to the current total of 826,023, an increase of over 225 percent over a 15-year timeframe."²
- Girls' participation in youth sports has grown significantly since 1969. In 1972, Title IX provided equal access to programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance, including sports. In the 45+ years since Title IX went into effect, girls' participation in sports has grown exponentially. During the 1971-1972 school year, immediately before the legislation passed, fewer than 300,000 girls participated in high school athletics. To put that number in perspective, just 7% of all high school athletes were girls. In 2010-2011, the number of female athletes had climbed by more than tenfold to nearly 3.2 million, or 41% of all high school athletes.³ Before Title IX, one in 27 girls played sports. Today that number is two in five.⁴ This growth is also reflected in youth sports programs.

¹ http://www.usyouthsoccer.org/media_kit/ataglance/, n.d., Web. 14 Dec. 2017.

² Logue, Brian. www.uslacrosse.org/blog/national-lacrosse-participation-tops-825000-players, 9 June 2017, Web. 14 Dec. 2017.

³ National Federation of State High School Associations, *2010-11 High School Athletics Participation Survey*.

⁴ Olmstead, Maegan. www.womenssportsfoundation.org/education/title-ix-and-the-rise-of-female-athletes-in-america/, 2 Sep. 2016, Web 14, Dec. 2017.

- Youth sports programs have expanded beyond their traditional seasons. Baseball is no longer just a spring sport with most youth programs offering both spring and fall seasons. Soccer and lacrosse also are played in multiple seasons.
- The COVID—19 pandemic affected recreation habits. Organized recreation activities were suspended, and many youth sports organizations saw subsequent reduction in participation in 2021 with 2022 as a rebuilding year. Self-directed recreation saw gains in participation as people sought opportunities to get outside where they could be active while socially distancing. The York County Heritage Rail Trail saw a 240-percent increase in use between May 2019 and May 2020 during the height of the pandemic. Research led by faculty in Penn State’s Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management in collaboration with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics explored the pandemic’s effects on outdoor recreation. “Results indicated that nearly half of adults from across the United States now participate in outdoor recreation on at least a monthly basis, and approximately 20% may be new to outdoor recreation during the pandemic. Meanwhile, more than 13% of Americans ceased participation in outdoor recreation during the same time period.”⁵

The statistics above show that the 10-acre parkland standard is outdated. In 1995, in the NRPA *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, the NRPA promoted a shift away from reliance on an absolute national standard, i.e., the long-standing notion of 10 acres/1,000 persons, to increasing community self-direction where the number of acres for park and recreation land is based on what the citizens determine is best for themselves.

The current parkland acreage for Washington Township can be calculated to determine the status quo for parkland acreage based on population. The calculation is based on the 2020 population for the region.

2020 Status Quo Calculation – Active Municipal Parks

$$4,443 \text{ (2020 population of region)} \div 1,000 = 4.44$$

$$56.952 \text{ (active parkland acreage)} \div 4.44 = 12.83\text{-acres of parkland}/1,000 \text{ residents.}$$

At 12.83-acres per 1,000 population, Washington Township exceeds the minimum standard first recommended in 1969.

In 2009 the NRPA launched Park Metrics 2009 to provide critical park-related data to communities. NRPA Park Metrics is the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies. Data is gathered from park and recreation agencies and made available to build customized reports that allow for comparisons with peer agencies. Table 3-3 summarizes the Park Metrics, 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review data on communities of similar size to the Washington Township.

Table 3-3 2022 NRPA Park Metrics Jurisdiction Population Less than 20,000 Acres of Parks per 1,000 Residents		
	Mid-Atlantic Region	Nation-wide
Lower Quartile	5.3	5.2
Median	10.8	12.9
Upper Quartile	20.0	21.7

⁵ Aaron Wagner, <https://www.psu.edu/news/health-and-human-development/story/how-has-covid-19-pandemic-affected-outdoor-recreation-america/#:~:text=The%20more%20than%2013%25%20of.than%20existing%20or%20new%20recreationists>, Penn State, January 24, 2022.

Based on the NRPA data, the Washington Township region at 12.83 acres of parkland per 1,000 population is comparable to the median quartile metric for jurisdiction populations of similar size. To maintain the median metric for similar sized jurisdictions, Washington Township should continue to exceed the 10-acre standard as the population grows.

Table 3-4 Washington Township Parkland Acreage/NRPA Standards Analysis – Regional Assessment					
	Existing Active Parkland Acreage	Recommended Acres/2020 Population – 4,443	2020 Deficit (-) Excess (+)	Recommended Acres/2030 Projected Population – 4,642	2030 Deficit (-) Excess (+)
Community Parks @ 10 Acres/1,000 Population	56.95	44.43	+ 12.52	46.42	+ 10.53
Community Parks @ 15 Acres/1,000 Population	56.95	66.65	- 9.70	69.63	- 12.68

Source: PA State Data Center / Berks County Planning Commission

The 2020 U.S. Census indicated a population of 4,443 residents in Washington Township. Population projections for 2030 provided by the Berks County Planning Commission show population growth in Washington Township. Table 3-4 provides an assessment of the amount of parkland that should be available for active recreation in Washington Township for U.S. Census year 2020 and projected for 2030 using the 10-acre and 15-acre standards. Passive, non-municipal, and undeveloped parkland has been excluded from this analysis.

The assessment of parkland acreage shows that Washington Township exceeds the minimum amount of recommended parkland needed in the community in 2020. The 15-acre standard represents a progressive standard that will position the municipality to continue to meet recreation needs as trends in recreation change and the population grows.

Washington Township’s acquisition of the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands for a future community park aligns with a progressive approach to parks and recreation. When Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands is developed, it is anticipated that a portion of the 38.25-acre property will be developed with active and passive recreation facilities. This additional parkland acreage will offset, in part, the 12.68-acre deficit projected for 2030 based on the 15-acre standard. With the acquisition and development of the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands, Washington Township is positioned to continue to meet the community’s parkland needs.

Service Area and Parkland Distribution

The Park and Recreation Classification System for the Washington Township region identified service areas by park types. Service areas are the zone of influence of individual parks. Service areas are usually determined by the average distance users are willing to travel to reach a facility. Although expressed in terms of service radius, features such as arterial roads, active railroads, streams, or other disruptions to normal travel may influence the extent of the service area. Service radii differ by park size. Mini parks have a service radius of one-quarter mile, neighborhood parks have a service radius of one-half mile, and community parks serve residents within a two-mile radius. Community parks have the most facilities and may draw visitors from beyond the two-mile radius or even the municipal boundary. Neighborhood and mini parks are smaller with fewer facilities and typically draw visitors from the immediate surrounding neighborhood.

The Recreation Access Map on page 3-25 illustrates the service radius for the two municipal parks. The Map shows that nearly the entire municipality falls within the service areas of the two community parks. Only small portions of northern and southern Washington Township do not have convenient access to parkland.

Recreation Facilities

Park facilities are often assessed based on standards. In 1983 the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) published facility standards that have long been used as a benchmark for assessing if a community has sufficient recreation facilities. The NRPA Park Metrics, compiles a comprehensive collection of park and recreation-related benchmark data about public parks and recreation facilities in the United States. These statistics provide a more relevant and up to date benchmark for assessing facilities. The 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review based on Park Metrics was referenced, along with the 1983 NRPA facility standards to consider the appropriate number of recreation facilities that should be available in Washington Township.

Activity / Facility	1983 NRPA Facility Standard (# Units / Population)	2022 NRPA Median # Residents / Facility	2020 # Township Area Residents / Facility (4,443 Population)	Township Area Facility Standard	# Facilities Required/ Township Area Standard	Existing # Units Township Area	Township Area Unit Deficit/ Surplus	Comments
Basketball Court	1 court/ 5,000	1/3,750	1/4,443	1/4,000	2	1	-1	
Tennis Court	1 court/ 2,000	1/2,723	-	1/3,000	2	0	-2	2 in Bally Borough Park
Baseball Field – Youth (60’ BL)	1 field/ 5,000	1/3,107	1/4,443	1/3,000	2	1	-1	
Baseball Field – Adult (90’ BL)		1/7,154	-	1/5,000	0	0	0	
Football Field	1 field/ 20,000	1/8,004	1/4,443	1/8,000	0	1	+1	
Soccer Field	1 field/ 10,000	1/3,504	1/555	1/3,000	2	8	+6	
Multi-purpose Field		1/4,362	-	1/4,000		2*	-1	Lacrosse, field hockey, informal play. 2* includes football field and soccer fields counted in Table 3-5
Softball Field – Youth	1 field/ 5,000	1/5,339	-	1/5,000	0	0	0	
Softball Field - Adult		1/5,667	-	1/5,000	0	0	0	Could use youth baseball field
Pickleball Court		1/3,446	-	1/2,000	3	0	-3	
Playground		1/1,986	1/2,222	1/Active Park	2	2	0	
Dog Parks		1/11,100	-	1/10,000	0	0	0	
Skate Park		1/11,100		1/10,000	0	0	0	

Table 3-5 documents the evaluation of recreation facilities. Washington Township facility standards were used to project the number of recreation facilities that should be available in Washington Township area parks. The standard was compared to the number of existing facilities to calculate the facility deficit or surplus.

Research

Recreation does not happen in a vacuum, instead there are national, regional, and local trends, community initiatives; and a variety of outside influences that affect the way we recreate and spend leisure time. Some of the influences on recreation and parks in Washington Township include:

- The emergence and immense popularity of pickleball and the continued popularity of dog parks.
- Pickleball is one of the fastest-growing sports in the US, with an estimated 4.87 million players in the US, and a growth rate of 39.9% over the recent two-year period⁶.
- 38.4 percent of US households own a dog with an average of 1.6 dogs owned in 2018.⁷ From 2009 to 2020 there was a 40 percent increase in the development of public dog parks.⁸
- Recently the Covid pandemic significantly affected how people recreate and spend time outdoors. Local sports organizations noted that participation rates fell during the pandemic as people isolated and avoided close contact with others. Many local sports organizations noted that their participation numbers are not back to the pre-pandemic rates but growing from their low point.

Recreation Facility Assessment

Basketball Courts – There is one basketball court in the Barto Community Park which was recently improved with color-coat surfacing, however the court is not developed with sufficient run-out room behind the baskets and along the sidelines. The court is not developed with the appropriate north-south orientation. There are five basketball nets at the Washington Township Elementary School, one basketball net at the Bechtelsville Community Park in Bechtelsville Borough, and one basketball court in Bally Community Park in Bally Borough.



- Adding basketball courts was Very Important or Somewhat Important by 69.4 percent of the respondents to the online survey.
- Based on the Washington Township Recreation Facility Development Standards, a second basketball court should be developed in the municipality.

Basketball courts should be included in new neighborhood and community parks and rehabilitated in Barto Community Park.

⁶2022 Pickleball Fact and Media Sheet, USA Pickleball, 2.15.22, <http://usapickleball.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2022-Pickleball-Fact-Sheet-updated-2.15.22.pdf>

⁷ 2017-2018 U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook, <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/reports-statistics/us-pet-ownership-statistics>

⁸ The State of Public Dog Parks Across the United States, July 11, 2022, David Adams, <https://www.sniffspot.com/blog/sniffspot-community/the-state-of-public-dog-parks-across-the-united-states>

Tennis Courts – There are no tennis courts in community parks in Washington Township. There are two tennis courts at the Bally Community Park in Bally Borough.

Tennis is a lifetime recreation activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Although the popularity of the sport has waned over the last decade and has been eclipsed by the popularity of pickleball, it is important to provide tennis courts that are available for public use for lifetime recreation benefits. Tennis courts should be developed in banks of two or more in visually accessible areas, preferably near parking areas and park entrances. Court lighting is recommended where adjacent land use is compatible.

- Tennis courts were determined to be Not Needed by 43.3 percent of respondents to the online survey.

The popularity of tennis should be assessed during the development of the master plans for the Washington Township Park and Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands to determine if tennis courts are necessary in the parks in the future.

Baseball Fields – There is one youth baseball field in Barto Community Park and no adult baseball fields. The field has a 60-foot baseline and is developed with spectator seating, sideline fence, and a nearby porta-john restroom. The field was not developed with a preferred solar orientation. There is a youth baseball field at Washington Township Elementary School and two baseball fields at Bally Community Park in Bally Borough.



- Adult baseball fields were determined to be Not Needed by 50.3 percent of respondents to the online survey.
- Youth baseball fields were determined to be Very Important or Somewhat Important to expand by 65.2 percent of online survey respondents.
- Based on the Washington Township Recreation Facility Development Standards, a second youth baseball field should be developed in the municipality.

Youth baseball fields should be provided to meet youth organization needs and be assessed during the development of the master plans for Washington Township Park and the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands. A community the size of Washington Township would typically not have an adult baseball field. Adult and young adult baseball players in the area use Boyertown Bears Stadium, a 90-foot baseline adult field, which is home of the Boyertown Bears Senior Legion baseball team and the Boyertown Area High School varsity boys baseball team.

Football Fields – There is one football field in Barto Community Park. The field is minimally developed with field goal posts and an electronic scoreboard but lacks spectator seating and team benches. This field is also used for youth lacrosse games.



- Football fields were determined to be Not Needed by 54.7 percent of respondents to the

online survey. This high number is probably due to the current fields meeting youth league needs.

Additional football fields are not recommended in the Township. Further development of the current football field should be assessed during the development of the master plan for the Barto Community Park.

Soccer Fields – There are multiple flat field areas at Washington Township Park that are configured for soccer fields. The flat field areas are currently configured with eight soccer fields. JK Memorial Field on the south side of Niantic Road is developed with a concession stand, scoreboard, spectator seating, surrounding chain link fence, and nearby porta-john restroom. This field has preferred solar orientation.

- Soccer fields was considered Not Needed by 48.7 percent of respondents to the online survey due to the numerous existing fields in Washington Township Park.

Additional soccer fields are not recommended in the Township.

Softball Fields – Currently there are no dedicated softball fields in Washington Township or the surrounding area. Softball is enjoyed by active adults and often played in business or church leagues.

- Softball fields were determined to be Not Needed by 45.5 percent of respondents to the online survey.

Softball fields are not proposed for parks in the Township until the need is identified through league growth.

Pickleball Courts – Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the nation, with an estimated 4.87 million players in the United States, and a growth rate of 39.9% over the recent two-year period.⁹ There is significant interest in Washington Township for pickleball courts expressed to the Washington Township Recreation Study Committee. Currently there are no pickleball courts in Washington Township. Pickleball is a lifetime sport, primarily enjoyed by active adults and growing in popularity with diverse age groups.

- The online survey found that 59.4 percent of respondents consider pickleball courts Very Important or Somewhat Important.

Pickleball courts should be included in the master plans for the community parks and any new neighborhood parks.

Swimming Pools / Splash Pads – There are no public swimming pools or splash pads in Washington Township. Swimming is a lifetime recreation activity and convenient access to swimming pools would be an asset for the area. Splash pads, increasingly popular alternatives to tank swimming pools, offer spray features, slides, and misters. There is one swimming pool in the Bally Community Park that is open for public use. The Boyertown YMCA, a membership organization, has an indoor swimming pool.

- The online opinion survey did not assess residents' interest in a swimming pool due to the challenges of a small municipality the size of Washington Township developing and operating a swimming pool.
- The online opinion survey did ask residents opinions about a spray ground/splash pad and 63.1 percent rated spray ground/splash pad as Very Important and Somewhat Important.

⁹ 2022Pickleball Fact and Media Sheet, USA Pickleball, 2.15.22, <http://usapickleball.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2022-Piball-Fact-Sheet-updated-2.15.22.pdf>

The need for a spray ground / splash pad should be assessed during the development of the master plan for the community parks.

Playgrounds – Playgrounds are currently located in two parks: Barto Community Park and Washington Township Park. The playground equipment in Barto Community Park was recently replaced. The playground equipment in Washington Township Park is outdated and should be replaced. Playgrounds are also located at the Washington Township Elementary School and Bally Community Park in Bally Borough.



Neither of the Township’s playgrounds are developed to provide age-segregated play, with separate areas for tots ages two to five and youths ages five to twelve. The playground areas were not designed with consideration of caregivers, socializing, and non-equipment play opportunities. Neither playground offers shaded seating for caregivers to relax and watch playground activities. Benches and picnic tables are provided but in the case of Washington Township Park these amenities are in lawn areas and not accessible to persons with disabilities. The playgrounds consist of play equipment in mulch areas and do not provide areas for pavement games, socializing, or group gatherings such as birthday party outings.



Playgrounds should be provided in neighborhood parks and community parks. When developing and renovating playground areas, the following general guidelines should be incorporated into the design:

- The playground layout, equipment, and safety zone with safety surface materials should comply with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Guidelines for Public Playground Safety.
- Playgrounds must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires that an accessible route be provided from walkways/parking areas to the playground equipment and that a portion of the equipment offer activities that can be utilized by physically challenged children.
- Playgrounds should be age-segregated to accommodate children of different ages and abilities and meet the CPSC safety guidelines. The play equipment should be separated into a tot area for children two to five years old and a youth area for children five to twelve years old. The two age group areas should be physically separated with a plaza area or landscaping. Playgrounds should have signs identifying the age-appropriate areas of play.
- American Society for Testing and Materials references for public playground safety:

- F1478 Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use.
 - F2373 Standard Consumer Safety Performance specifications for Public Use Play Equipment for Children 6 Months through 23 Months.
 - F1292 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment.
- Improving and adding youth playground/tot lot was rated as Very Important or Somewhat Important by 86.9 percent of the online survey respondents.
 - A fully accessible (all abilities) playground was rated as Very Important or Somewhat Important by 89.4 percent of online survey respondents.
 - When asked what is one thing that could be done to improve parks and recreation opportunities in Washington Township 13 respondents suggested developing a new larger playground.
 - Several residents added comments to the survey about the need for playgrounds, especially for older children. The newly renovated playground in Barto Community Park was cited as only providing play equipment for younger children.

Playgrounds should be renovated or upgraded on a cyclic basis to conform to the latest safety and accessibility standards and address use and wear issues. A playground safety and accessibility audit should be completed, and all playground equipment should be removed that cannot be rehabilitated to fully comply with the latest standards. Washington Township Park playground renovation and replacement should be identified in the municipal capital improvement budgets.

Playgrounds should be designed as lively spaces in parks where play equipment and surrounding areas stimulate imaginative play and physical activity. Playgrounds should be bright, dynamic environments that engage children with options for equipment play, pavement games, and socializing. Shaded sitting areas should be provided for caregivers. Pavilions should be located nearby for birthday parties and summer playground program activities. Playgrounds should be located for safety with adequate separation from parking areas, drives, roadways, and ballfield foul ball and homerun territory.

Picnic Areas – Picnic pavilions are provided in Barto Community Park and Washington Township Park. The pavilions are open structures, have electric service, and do not include restrooms. However, a nearby porta-john restroom is available. The pavilion at Barto Community Park also has two park style charcoal grills. Pavilions should be located near playgrounds to support summer playground programs and birthday parties. In community parks, pavilions should be provided in a variety of sizes to accommodate small family gatherings and larger groups.



Pavilions are important amenities in new parks where there are limited mature trees to provide shade. Picnic areas can also be established as informal areas with picnic tables and grills within a shaded grove of trees. Consider the addition of complementary facilities near picnic areas such as cornhole toss or horseshoe pits. Access to picnic pavilions must be provided by an accessible route and 20 percent of the picnic tables within a pavilion must be accessible models.

The need for additional picnic pavilions and/or renovations to the current picnic pavilions should be assessed during the development of the master plans for the community parks.

Trails / Pathways – Over eighty-four percent of respondents to the online opinion survey ranked Walking on Trails/Pathways as the number one experience they and members of their household are looking for when visiting parks and recreation areas. This strong support is upheld by comments in the open-ended portions of the survey.



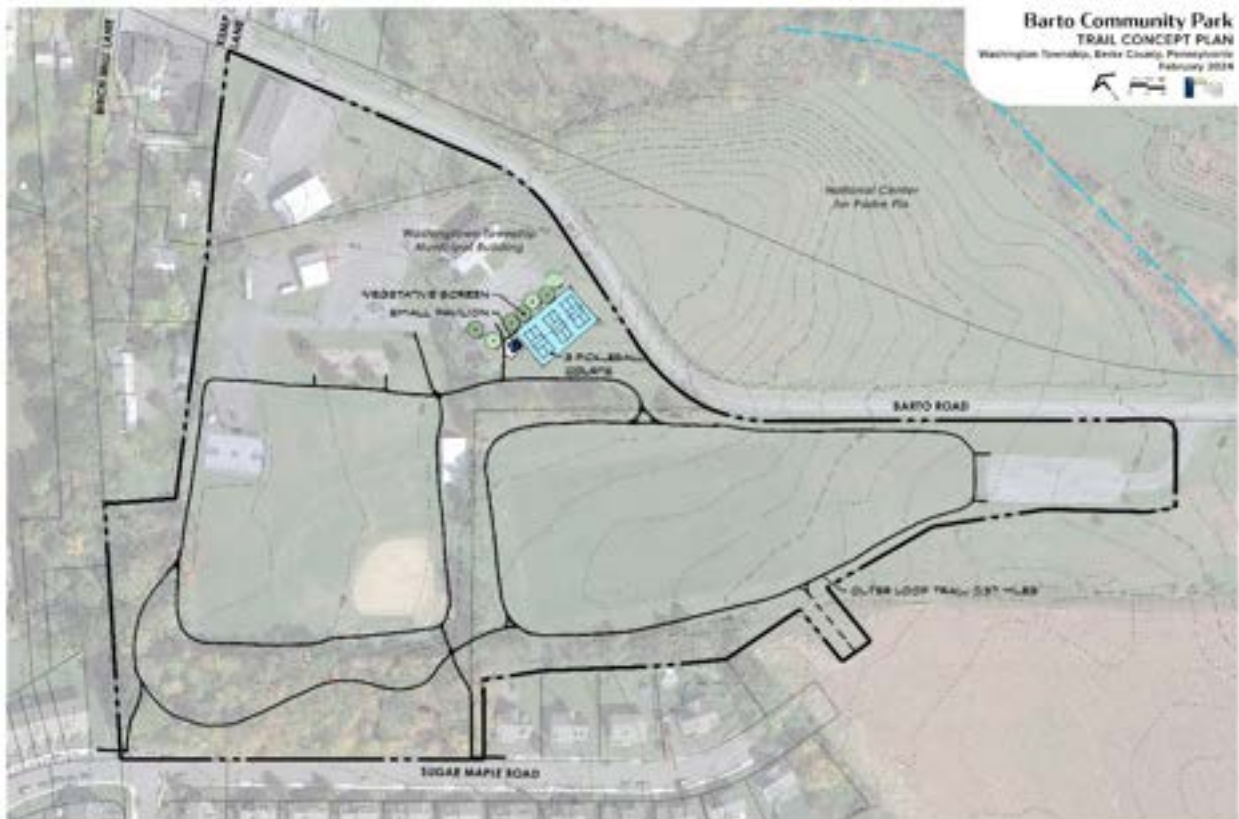
Walking is an activity that is widely enjoyed by all segments of the population. Opportunities to walk in Washington Township is limited to a short trail segment in the Barto Community Park. Washington Township Park does not have any trails. Some residential developments in the Township have sidewalks available for walking.

- The online survey found significant support for trail development in Washington Township area parks with 97.8 percent of respondents indicating that trails are Very Important or Somewhat Important. This was the highest rated facility preference.
- Walking on trails/pathways was ranked highest at 84.2 percent when online survey respondents indicated the most popular experience they were looking for when visiting parks and recreation areas.
- When the online survey asked what is one thing that should be done to improve parks and recreation in the Washington Township area, 47 comments out of 139 comments mentioned trails, safe walking, and biking. These were the highest responses for improvement.
- The online survey asked how satisfied respondents were with specific park features. The highest Dissatisfied response was for Availability of Trails/Walkways at 57.5 percent.

Trails and paths should be developed in every park for recreation purposes and to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA requires accessible routes from accessible parking spaces and drop-off areas to recreation facilities. Accessible routes must extend to player and spectator areas at sports courts and fields. In neighborhood and community parks where space allows, develop trails at eight-foot wide to accommodate multiple users. Five-foot wide should be the minimum trail width in parks. Trails in urban and developed settings should be paved to provide multiple recreation opportunities such as bike riding, inline skating, jogging, and walking. Stone dust trails may be preferred in natural settings where slopes are gentle. Trails should link to nearby multi-use trails and sidewalks to promote non-motorized access to parks.

Conceptual trail plans have been developed for Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park. These conceptual plans illustrate a possible trail layout that provides access from the parking areas, connects to recreation facilities, and loops throughout the park sites. Boardwalks are added to the Washington Township Park Trail Concept Plan; however, a wetland delineation will be required to determine the location and extent of wetlands on the site. Pickleball courts and a small pavilion are added

to the Barto Community Park Trail Concept Plan as suggested improvements. Park master plans are recommended for both parks, which will define the final trail and recreation facility locations.



Indoor Recreation – The Washington Township municipal building in Barto Community Park has the Sandra S. Moser Community Room that is available for rent by residents and non-residents for programs and celebrations. The Community Room can accommodate 60-70 people comfortably. It is equipped with a kitchen sink, refrigerator, microwave oven, standard stove, air conditioning, and lots of counter space. The Bally Community Center, located in Bally Borough, is also available to rent by residents and non-residents. The need for additional indoor recreation space(s) in Washington Township does not appear to be currently necessary.

Park Data Sheets

Park data sheets have been prepared for each municipal park in Washington Township. The data sheets provide park acreage, list existing facilities, and note public comments about the park provided through the public engagement process. A vision for the future improved park is described based on recreation, social, and ecological attributes. Park data sheets are provided on pages 3-15 to 3-17.

Community Park

Washington Township Park

ACREAGE: 38.655

(37.455 acres Recreation, 1.20 acres Sewage Treatment Plant)

EXISTING FACILITIES

- Playground
- Soccer fields (8)
- Concession building
- Pavilion

WHAT WE HEARD

Have a walking path at the park. It would be great to have a crosswalk for residents to safely cross Route 100.

Parking at soccer fields is always a problem. People park everywhere.

Update playground.

VISION

Develop a park master plan to define a vision for the park.

RECREATION

- Update and expand the playground to be age segregated with a shaded plaza for caregivers to sit and watch playground activities.
- Develop a trail that encircles the 30+ acre park site and connects to Washington Elementary School. Incorporate loop trail and boardwalks at wetlands.

SOCIAL

- Develop a shaded plaza at the playground with benches and picnic tables.
- Introduce benches along the perimeter trail.

ECOLOGICAL

- Plant shade trees at parking areas to shade pavement.
- Delineate wetlands and plant vegetative buffer to protect them.

FUNCTIONAL

- Develop safe crossing of Niantic Road with a crosswalk and signage.
- Right-size the parking areas for typical use and provide designated overflow parking areas for tournaments.
- Define the parking area with pavement stripping or bumper blocks on north side of Niantic Road.
- Define the parking areas on the south side of Niantic Road with aggregate pavement and bumper blocks.
- Provide an accessible route to all facilities including spectator areas.



Community Park

Barto Community Park

ACREAGE: 15.94 (Existing),
5 +/- (Additional Lands)

EXISTING FACILITIES

- Playground
- Youth baseball field
- Basketball court
- Football field
- Pavilion
- Trail
- Sandra S. Moser Community Room (Municipal Building)

WHAT WE HEARD

Bigger playground equipment than we currently have. That upgrade was a downgrade. What a disappointment!

Basketball fence is unsafe.

VISION

Create a vision through a master plan for the park. Expand the park with diverse facilities for families and seniors. Incorporate the 5 +/- acres of land gained by the realignment of Barto Road and Edison Walk land swap.

RECREATION

- Develop three or more pickleball courts with adjacent small pavilion for shaded seating area.
- Develop a trail that encircles the park site, explores the wooded area, and connects to parking areas and recreation facilities. Incorporate loop trail for varied walking routes.
- Expand the playground to provide age-segregated areas with a plaza gathering area and small pavilion for shade.

SOCIAL

- Provide a shaded gathering area at the playground.

ECOLOGICAL

- Plant shade trees at the parking areas to reduce heat island effect.

FUNCTIONAL

- Remove the chain link fence and gate at the main entrance.
- Extend a trail through the southern wooded area that connects to the sidewalks along Sugar Maple Road.
- Realign or remove the basketball fencing to provide run-out room on all sides of the court.



Community Park

Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands

ACREAGE: 38.25 (4 parcels)

EXISTING FACILITIES

- Undeveloped open space
- Includes Hoffman Estates Open Space
- Includes Reserve at Bally Spring Open Space

VISION

Develop a park master plan as a Community Park with a trail connection to the Reserve at Bally Spring.

RECREATION

- Develop a trail connection to Reserve at Bally Spring.
- Develop active and passive recreation facilities desired by the residents that are compatible with the site characteristics and natural resources.

SOCIAL

- Incorporate sitting areas and areas for small and medium group gatherings.

WHAT WE HEARD

Rename the park.

ECOLOGICAL

- Maintain and enhance the existing hedge rows.
- Monitor the site for invasives and remove when found.
- Protect head waters of Middle Creek.

FUNCTIONAL

- Develop a safe crossing of Hoffmansville Road.
- Retain the stormwater management functions on the Hoffman Estates Open Space parcel.
- Provide a pedestrian access point at Audrey Drive with a trail connection to trails in Edison Walk Park parcels.



Mandatory Dedication

A typical means of acquiring land for recreation purposes, including trails, is the mandatory dedication process. In 1989, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act. No. 170 of 1988 went into effect. This legislation provides municipalities with the authority to require the dedication of public land for recreation purposes. To comply with this legislation, municipalities must meet the following requirements:

1. Adopt a recreation plan that establishes parkland standards and park service areas, identifies areas in need of parkland, and includes a capital improvement program.
2. Have a municipal subdivision and land development ordinance (SALDO).
3. Develop a mandatory dedication ordinance within the SALDO that contains standards for determining the portion of a development to be dedicated and the amount, if any, of fee to be paid in lieu of land.
4. Create a separate interest-bearing account for the placement of any collected fees.

The dedication of parkland is a mechanism that many municipalities use to ensure that future residents have adequate park and recreation opportunities by requiring developers to dedicate public open space within proposed developments. Washington Township has a mandatory dedication ordinance that requires the developer of subdivisions to dedicate parkland for recreation purposes. The ordinance provides for fees-in-lieu of land as an alternative to land dedication, when approved by the elected officials.

2014 Changes to the Law

In 2014, the Pennsylvania General Assembly clarified and modified the public dedication rule, addressing three major matters:

- Use of land and fees
- Accounting
- Removal of time limits.

Use of Land and Fees – The legislation originally required the dedicated land or fees “to be used only for the purpose of providing park or recreational facilities accessible to the development.”

This changed in 2014 to state that:

The land or fees, or combination thereof, are to be used only for the purpose of providing, acquiring, operating, or maintaining park or recreational facilities reasonably accessible to the development.

Under the new rules, municipalities are clearly authorized to use fees not only for acquisition and development of facilities but also for operations and maintenance.

Accounting – The original rules required municipalities to deposit the fees in an interest-bearing account:

“clearly identifying the specific recreation facilities for which the fee was received.... Funds from such accounts shall be expended only in properly allocable portions of the cost incurred to construct the specific recreation facilities for which the funds were collected.”

The 2014 rules only require that the fees be placed in an interest-bearing account:

“clearly identified as reserved for providing, acquiring, operating or maintaining park or recreational facilities.”

This change provides municipalities flexibility in banking and accounting for fees while still requiring that any fee be used to support the development that generated it.

Removing Time Limit – The rules previously required municipalities to refund any fees that they failed to use for an allowed purpose within three years of receipt. The 2014 revision require that:

Upon request of any person who paid any fee under this subsection, the municipality shall refund such fee, plus interest accumulated thereon from the date of payment, if the municipality had used the fee paid, for a purpose other than the purposes set forth in this section.

There is no time limit for expending collected fees.

Washington Township Land Dedication Formula

Current Land Dedication Formula – The Township’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) requires dedication of parkland for each residential lot created for a single-family dwelling in a subdivision or land development that varies according to the zoning district. Minimum required open space and recreational land areas in High Density Residential Districts are 30% or 40% of the ATA (Adjusted Tract Area). In Rural Residential and Watershed Conservation Districts it is 20% of the tract gross area. In the Suburban Residential District, the required open space and recreation lands area shall be not less than 25% of the tract gross area. An exception for all districts is that residential tracts less than three gross acres no open space or recreation land is required. The developer is required to pay a fee of \$1,500. Source: Article V. Design Standards and Improvement Requirements, Open Space and recreational areas 107-28.F.2

The Washington Township ordinance defines required recreation facilities to be provided by the developer based on the number of dwelling units. Recreation facilities may include one or more of the following: tot lot, tennis courts, basketball courts, and multipurpose fields. Additionally, the ordinance requires the developer to provide benches and waste receptacles, adequate parking areas, and walkways as well as water, sewer, and electric facilities.

Alternate Land Dedication Formula

Alternative Land Dedication Formula – One popular method to determine how much open space should be required in a subdivision is through a dwelling unit calculation using the parkland standard adopted by the municipality. A 15-acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is used to illustrate the alternate land dedication formula. To derive a per unit calculation using this methodology, the 1,000-population figure is divided by the municipality’s 2020 U.S. Census average household size. The following calculation results:

Washington Township 2020 Average Household Size: 2.37

$1,000 / 2.37$ persons per dwelling unit = 422 dwellings

Divide the desired 15-acres per 1,000 residents by the 422 dwellings to yield the amount of land per dwelling:

$15\text{-acres} / 422$ dwellings = 0.0355 acres/dwelling

Example: For a subdivision of 50 homes, the 0.0355-acre requirement would net 1.775 acres of parkland:

$$0.0355 \text{ acres/dwelling} \times 50 \text{ dwellings} = 1.775 \text{ acres}$$

The parkland standard has a direct effect on the land dedication formula. If the same calculation is made using a 10-acre standard the following calculation results:

$$10\text{-acres}/422 \text{ dwellings} = 0.0237 \text{ acres/dwelling}$$

$$0.0237 \text{ acres/dwelling} \times 50 \text{ dwellings} = 1.185 \text{ acres}$$

Fee-in-Lieu

Current Fee-in-Lieu Requirements – Washington Township has a fee-in-lieu requirement. Washington Township’s fee shall be equal to the value of the land and recreation improvements required by ordinance. The value of the land and required improvements is determined by the Board of Supervisors at the time of the final plan approval. However, as noted above, residential tracts less than three gross acres require no land dedication but require a fee of \$1,500.

Example of Fee-in-Lieu Calculation – When fee-in-lieu is preferred over land dedication, the municipalities should require that the fee relate to the average fair market value of the land to be dedicated. Using a dwelling unit calculation to assess fee-in-lieu, the calculation should relate to the current fair market value and should be reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis. The following calculation is based on a fair market average value of \$100,000 per acre of developable land appraisals and the land dedication formula calculation:

15-acre Parkland Standard: $0.0355 \text{ acres} \times \$100,000/\text{acre} = \$3,550/\text{dwelling unit fee-in-lieu amount.}$

10-acre Parkland Standard: $0.0237 \text{ acres} \times \$100,000/\text{acre} = \$2,370/\text{dwelling unit fee-in-lieu amount.}$

By tying the mandatory dedication fee-in-lieu to the fair market value of an acre of land and the average household size, the dedication of lands or fee will align with the changing municipal household characteristics and real estate market. The parkland standard adopted by the Township will have a direct effect on the fee-in-lieu calculation.

Land Type and Characteristic for Dedication Requirements

The characteristics of land suitable for dedication for recreation purposes should be defined by the municipal ordinances. Washington Township’s ordinance provision states:

Steep slopes, streams, lakes, watercourses, wetlands, ponds and floodplains may comprise no more than 40% of the open space land requirement. In all instances, a minimum of 60% of the open space land requirement shall be suitable for dry-ground recreation use. Fifty percent of the dry-ground recreation use areas shall not exceed a finished grade of 2%. Exceptions to the preceding may be granted by the Board of Supervisors.

Mandatory Dedication ordinances should provide concise criteria for land to be dedicated for parkland or open space. The following criteria is suggested for land to be dedicated for parkland and trails.

- The land is a minimum of five acres in size, contiguous in shape and has soil conditions suitable for developing recreational facilities. The five acres relates to the size of a neighborhood park as defined by the Washington Township Park and Recreation Classification System. The municipality

should require a fee-in-lieu for land areas less than five acres unless the land to be dedicated is contiguous to an existing park site or protected open space.

- The land is configured to include natural features worthy of preservation and protection.
- The land is easily and safely accessible from all areas of the subdivision with direct access to a public street and the minimum required lot width at the public street frontage. Sidewalk connections are provided where feasible. No roadways traverse the site.
- A maximum of 15% (or 10%) of the total site to be dedicated can consist of floodplain, wetlands, steep slopes (greater than 8%), utility easements or rights-of-way, or other limiting features that render the lot un-developable.
- The land should be accessible to utilities such as sewer, water, and power. The municipality should require that the developer extend utilities to the tract.
- The land should not contain stormwater facilities designed to detain, retain, or infiltrate stormwater.
- The land to be dedicated shall be in a suitable place on the periphery of the subdivision or land development to ensure a more usable tract will result when additional land is obtained upon development of the adjacent land. The location shall be subject to review by elected officials.
- When the dedicated land exists adjacent to a tract to be subdivided or developed, the land to be dedicated shall be located to adjoin the presently existing dedicated land to create a single, larger tract. The configuration of such land shall be subject to review and approval by municipal elected officials.
- Trails and linear parks may be developed and dedicated for public use and incorporated into the trail system of the municipality by either means of land dedication, grant of right-of-way or easement to the municipality. Trails and linear parks shall be consistent in location, design, dimension, topography, and route with the approved *Trail System Map* and recommended by the municipal elected officials.
 - Lands to be dedicated for trails should be suitable for the development of a trail without extensive engineering and structures.
 - Grants of rights-of-way or easements intended to be incorporated in the trail system shall be not less than twenty feet (20') wide nor not more than thirty feet (30') wide at any point along the length of said trail and shall include an additional twenty-foot (20') wide parallel construction easement along the length of said trail which shall automatically terminate upon the completion of construction of the same.
 - Dedication of lands shall be a minimum width of fifty feet (50').
 - The width of the trail surface shall be eight feet (8') wide unless approved at another width by the Township Board of Supervisors/Borough Council. In no case shall the trail surface width be less than 5-foot (5') wide.
 - Trail surface material shall be approved by the municipal elected officials.

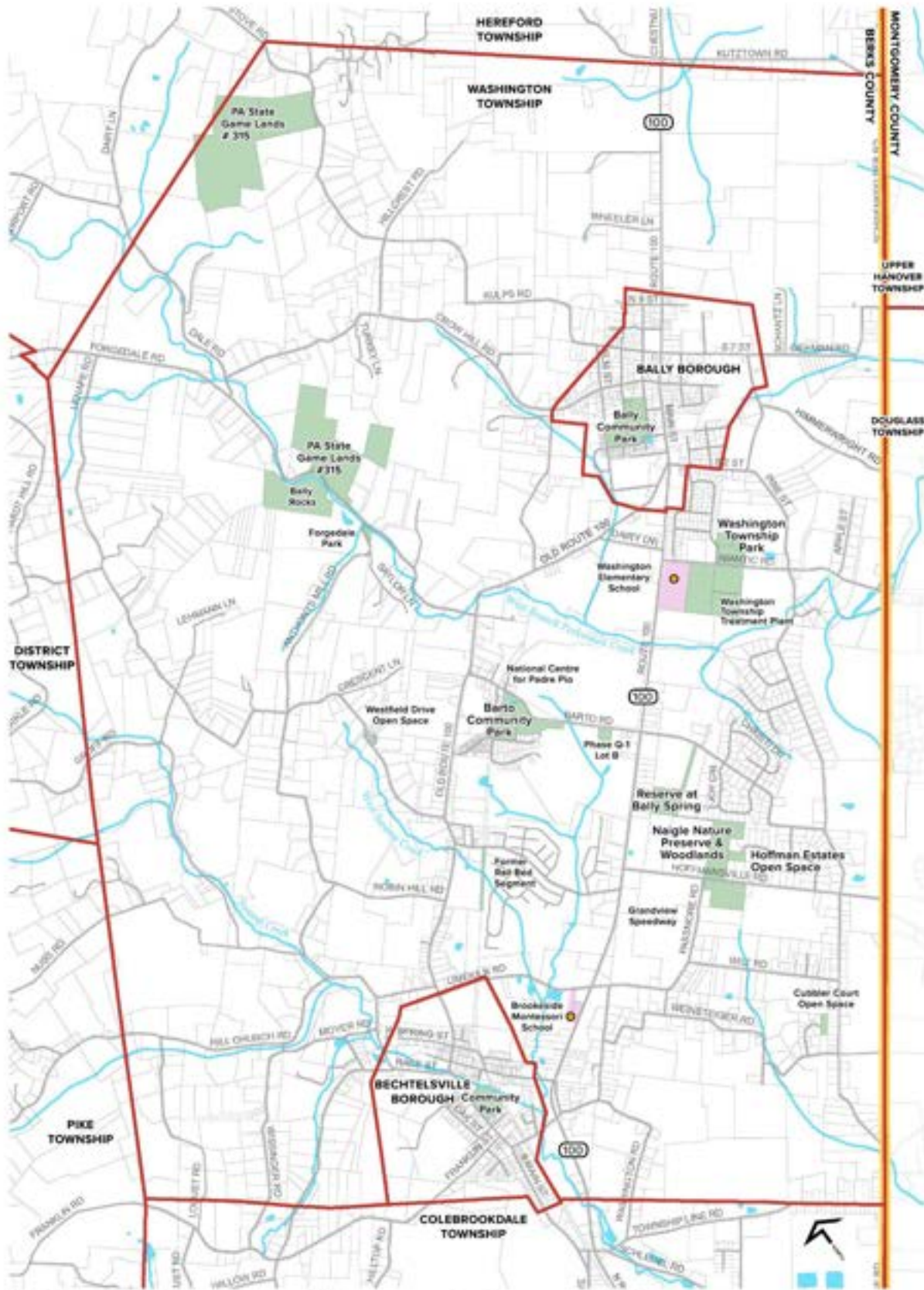
Parks and Recreation Facilities Strengths

- Washington Township anticipated the need for additional parks and recreation facilities with the acquisition of the Reserve at Bally Spring and the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands parcels. The Township has sufficient parkland acreage to meet resident needs into the future.
- The Township has concentrated its park development and acquisition initiatives on larger park parcels. Smaller park parcels owned by the Township have not been developed.
- Washington Township municipal building provides a venue for small indoor recreation programs and public space rental for gatherings such as birthday parties and showers.
- Three of the parks, Reserve at Bally Spring, Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands parcel, and Hoffman Estates parcel, link together to provide an opportunity for a long-distance walking trail.
- The Reserve at Bally Spring and Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands parcels include wooded areas while Washington Township Park includes wetlands. These natural resource areas are valued by residents, provide diversity to the park offerings, and provide important habitat.
- Washington Township Park is located contiguous to the lands of Washington Elementary School linking recreation facilities in the park with facilities on the school property.
- Parks are located throughout the Township and based upon a 2-mile service radius for community parks, most of the Township has convenient access to the community parks, with minor areas beyond the service radius to the north and south.
- Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands parcels have the physical characteristics to develop a typical community park with both active and passive recreation opportunities.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Challenges

- Trails are needed in parks to address the desires of residents for close-to-home walking opportunities.
- Trails for walking, exercise, and accessible routes to facilities are missing from the parks.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations are missing from the parks.
- The parks generally target the recreation needs of youth and youth sports organizations and lack facilities typically enjoyed by teens, active adults, and older adults.
- Parks are not designed to create a “Sense of Place”.
- The parks generally lack color.
- Playgrounds are not designed as activity spaces with pavement play, programming, and socializing opportunities.
- The West Branch Perkiomen Creek is a significant stream and public access to the stream is limited to the PA State Game Lands parcels along Forgedale Road.
- The parks lack gathering areas and convenience facilities such as benches in conversation nodes.

- Shade is either missing or minimally provided in the parks.
- The parks are not designed to minimize maintenance with features such as flush playground edging, mow desire lines, meadow areas to reduce mowing, etc.
- Soccer fields dominate Washington Township Park.
- The natural resource areas of the park sites are not currently accessible to the public.
- The former railroad bed that extends north from Bechtelsville is primarily privately held. The small portion of right-of-way owned by the Township has no end point destinations and is undeveloped. Additional right-of-way is needed to connect to the Township owned corridor to make it a viable walking destination.
- Facilities of interest to residents to include pickleball courts and a dog park are missing from the parks.
- There is a road separation between parcels that make up Washington Township Park and the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands.



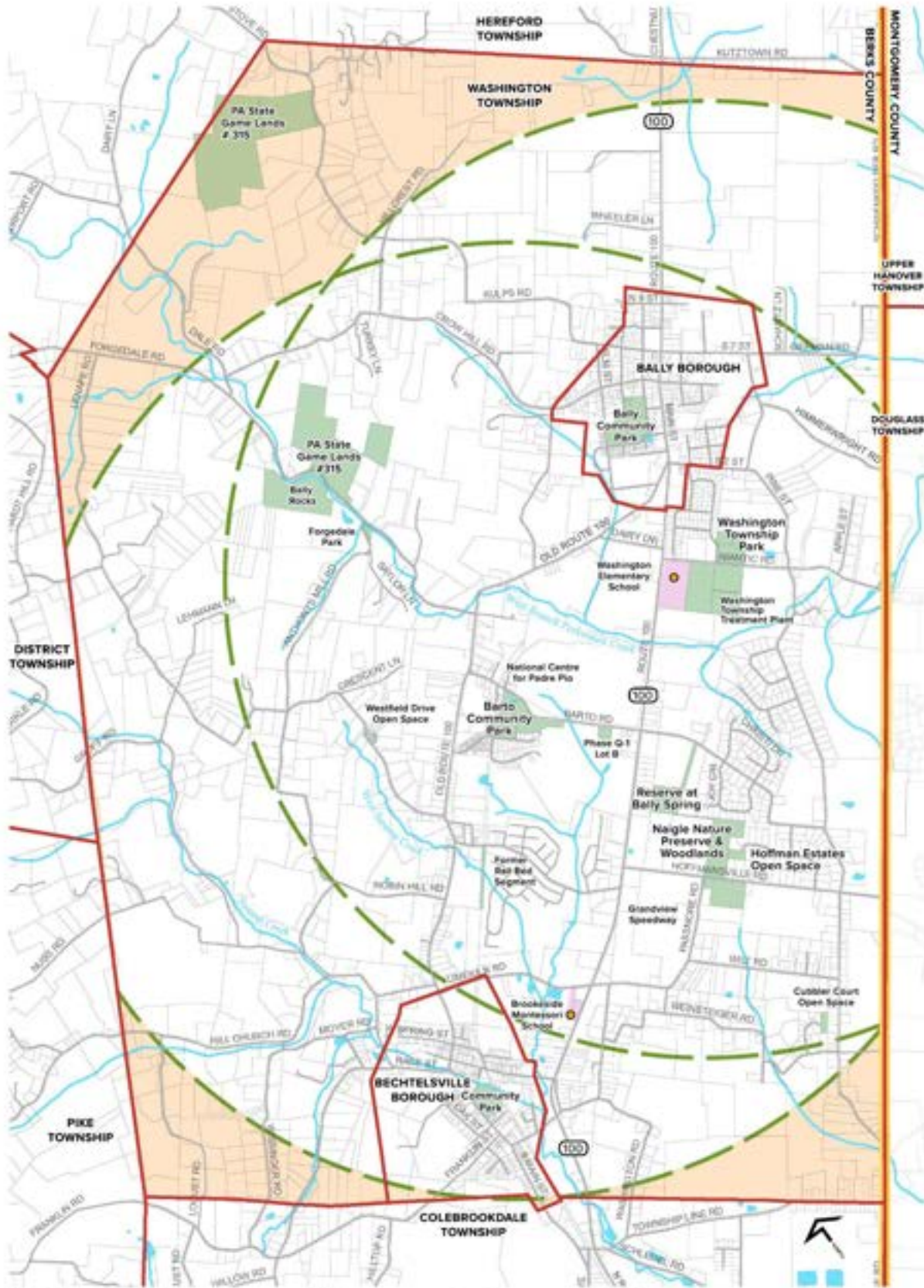
Washington Township

PARK INVENTORY MAP

Berks County, Pennsylvania
January 2024

- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Road
 - Parcel
 - Waterway
 - Parks and Recreation
 - School Land
 - Schools





Washington Township



RECREATION ACCESS MAP

Berks County, Pennsylvania
 January 2024

LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Road
- Parcel
- Waterway
- Parks and Recreation
- School Land
- Schools
- 2 mile Park Access

0 0.25 0.50
Mile



CHAPTER 4:

Open Space, Greenways, & Trails

Open Space, Greenways, & Trails

Natural Resources of Washington Township

Washington Township's natural resources include agricultural lands, woodlands, and stream corridors. The following briefly describes the land and water resources of Washington Township. Reference the Existing Resources Map on page 4-14 to identify locations of the resources discussed below.

Land Resources

Woodlands – The Oley Hills Region encircles Washington Township to the west with low range mountains. The Blue Mountain and South Mountain areas are across the County to the northwest. The low hills and peaks of the Oley Hills are primarily deciduous woodland which makes up the largest contiguous area of wooded cover in Washington Township. Woodlands help stabilize steep slopes, provide habitat for shelter, nesting, and food for wildlife, protect groundwater and headwaters, and improve air quality. Woodlands in Pennsylvania are being threatened by invasive species, fragmentation, and development.

Steep Slopes – The majority of Washington Township contains gentle to moderate slopes in the 3-15% range. The Oley Hills Region contains slopes that are 15% or greater. Slopes over 15 percent are considered steeply sloping areas and are prone to erosion and are difficult to build upon. Wooded cover protects steep slopes.

Agricultural Soils – Pennsylvania's Municipalities Planning Code defines prime agricultural land as "land used for agricultural purposes that contains soils of the first, second, and third class as defined by the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resource and Conservation Services County Soil Survey. The majority of Washington Township soil is classified as prime agricultural soil.

Natural Areas Inventory – The Natural Areas Inventory was conducted for Berks County by the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program for the Berks County Planning Commission in 1991 and updated in 2003. The Natural Areas Inventory provides maps of natural communities of known locations of animals and plant species of special concern to include endangered, threatened, or rare habitats in Berks County. Washington Township contains two priority areas; part of the West Branch Perkiomen Creek Watershed to the northwest and southeast of Bechtelsville.

Water Resources

Rivers / Streams – The most significant stream in Washington Township is the West Branch Perkiomen Creek which flows west to east across the Township and is tributary to Green Lane Reservoir. The West Branch Perkiomen Creek is classified by PA Department of Environmental Protection as a supporting Cold Water Fisheries (CWF) and migratory fish. CWF streams provide for the sustainment of fish, flora, and fauna that are indigenous to cold water habitats and requires construction measures to protect the water quality and aquatic life.

Other streams in the Washington Township include Swamp Creek and West Swamp Creek. Swamp Creek is classified as High Quality-Cold Water Fisheries (HQ-CWF) and West Swamp Creek is classified as supporting Cold Water Fisheries (CWF). Swamp Creek and West Swamp Creek flow south to Bechtelsville Borough. The headwaters of Middle Creek are in the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands. Protection of the headwaters and buffering of the stream will promote water quality.

Floodplain – Floodplains are lands contiguous to stream corridors that are subject to flooding. The 100-year floodplain is the base that the Federal Insurance Administration uses for purposes of floodplain management measurement. The 100-year floodplain is the area of the floodplain that has a 1% chance of flooding every year. Floodplains should be protected due to their important location adjacent to waterways and the ecological benefits they provide such as groundwater infiltration and the floodwaters they carry in storm events. Washington Township ordinances protect and regulate construction within floodplains.

Wetlands – Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetland are identified by unique soils (hydric soils), by plants adapted to life in wet environments (hydrophytic vegetation), and by the presence of water (hydrology) during the growing season. Wetlands should be protected for their numerous benefits including filtering pollutants from stormwater run-off, ground water recharge, wildlife habitat, flood and sediment control, and stormwater management. They are essential to maintaining a sound ecosystem. Wetlands identified through the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) are shown on the Existing Resources Map and appear to be primarily associated with stream corridors. The NWI wetland mapping provides generalized locations for wetlands and should only be used for general planning purposes. Wetlands are protected by State and Federal regulations.

Open Space

Washington Township can be characterized as a community with a mixed variety of residential densities, and larger areas of agricultural and forested open space. Developed areas are adjacent to Route 100 concentrated around Bally Borough, Bechtelsville Borough, and to the eastern side of Washington Township. Agricultural land use is mixed in with the residential land use to the east of the Township and there is preserved open space in the watershed conservation area to the west of the Township on the steeper terrain. Open space and natural areas are important to Washington Township residents.

- Over sixty-seven percent (67.8%) of respondents to the online opinion survey indicated that conservation of open space and natural resources was a high priority and 95.6% indicated it is a high priority or medium priority.

Greenways & Trails

Greenways

A greenway is corridor of open space. Greenways may vary greatly in scale from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban, suburban, and rural areas to wider corridors that incorporate diverse natural, cultural, and scenic features. They can incorporate both public and private property and can be land- or water-based. They may follow old railways, canals, or ridge tops, or they may follow stream corridors, shorelines, or wetlands, and include water trails for non-motorized craft. Some greenways are recreational corridors or scenic byways that may accommodate motorized and non-motorized vehicles. Others function almost exclusively for environmental protection and are not designated for human passage.

Greenways differ in their location and function, but overall, a greenway will protect natural, cultural, and scenic resources, provide recreational benefits, enhance natural beauty and quality of life in neighborhoods and communities, and stimulate economic development opportunities.

Greenways and trails are important components of a community's comprehensive park system. Trails provide passive recreation opportunities and green corridors protect natural resources and important habitat areas. Easy access to trails promotes fitness and wellness activities. Connecting parks and community destinations with trails and greenways adds to the livability and quality of life of a community.

Benefits of Greenways and Trails

Social Benefits -

- Provide access to historically and culturally significant features.
- Provide opportunities to reconnect with the natural environment.
- Increase quality of life.
- Help to preserve the character and aesthetic appeal of a place or landscape.
- Provide significant new public places which can help to connect people and communities.
- Improve health and wellness of greenway and trail users.
- Heighten sensitivity to the natural environment by providing interaction between people and nature.



Transportation Benefits –

- Promote non-motorized transportation.
- Provide safe alternative transportation routes for pedestrians and bicyclists which will lessen dependency on automobiles.
- Provide emergency access via trails to undeveloped areas.
- Reduce roadway congestion through redistribution of users to alternative transportation routes.

Ecological Benefits -

- Connect fragmented landscapes.
- Promote plant and animal species diversity.
- Provide corridors for wildlife migration and movement.
- Preserve and protect vital wildlife, plants, and aquatic habitats.
- Improve air quality and reduce noise.
- Protect natural areas.
- Reduce stormwater damage and promote flood mitigation within protected floodplains.
- Protect watersheds and groundwater retention areas.

- Store and convey floodwaters.
- Clean up abandoned corridors.
- Serve as a filtering zone; wetlands absorb pollutants and nutrients and slow surface run-off.



Recreation Benefits –

- Provide areas to jog, walk, bike, ride horses, cross-country ski, and canoe.
- Serve as sites for passive pursuits such as picnicking, fishing, and enjoying nature.
- Connect existing and planned trails.
- Encourage ecotourism.
- Provide landscapes for environmental education.
- Provide connections between parks and other protected lands.

Economic Benefits –

- Increase nearby property values.
- Precipitate new and expanded businesses related to greenway and trail use. New businesses will provide employment opportunities and revenues.
- Create tourist destinations which generate expenditures on food, services, and lodging.
- Reduce damage and financial loss from flooding by providing buffer areas along stream and river corridors.

State and Local Greenway and Trail Initiatives

Pennsylvania – In 1991, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge enacted Executive Order 1998-3, charging DCNR, DEP, and PENNDOT, assisted by the Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Commission, to develop an action plan for advancing a Pennsylvania Greenways Partnership Program. In June 2001, *Pennsylvania Greenways: An Action Plan for Creating Connections* was completed. The plan sets forth a series of goals and action items in a coordinated and strategic approach aimed at developing a statewide system of connected greenways.

Pennsylvania Greenways Vision

Pennsylvania and its many partners will develop an outstanding network of greenways across the Commonwealth, creating an asset highly valued by Pennsylvanians and enhancing the quality of life for all. This network of greenways will connect Pennsylvanian's open space, natural landscape features, scenic, cultural, historic and recreational sites, and urban and rural communities. Greenways will become one of the Commonwealth's most powerful tool to achieve sustainable growth and livable communities.

It is envisioned that Pennsylvania's greenways network will consist of individual greenways and regional networks of greenways of all kinds. While every greenway is important and adds value to Pennsylvania's landscapes and communities, a statewide greenways network achieves broad connections that are fundamental to sustainable environments in rural, suburban, and urban settings. The landscape connections that will result throughout Pennsylvania will create a "green infrastructure" of open space vital to the health of Pennsylvania's ecological systems and manmade communities. The statewide greenways network also can provide a new connectivity within and among Pennsylvania's communities, promote healthier lifestyles with more abundant recreational opportunities and transportation alternatives, and stronger connections to cultural and historic places. This connectivity can be represented by the metaphor of the "hubs" and "spokes" of a wheel.

Berks County – The *Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan from 2022* identifies four County designated destination trails, none of which currently connect to Washington Township. A Greenway Hub area from the 2007 plan is identified in Washington Township which includes the PA State Game Lands #315 areas to the northwest.

- Appalachian Trail
- Schuylkill River Trail
- Union Canal Towpath Trail
- Horse-Shoe Trail



Organizing Elements of the Greenways and Trail Network

The 2001 Pennsylvania Greenways – An Action Plan for Creating Connections proposes that "... the Commonwealth should have a distinguishable greenway network, similar to the Interstate Highway System ...". This greenway network will take the form of "hubs and spokes." The "hubs" of this network are the destinations, and the "spokes" are the greenways and trail corridors connecting these destinations with the places where we live, work, and play.

In Washington Township hubs would include: schools, recreation destinations to include municipal parks, Sandra S. Moser Community Room, commercial/employment centers, and other community destinations. Spokes consist of linear resources to include: trails, stream corridors, utility rights-of-way, sewer easements, and ridgelines.

Physical barriers can fragment greenways and present challenges to trail development. In the Washington Township Route 100 is the only significant barrier that will require special accommodations to link trails across.

Greenways in Washington Township

The Oley Hills Ridgeline, West Branch Perkiomen Creek, and other streams provide the spokes which form connections to the Washington Township greenway system. The potential greenways are illustrated on the Greenway and Trails Map on page 4-15.

Major Greenways

PA Highlands Greenway – The Highland Trail within the PA Highlands Greenway, connects three rivers: the Delaware River, the Schuylkill River and the Susquehanna River along a 300 mile route. The PA Highlands is part of a four-state Highland Region greenway that extends from Connecticut, across New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to the Maryland border. In Pennsylvania the Highland crosses through 13 counties. The closest PA Highlands Trail to Washington Township is at the Upper Perkiomen Valley County Park. A public-private partnership, the PA Highlands Coalition, promotes the conservation of natural lands and recreation trails within the PA Highland greenway. The Oley Hills are located within the PA Highlands Greenway.

Minor Greenways

Oley Hills, West Branch Perkiomen Creek, Swamp Creek and West Swamp Creek – Establishing minor greenways in Washington Township provides opportunities to protect natural resources to include steep slopes, streams, floodplain, headwaters, and wetlands. Greenways provide connections and resources for wildlife and important riparian buffer areas and often extend beyond municipal boundaries. The stream corridors within Washington Township are narrow and almost entirely on privately owned lands so trail development is not recommended within these corridors.

Potential Trails in Washington Township

Potential trails in the Washington Township are illustrated on the Greenway & Trails Map on page 4-15.

Potential Trails in Washington Township

Washington Township has limited opportunities for trail development due to the lack of manmade and natural linear resources except for several streams. There are three named streams in Washington Township: West Branch Perkiomen Creek, Swamp Creek, and West Swamp Creek. While these physical corridors exist, they primarily flow through privately held lands with the single exception of West Branch Perkiomen Creek traversing PA State Game Lands #315. Additionally, there is a short portion of an abandoned rail corridor that extends north from Bechtelsville Borough. The former rail corridor has no beginning or end point destinations and exists as an un-accessible right-of-way. The corridor north and south of the municipal owned parcel is privately owned.

Typically, when a municipality plans for a trail system the preferred trail type is a multi-use trail that can accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and other permitted uses. The evaluation of potential trails in the Washington Township began by identifying municipal and quasi-public owned lands, utility corridors, homeowners' association lands, schools, and other potential partners such as churches. Potential trails in the Washington Township include:

Washington Township Park to Barto Community Park Trail – Washington Township Park is contiguous on the south side of Niantic Road to Washington Elementary School. Washington Elementary School land extends to the corner of Niantic Road and Route 100 which is controlled by a traffic light. The traffic light could be modified to include pedestrian crossing accommodations to allow safe crossing of Route 100. The land on the west side of the intersection is privately owned and trail development would require the consent and cooperation of landowners. The northwest corner of this intersection is the location of Longacre's Old Fashion Dairy Bar, a local destination. Theoretically, if landowner cooperation is obtained, a trail could be developed parallel to Route 100 between the Niantic Road intersection and Barto Road. This corridor would require the crossing of West Branch Perkiomen Creek and would preferably be separated from the roadway by a safety strip of open space. Close to the creek crossing, the trail could enter the National Centre for Padre Pio if access is granted by the church. The final connection to Barto Community Park will require the crossing of Barto Road. Developing the

Washington Township Park to Barto Community Park Trail will link the two major recreation destinations in the community, two developed areas of the Township, and provide a safe route for children to access Washington Elementary School.

Washington Township Park to Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands – A second trail extension is envisioned from Washington Township Park, extending south, past the Sewage Treatment Plant to the Reserve at Bally Spring property. This connection would require crossing several privately owned parcels, although a corridor could be located primarily along parcel property lines and under an existing overhead power line. The corridor would require a bridge to cross the West Branch Perkiomen Creek. Upon reaching the Reserve at Bally Spring, the trail could connect to the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands through the existing linear corridor.

Walkable Communities

Walking is an easy way to start and maintain a physically active lifestyle that will provide substantial health benefits. Residents of Washington Township indicated through their responses to the online survey that walking opportunities and trails are important community amenities. Consider the following survey findings:

- Walking was ranked first (84.2%) when asked about the most popular experience residents look for when visiting parks and recreation areas.
- A combined total of 93.6% of respondents indicated that developing walking and biking connections between school, parks, and neighborhoods was a high priority or medium priority.
- When asked for one thing to improve parks and recreation areas in the Washington Township 48 individual responses mentioned trails, safe walking, and biking. This represents the highest topic of responses out of the 139 respondents.
- When asked how important it was to expand or add recreation facilities, walking paths and trails ranked first, closely followed by restrooms. Walking paths and trails had a combined very important/somewhat important rate of 97.8%.
- When asked how satisfied residents were with specific park features, availability of trails and walkways achieved the highest dissatisfied score of 50.7%.

Walking trails can be multi-purpose accommodating both pedestrian and bicycle. Trails can provide transportation links to schools, shopping areas, and residential areas. Trail can also provide areas to walk dogs and gather with friends for fitness activities. The online opinion survey provides the following information:

- When asked what experiences you or members of your household are looking for when visiting parks or recreation areas, 45.8% indicated that they go to parks to exercise their dogs.
- Numerous survey comments noted the desire to have the opportunity to walk with their dogs in the parks or on trails.

Complete Streets – Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.¹ Benefits of Complete Streets include:

- Provide travel choices
- Encourage walking and bicycling
- Encourage healthy and active lifestyles
- Enhance safety
- Improve air quality
- Help reduce carbon emissions
- Help create livable communities where walking and bicycling are a viable choice of transportation
- Provide children with opportunities to reach nearby destinations in a safe environment
- Have positive environmental impacts due to reduced pavement widths, use of pervious pavement, and introduction of landscaping



In 2015 the US Department of Health and Human Services released *“Step It Up! The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities”*. The Call to Action addresses several key principles for improving the nation’s health and defines five goals to support walking and walkability in the United States.

Goal 1 – Make Walking a National Priority.

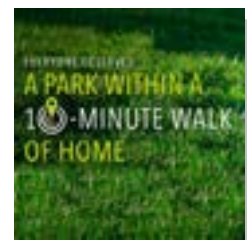
Goal 2 – Design Communities that Make It Safe and Easy to Walk for People of All Ages and Abilities.

Goal 3 – Promote Programs and Policies to Support Walking Where People Live, Learn, Work, and Play.

Goal 4 – Provide Information to Encourage Walking and Improve Walkability.

Goal 5 – Fill Surveillance, Research, and Evaluation Gaps Related to Walking and Walkability.

A Park Within A 10-Minute Walk of Home – Easy access to parks promotes an active, healthy lifestyle. Parks provide opportunities and facilities for physical activity for people of all ages and abilities. Convenient access to parks can facilitate incorporating healthy activities into daily routines. The Trust for Public Land, Urban Land Institute, and National Recreation & Park Association have teamed together to create a campaign that promotes easy access to parks: *10 Minute Walk Campaign*. This campaign recognizes that parks are essential to the physical, social, environmental, and economic health of a community and promotes easy access to parks.



The Washington Township parks are near major residential areas, however the infrastructure to walk to the parks is missing. There are no trails and sidewalks are not consistently developed in subdivisions.

¹ National Complete Streets Coalition, 10/28/15. <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/complete-streets-fundamentals/complete-streets-faq>

Expanding the Trail System

The land use and housing characteristics of the Washington Township are diverse with the traditional town center, suburban residential areas, rural areas dominated by agricultural fields and wood lots, and commercial corridors. To create a connected community with a comprehensive area-wide system of trails a full menu of trail strategies must be explored.

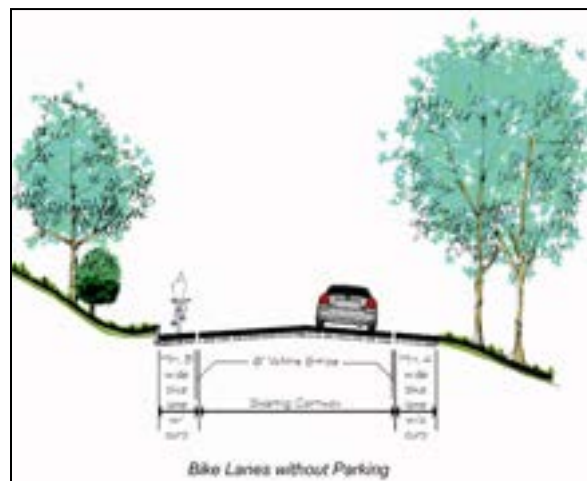
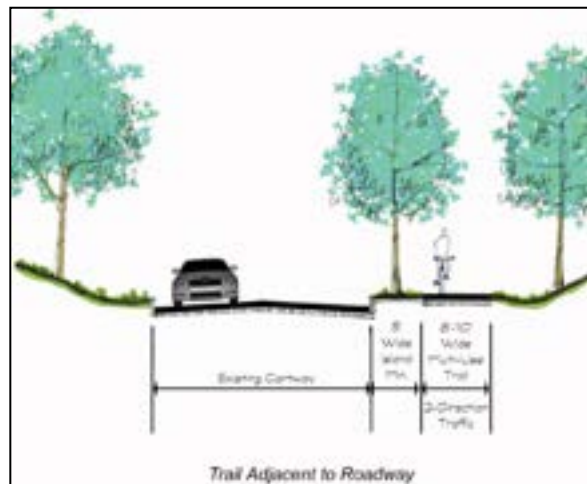
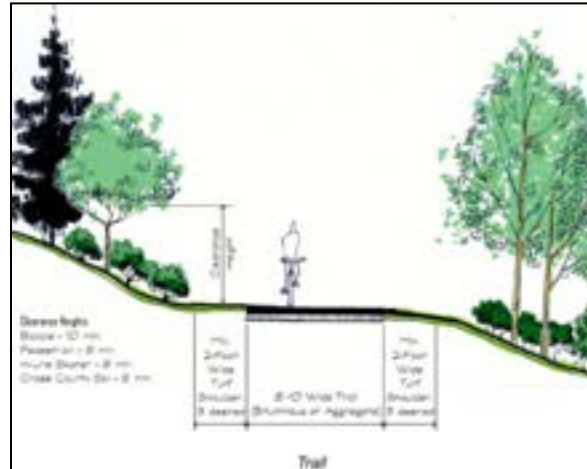
The potential trails identified in this plan are suggestions based on the natural and man-made infrastructure of the area. However, there are not always physical features to create an area-wide system of trails. To maximize connectivity and link beyond the identified corridors, sidewalks, bike lanes, and shared roadways can extend the system. The following are facilities that should be considered to enhance connectivity and expand the trail system.

Sidewalks – Sidewalks present one level of solution for enhancing mobility but can only accommodate pedestrians. To truly enhance mobility in a community, trails of enough width to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists are needed. While sidewalks are provided in many areas of Bally Borough and Bechtelsville, the suburban subdivisions in Washington Township are developed without sidewalks. The municipal subdivision and land development process should require sidewalks in residential developments and limit the consideration of waivers for the requirement.

Trails – Typically, the preferred configuration for a trail is a separate corridor that extends from point A to point B. Safety is enhanced when trails are separated from roadways and road crossings are minimized. Community trails should be multipurpose for both pedestrians and bicycles. Recommended width for a shared use trail with two-directional traffic is 8-12-feet. Where trails are outside of public rights-of-ways, access easement will be required where trails are not on public land.

Trails Adjacent to Roadways – Trails adjacent to roadways are typically located within the road right-of-way. A grass strip of at least 5-foot wide should separate the trail from the roadway where possible. Trails adjacent to roadways are suggested along roads that do not have adjoining sidewalks and the physical area to develop a separate trail is available.

Bike Lanes without Parking – Where physical space is limited, trail development may not be possible. An alternative may be development of bike lanes on roadways with adequate right-of-way width. Bike lanes should be developed on both sides of a two-way street, separated from the vehicular cartway by



a 6" white stripe. Bike lanes carry bike traffic, on the road cartway, in the same direction as the adjacent vehicular traffic. The recommended minimum width of a bike lane is 4' on streets without curb or gutter and 5' from the face of a curb. The *American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* should be referenced when designing on-road bicycle facilities. Bike lanes provide a travel route for bicycles, but do not provide accommodations for pedestrians. In areas where sidewalks exist, bike lanes can expand the network by providing a dedicated location for bicyclists. Bike lanes effectively narrow the street width and slow traffic providing traffic calming.

Bike Lanes Variations – There are numerous variations for bike lane configurations. A major consideration is on-street parking. There is an inherent danger associated with bike travel in the “door zone” of parked cars. Various techniques have been used to provide bike lanes where on-street parking is allowed and accommodations should be designed based on the unique circumstances of each street configuration.

Signed Shared Roadways – The roadways throughout Washington Township have not been designed with bicyclists in mind. In Pennsylvania, a bicycle is considered a vehicle and must conform to the rules and regulations that apply to all vehicles as well as specific requirements for bicycles. There are accommodations that can make a roadway more compatible with bicycle travel such as signing or marking a road for shared use.



The two signs at the right are used in Pennsylvania to designate a shared road roadway. The AASHTO guidelines note the following reasons for developing a signed bike route:

- The route provides continuity to other bicycle facilities such as bike lanes and shared use paths.
- The road is a common route for bicyclists through a high demand corridor.
- In rural areas, the route is preferred for bicycling due to low motor vehicle traffic volume or paved shoulder availability.
- The route extends along local neighborhood streets and collectors that lead to an internal neighborhood destination such as a park, school, or commercial district.

Another method of signing a roadway is the installation of “sharrow” markings on roadway pavement. A sharrow is a shared lane marking installed on roadways that are popular with bicyclists, but too narrow or inappropriate for bike lanes. Sharrow markings are intended to improve the position of the bicyclists and motorists on roads without bike lanes, alert motorists, deter aggressive motorist behavior, encourage correct bicycle travel, and encourage bicycle use.

Other roadway improvements that enhance shared road bicycle travel include bicycle-safe drainage grates, paved shoulders, flush bridge expansion joints, improved railroad crossings, controlled intersections with lights, and wide curb lanes.



Greenways and Open Space Protection

The Washington Township greenways function primarily to protect open space, natural area, and natural resources. The PA Highlands Greenway and other greenways identified in the Washington Township are primarily on private lands, following stream corridors.

While public ownership is one way to protect the greenways and their underlying resources, few municipalities have the financial resources or the opportunity to acquire all the land along a natural corridor. Sharing information with residents about conservation initiatives such as stream stabilization and riparian buffer plantings protects green corridors. Working with willing landowners to establish conservation easements and purchase of development rights are popular approaches to open space protection while the land remains in private ownership.

Table 4-1 identifies various strategies to protect open space and greenway corridors.

Table 4-1 Open Space Protection Strategies		
Open Space Protection Strategy	Strategy Explanation	Advantage/Disadvantage
Acquisition or Donation		
Acquisition	Acquisition of land for the sole purpose of greenway/trail development	One of the most effective methods of permanently protecting open space. It is also the most costly and contingent upon an agency or organization to manage and maintain the land.
Donations/Gifts	Donation of land to an agency or non-profit organization	Provides permanent protection without public expenditure. May provide tax benefits to the donor if the donation is for preservation or conservation.
Bargain Sale	Land is purchased at less than its appraised market value.	Difference in purchase and fair market value is considered a charitable gift for tax purposes.
Option to Buy	An agreement with a property owner to purchase or have the right of first refusal to purchase land.	Secures the rights for future purchase but does not set price or determine when or if property would be sold.
Purchase of Development Rights	To provide a landowner the monetary difference between the value of land when fully developed with uses allowed by rights verses the value of the same parcel remaining undeveloped as open space.	For landowner lowers taxes on land. Cost to purchase development rights may be high.
Purchase of Resource Protection Rights	To purchase the rights from a landowner to protect and manage specific resources.	Cost to purchase resource protection rights may be high.
Purchase & Resale	Purchase land by party desiring to restrict its future use and resold only under conditions or restrictive deed conditions.	Party that originally purchased the land for the sole purpose of restricting its use is relieved of continuing ownership and maintenance responsibilities. Land remains on tax rolls.
Condemnation	Condemnation is the act of eminent domain or taking of private property for public purposes.	Tool for acquisition. May be costly and reflect negatively on the greenway initiative. Use as last resort for protection.
Easements		
Conservation Easements	A legally enforceable agreement between a landowner and an agency or non-profit organization which places restriction on the use of or activities on a specific property which aligns with conservation objectives.	Less expensive than acquisition of land. The landowner retains rights not surrendered in the easement agreement and the easement provisions are valid and enforceable in perpetuity. Public access may be restricted. Method for enforcement needed.
Public Access Easement	An easement that provides the public the right to access to or through a privately-owned land for a defined purpose such as hiking, walking, and biking. Specific activities	Less expensive than acquisition of land. The landowner retains rights not surrendered in the easement agreement and the easement provisions are valid and enforceable in perpetuity.

**Table 4-1
Open Space Protection Strategies**

Open Space Protection Strategy	Strategy Explanation	Advantage/Disadvantage
	such as hunting and motorized vehicle use may be prohibited.	
Land Use Regulations		
Overlay Zone	A zone that is overlaid on an existing zone which adds regulation governing the use of a property. This technique is typically used to protect floodplains, woodlands, and steep slopes. Overlay zones can be designated for specific resources or areas to provide additional environmental protection. Riparian buffers, wetlands, and unique natural areas are resources that could be protected with an overlay zone.	Enforced by local government. Allows targeted protection of natural resources.
Cluster Zoning	Cluster zoning promotes the clustering of development and maximizing open space on a tract of land. Ordinance provisions should promote the preservation of sensitive natural resources such as stream corridors, wetlands and hedgerows, and contiguous open space.	Can reduce construction and infrastructure costs. Must work with developer to ensure that open space is useful as a greenway and linked to other protected open space.
Transfer of Development Rights	Property owners can sell development rights to developers for use in targeted areas. Open space is preserved by deed restrictions on properties that no longer carry development rights.	Allows development to be directed to specific areas.
Mandatory Dedication	Dedication of land from developers for park and recreational purposes. Municipalities must adopt a recreation plan that supports the dedication standards contained in the subdivision and land development ordinance.	Dedicates open space where development is occurring. Fee in lieu of provisions allow fee for land based on fair market value to be used for purchase of land in targeted areas.
Open Space Subdivisions	Open space subdivisions promote preservation of open space through the identification of natural resources and development designs that preserve these resources and significant open space.	Retain the density of the tract being developed. Must work with developer to ensure that open space is useful as a greenway and linked to other protected open space.
Other Methods		
Official Map	A municipality may map existing and proposed features such as parks, greenways, trails, and easements, and through this designation reserve public land. If a plan for subdivision or development of mapped land is presented, the municipality may withhold approval for a period of one year, giving the municipality the option to purchase or condemn the property.	The official map does not protect land for greenways but merely reserves land for purchase by the municipality.
Deed Restriction	Restrictions as part of the deed that limit in some way the use of a piece of land. Examples include removing vegetation, requiring a portion of a tract to remain undeveloped, buffer, etc.	Features protected in perpetuity.

It will take the cooperative efforts and long-term commitment of landowners, municipalities, the county, and land conservation organizations to fully protect greenways. The existing parks and municipal open space parcels are the building blocks of a continuous network of protected green corridors. Protecting contiguous lands along the major greenway corridors is recommended as the highest priority for conservation. The rationale for starting with contiguous lands is based on the conservation principles stated by the *International Union for Conservation of Nature – 1980 World*

Conservation Strategy which suggests that connected natural systems are ecologically more sustainable and important than unconnected systems. “If all else is equal, large reserves are better than small reserves; a single large reserve is better than several small ones of equivalent total area; reserves close together are better than reserves that are far apart; rounded reserves are better than long, thin ones; reserves clustered compactly are better than reserves in a line; and reserves that are connected by corridors are better than unconnected reserves.”²

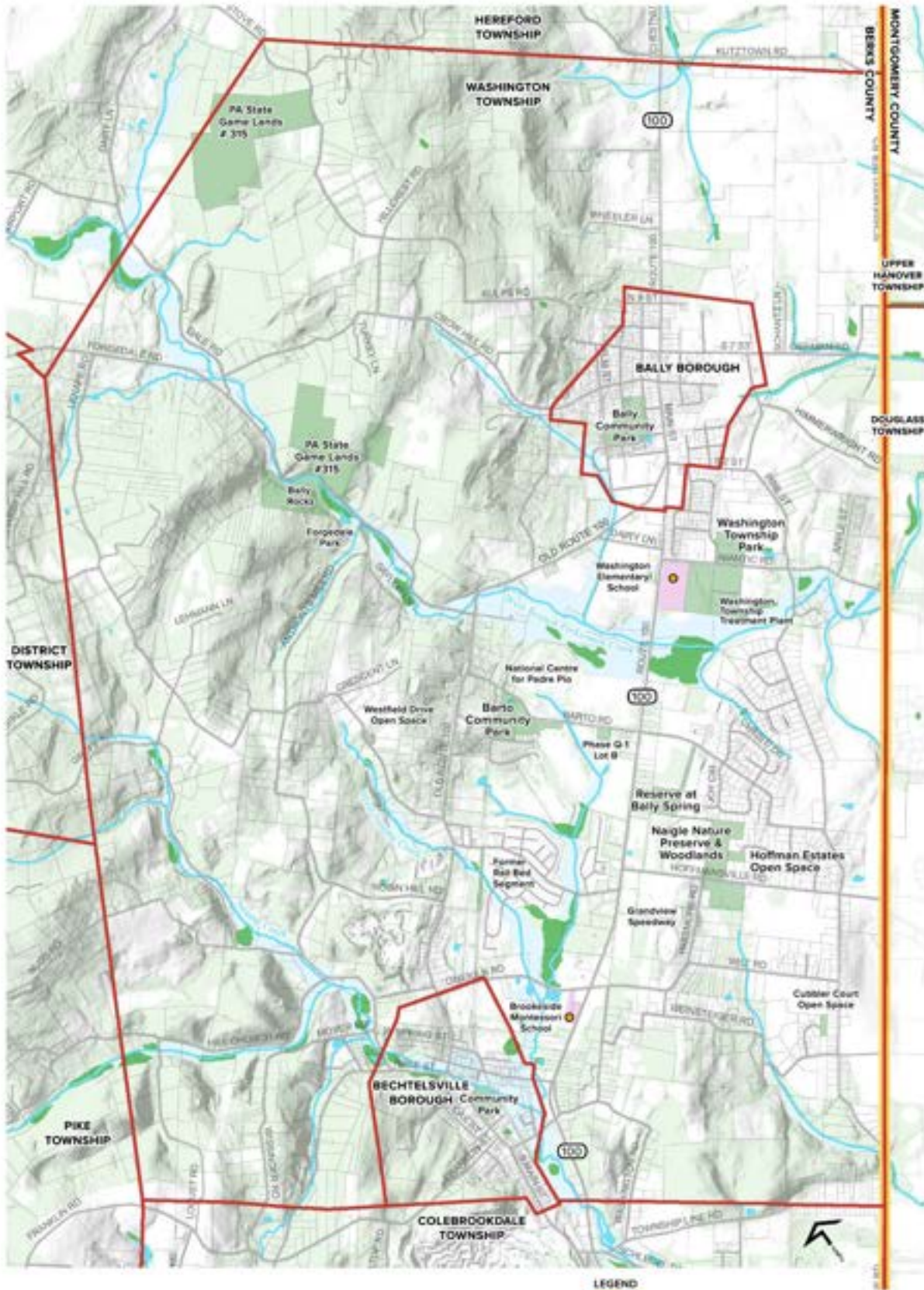
Open Space, Greenways & Trails Strengths

- Washington Township has significant natural resources that provide the natural infrastructure for greenways.
- Residents of Washington Township support developing trails and expanding opportunities for walking and biking should be a priority.
- Washington Township residents support conservation of open space and natural resources.
- Washington Township has ordinance regulations for the floodplain overlay district that promote greenway protection and is compatible with trail development.

Open Space, Greenways & Trails Challenges

- Minimal public lands exist in Washington Township to protect designated greenways.
- The former railroad bed that extends north from Bechtelsville is primarily privately held. The small portion of right-of-way owned by the Township has no end point destinations and is undeveloped. Additional right-of-way is needed to connect to the Township owned corridor to make it a viable walking destination.
- To protect greenways and develop trails the municipalities will require working with willing landowners and homeowner associations.
- Developing trails and protecting greenways are long-term initiatives that will require the commitment of a “champion” to provide leadership and the cooperation of multiple stakeholders.

² Mark A. Benedict and Edward T. McMahon, *Green Infrastructure, Linking Landscapes and Communities* (Washington: Island Press, 2006), p.110.

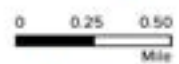


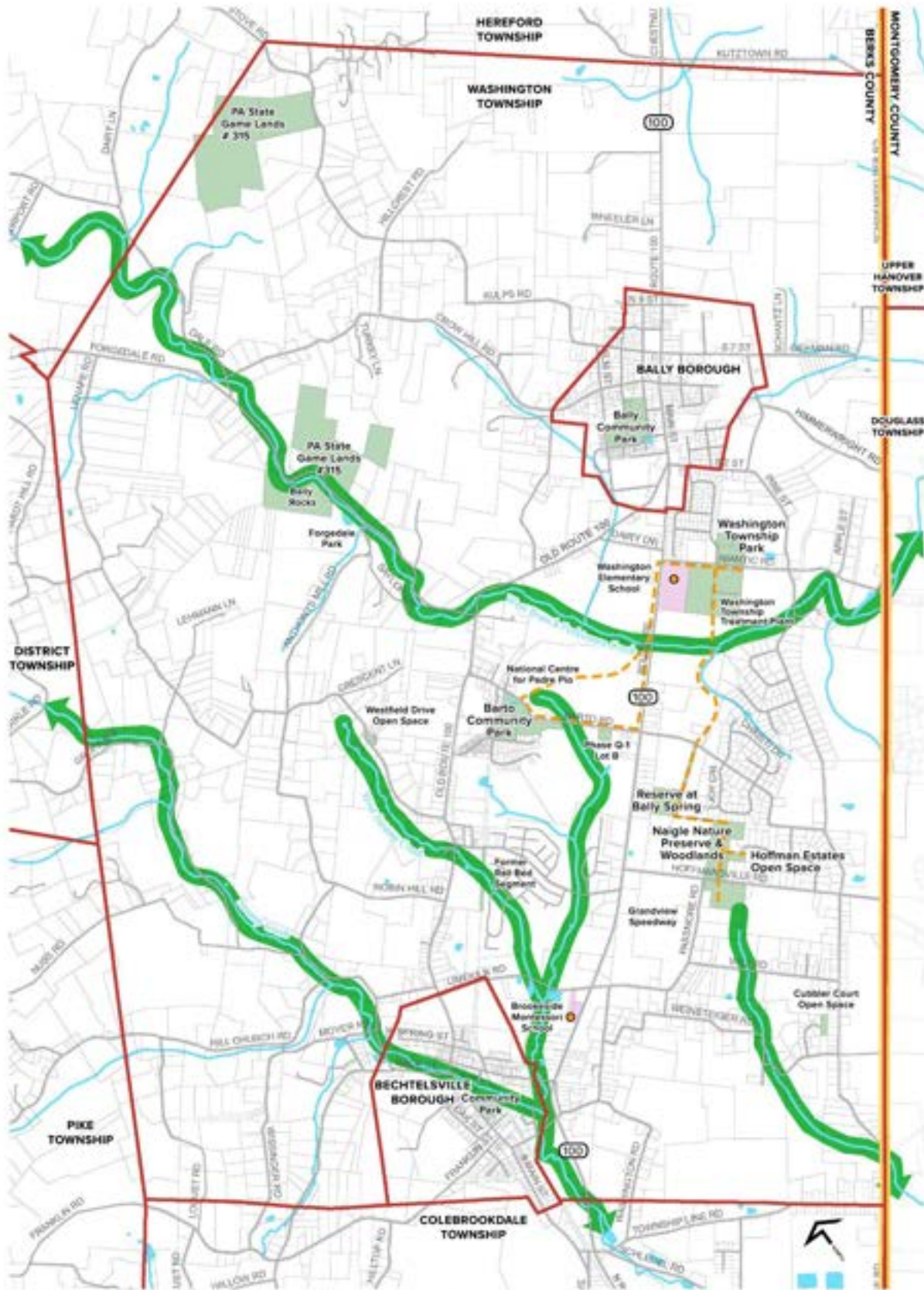
Washington Township

EXISTING RESOURCE MAP

Berks County, Pennsylvania
January 2024

- LEGEND**
- County Boundary
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Road
 - Parcel
 - Waterway
 - Parks and Recreation
 - School Land
 - Schools
 - Floodplain
 - Terrain / Steep Slopes
 - Tree Canopy / Forested
 - Wetlands





Washington Township

GREENWAYS AND TRAILS MAP

Berks County, Pennsylvania
January 2024

LEGEND

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Road
- Parcel
- Waterway
- Parks and Recreation
- School Land
- Schools
- Greenway
- - - Potential Trail

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CHAPTER 5:

Administrative & Personnel

Administrative & Personnel

Administrative and Personnel Assessment

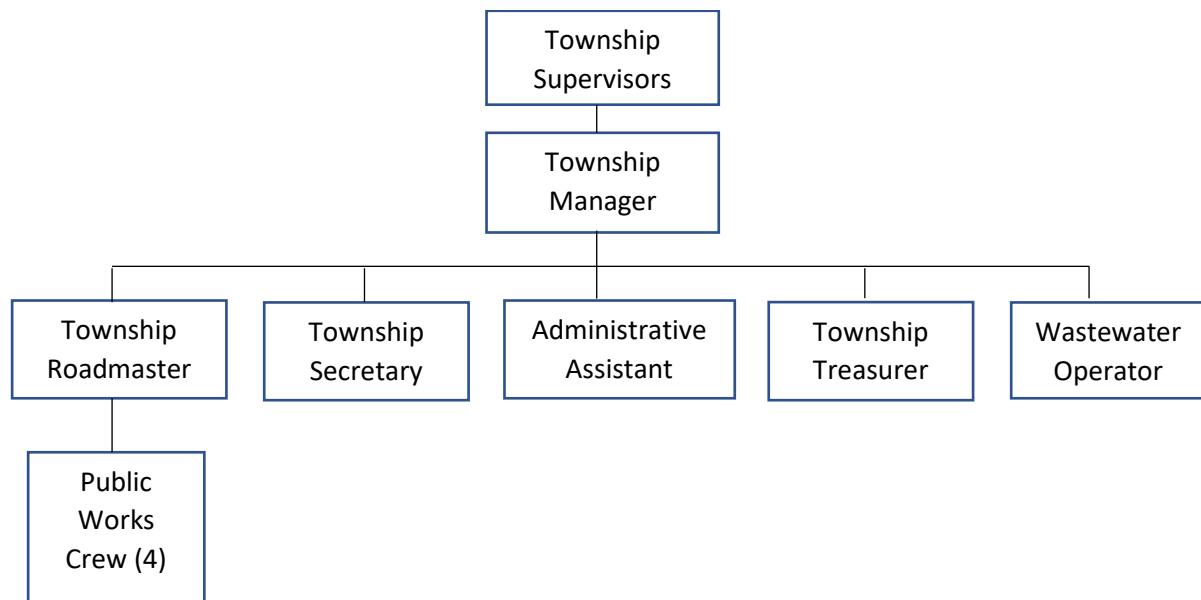
Administrative Structure and Authority

Washington Township is a second-class Township located in eastern Berks County that is governed by a three-member elected Board of Supervisors. The Supervisors are elected from the Township at large to six (6) year terms.

The Township employs a Township Manager, Township Secretary, Township Treasurer, Administrative Assistant, Roadmaster, Wastewater Operator, and four Public Works Crew members. Located adjacent to Barto Community Park, the Washington Township municipal building houses offices for staff and elected and appointed officials, as well as public meeting space. The Washington Township Public Works garage and Red Barn Recycling Center are also located adjacent to the community park.

Figure 1 details the Washington Township organizational chart and staff reporting relationships.

Figure 1 – Washington Township Organizational Chart



The Second-Class Township Code allows the Board of Supervisors to appoint individuals who possess specific expertise to administrative positions. In addition to the appointed Township Manager, the Supervisors appoint a Township Solicitor, Township Engineer, and Code Enforcement, Zoning, and Building Professionals.

The Township Code also permits the Board of Supervisors to enlist the capabilities of its residents and directly involve them in their government through the formation of authorities, boards, and commissions.

Two Township advisory groups play a role in public parks, recreation, and open space.

- The seven-member Washington Township Recreation Advisory Committee is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors in matters regarding development of recreational areas within the Township. Members of the committee serve staggered three (3) year terms. There are currently three vacancies on this committee. The Recreation Advisory Committee was not formed by Township ordinance and its responsibilities have not been officially defined. By-laws have not been adopted for its operation.
- The five-member Washington Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is appointed by the Board of Supervisors and mans the Township’s Red Barn Recycling Center. The EAC also reviews all subdivision and land development plans with regard to environmental issues, such as flood plains, wetlands, woodlands, etc. Members of the EAC serve staggered three-year terms. There are currently three vacancies on the EAC.

Washington Township produced a Comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan in 1992. Although this Plan is outdated, the Township has been actively involved in park planning, acquisition, and development activities.

Washington Township recently joined the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC). This collaboration provides the Township with technical assistance for parks and recreation projects from the full-time Pottstown Area Regional Parks Planner including: grant writing and administration, park planning and design, assessment of community needs and interests, park inventory and evaluation, playground safety inspections, coordination of recreation resources among the municipalities, marketing and event promotion, and advocacy for local parks and recreation. PARRC is comprised of representatives from eight municipalities: the Townships of Douglass, Lower, Upper, and West Pottsgrove, and the Borough of Pottstown in Montgomery County, North Coventry and East Coventry Township in Chester County, and Washington Township in Berks County.

Washington Township publishes a newsletter that provides residents with information on municipal services and officials, contact numbers for municipal offices and other agencies, and updates on current projects being undertaken within the Township. The Township website contains information on the community parks and picnic pavilion and community room rental opportunities. The Township does not have a Facebook account.

Below is a brief analysis of the strengths and challenges associated with parks and recreation administration and personnel in Washington Township.

Administration and Personnel Strengths

- The Washington Township Board of Supervisors, through the revitalization of the Recreation Advisory Committee and commitment to this Plan, are placing an increased emphasis on improving parks, recreation, and open space services in the Township.
- Grants are being pursued for park development and improvements by the Township.
- The Township has adopted rules and regulations for the parks which are posted at the parks.
- The Township website contains information on parks and recreation opportunities in the Township.
- Washington Township has joined the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC).

Administration and Personnel Challenges

- The Recreation Advisory Committee has only recently been reestablished and its responsibilities are not well defined.
- Dog walking and bike riding are not allowed in Washington Township parks according to the posted rules and regulations. Neither of these rules are enforced.
- The community park names are confusing. Barto Community Park and Barto Community Park Athletic Field are referred to as two separate places. Washington Township Park is referred to as three separate properties: the park itself, a park annex, and the treatment plant property.



CHAPTER 6:

Park & Facility Maintenance

Park & Facility Maintenance

Park and Facility Maintenance Assessment

Washington Township owns two park areas that encompass 47.6 acres, the 15.9-acre Barto Community Park properties and the 30.7-acre Washington Township Park properties.

The Barto Community Park contains one play equipment area, one picnic pavilion, one basketball court, one baseball field, one football field, a paved walking path, portable restrooms, and two parking lots. The Barto Community Athletic Field (the park football field) is referred to as a separate space from the Barto Community Park. The Township municipal building, Public Works garage, and recycling center are located on the property.

Facilities on the three Washington Township Park properties (Washington Township Park, Washington Township Park Annex, and Washington Township Treatment Plant) include numerous soccer fields, one play equipment area, one picnic pavilion, portable restrooms, parking lots, and the J. K. Memorial Soccer Field and Snack Bar, constructed by the Boyertown Soccer Club. Portions of the park are adjacent to Washington Elementary School. The park properties are separated by Niantic Road. The Washington Township Municipal Authority Sewer Plant is located on one of the park parcels.

There is a small trail segment in Barto Community Park.

The Township municipal building contains one room that is available for community use.

Washington Township also owns and maintains five small properties, Cubbler Court (1.5 acres), Hoffman Estates (1.8 acres), Westfield Drive (.7 acres), Forgedale Park (.4 acres), and a War Memorial along Barto Road. Another 1.5-acre open space lot on Barto Road is leased to a farmer. A former railroad bed segment on Stauffer Road of 1.9 acres is owned by the Township and currently not maintained.

One larger undeveloped open space owned by the Township but not currently maintained is the 10.2-acre Reserve at Bally Spring property. The Township owns the two Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands open space parcels totaling 26.3 acres along Hoffmansville Road.

The information below describes Washington Township's approach to providing park maintenance.

Park Maintenance Personnel

The Washington Township Public Works Department is responsible for park and facility maintenance. Four full-time Public Works crew members report to the Roadmaster and handle the park maintenance work. These full-time employees possess the general knowledge, ability, and skills to operate a variety of large and small equipment, complete projects and repairs, and perform routine park maintenance. No seasonal or part-time maintenance staff are hired. The Township does not rely on the use of contracted services other than the provision and maintenance of two portable toilets, one in each of the community parks.

Community service workers from Graterford Prison and Berks County Probation Department have been used in the past for park maintenance tasks. The Township has not had enough park work to keep them busy on a regular basis.

Training

Public Works staff are required to maintain Commercial Driver's License certification and CPR and First Aid certifications. A recently hired staff member is certified to apply weed or turf chemicals through a Certified Pesticide Applicators License. No one on the staff is a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) however, the PARRC Regional Parks Planner is a CPSI and will be inspecting Washington Township playground equipment as part of her responsibilities.

Park Inspections, Work Scheduling, and Record Keeping

A park system walk-through is conducted by the Roadmaster in the spring and the Public Works crew does periodic inspections at least monthly. Any issues are recorded on checklists and scheduled for correction.

Work is scheduled based on knowledge of what routine work needs to be accomplished, requests received in the office, inclement weather, vandalism, or other circumstances. Mowing and trash removal are done weekly. Time keeping records are for payroll purposes only and do not include information about maintenance tasks completed. According to the Roadmaster, it takes one crew member three and one-half days to complete the park mowing each week in the spring, summer, and fall months.

There is no written program in place that identifies a schedule of routine recurring tasks and preventative maintenance requirements needed for each park facility. There are no standards established that describe what adequate park maintenance should look like to the staff or facility user when a task is completed. The use of standards is a good method for the staff to learn if the level of maintenance for an item is meeting the expectations of residents and elected officials.

The Roadmaster meets with the staff every other day to assign work duties and prepares the work schedule two weeks in advance. The Township office notes all requests for service and complaints about recreation facility conditions on a form and forwards them to the Roadmaster, who schedules the work to resolve the issue. Depending on pavilion rentals, staff may work a few hours on Saturday or Sunday to empty trash and perform clean up tasks. Some areas of the parks have wet spots with poor drainage. Mowing is also slowed down by the need to pick up litter, especially at the soccer fields. The five small open space areas must also be mowed.

Park Maintenance Agreements

Written agreements are in place with the Boyertown Soccer Club, Pine Forge Athletic Association, and the Boyertown Optimist Club for the use of Township community park fields.

The agreements are for five-year terms and can be extended by written amendments. The agreements require the groups to submit season schedules for field usage and allow for use of the fields by the public on any days not scheduled by the groups. The responsibilities for field maintenance are defined. Each written agreement has slight differences.

The Pine Forge agreement states that the Athletic Association is responsible for: grading the baseball infield, removing excess vegetation around the fences, cutting grass, making minor backstop repairs, picking up litter, and supplying player benches, equipment box, bases, home plate, pitching rubber, infield mix, and field white for base paths and batter's box. The Township allows use of its equipment shed to store equipment and supplies and access to a lawn tractor for the Athletic Association to cut the grass. The Township provides a portable restroom and two bleachers at the field. The agreement also establishes parking, insurance, maintenance fees, property damage, and annual meeting requirements with the Athletic Association. The Athletic Association pays a \$550 maintenance fee to the Township in 2023 to cover the cost of the portable restroom; a \$1,000 financial security deposit is held by the Township.

The Optimist Club's agreement for use of the football field differs from the Pine Forge Athletic Association agreement in that the Township mows the field. The Club pays a maintenance fee to the Township of \$995 in 2023 for the cost of the portable restroom, mowing of the field, and scoreboard electricity. The scoreboard itself is the property of the Club and all maintenance on it is the Club's responsibility. The Club is also responsible to supply and apply seed, fertilizer, lime, and other materials for the proper maintenance of the field.

The Soccer Club has two written agreements with the Township. The J. K. Memorial Field agreement is for a term of 20 years at a fee of \$1 annually. The Club constructed the field improvements at their expense and is solely responsible for maintenance of the field, bleachers, scoreboard, snack bar, and restrooms. The second agreement is for the use of all other soccer fields owned by Washington Township. The Club pays a yearly maintenance fee to the Township of \$900 for the cost of the portable restroom, mowing and maintenance of the fields, and trash removal.

Park Safety and Security

Vandalism is not a significant issue at the parks. Portable trail cameras are used at the parks when needed. Both community parks have some security lighting. Barto Community Park is gated at the main parking lot and is locked at 9 p.m. The second parking lot is not gated. Washington Township Park is separated by a busy road. No crosswalks have been installed to make crossing the road to get to areas of the park safer for visitors.

Park Maintenance Equipment

Equipment such as mowers, weed whackers, pressure washers, and backhoes is available for park maintenance as needed. The Township does not depreciate equipment and has no formal equipment replacement schedule. Requests for added and replacement equipment are presented annually as part of the budget discussion. The need to replace equipment is normally based on the cost of recent repairs together with the age and record of use in miles or hours. Added equipment is requested when there is recurring need for a particular piece of equipment that will enhance maintenance operations. Additional equipment for detention basin maintenance and to more efficiently sweep and clear snow from parking lots would be helpful. Equipment is borrowed at times from Douglass Township, Montgomery County. No park maintenance equipment is rented.

Major Park Maintenance and Capital Replacement

In addition to routine maintenance duties that are performed each year, there are other tasks that are required during the lifetime of any recreation facility. These tasks deal with periodic maintenance such as painting and sealing and the normal replacement of minor and major equipment such as play equipment, park benches, and picnic tables. The timing for these repairs and replacements is determined largely by the materials used, weather, use of the facility, and the maintenance performed during its life. The American Public Works Association recommends budgeting two to four percent of a park's capital development costs annually to establish as a capital reserve account for major capital repairs and replacements.

Below is an analysis of the strengths and challenges associated with park and facility maintenance in Washington Township.

Park and Facility Maintenance Strengths:

- The Township has lease agreements with youth athletic organizations who perform and pay for field maintenance activities.
- The Township has a sufficient number of staff members and budget to maintain its current parks.
- Monthly park inspections are conducted, and checklists are used to record issues.
- The parks are well maintained.
- The Township owns the basic equipment needed for park maintenance tasks.
- Vandalism is not a significant problem.

Park and Facility Maintenance Challenges:

- A few small, scattered land parcels owned by the Township must be mowed which adds to maintenance costs.
- Routine recurring tasks and preventative maintenance requirements for park areas and recreation facilities are not outlined in a written schedule.
- Standards that describe what adequate maintenance should occur when a task is completed have not been established.
- The Township does not depreciate equipment and has no formal equipment replacement schedule.
- Written records of park and playground inspections are not maintained by the Township.



CHAPTER 7:

Recreation Programming

Recreation Programming

Recreation Programming

Providing park land and recreation facilities are important municipal functions. Equally as important are the recreation experiences residents have through involvement in recreation programs and community events. A variety of organizations help to meet the recreation program needs of Washington Township residents.

Township-Sponsored Recreation Programs

Washington Township does not sponsor any recreation programs or special events.

Public School District

Washington Township is part of the Boyertown Area School District, which encompasses 10 municipalities in Berks and Montgomery Counties.

Boyertown Area Senior High School, Middle School East, and Middle School West offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities for students including athletics, music, drama, and clubs. School dances and other special events are held throughout the school year. Student performances such as musical plays and concerts are open to the public. High school sporting events attract all ages of residents as spectators. The School District offers Gold Card Memberships for residents ages 62 and over, which provide free or reduced-price admission to school-sponsored events.

Washington Elementary School is located in the Township and is one of six School District elementary schools. The school contains grades K-6, serves 510 students, and offers art, music, and physical education classes, as well as a library and computer lab. The school grounds include playgrounds, pavement games, and basketball courts that are adjacent to the Washington Township Park Annex.

The use of the Boyertown Area School District facilities and grounds is encouraged for events that support community-sponsored educational and recreational programs and provide for community activities. The School District plays an active role in recreation by allowing public use of its indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for youth sports programs for groups located within School District boundaries. The District maintains a schedule of fees for the use of school facilities by approved groups. School facility and field use is scheduled in this priority order:

1. Educational programs and school functions for the individual school and School District.
2. Events and activities sponsored by a school district connected group.
3. Activities in which the majority of the participants are school age youth.
4. Meetings of parent/guardian and staff organizations.
5. Community-sponsored activities and events open to the public.

Tennis courts and outside basketball courts are available for individual use on a first-come first-serve basis. Outdoor track facilities are available for walking.

Private Schools

Two private schools are located in Washington Township. In 2020, St. Francis Academy, a Roman Catholic parochial school affiliated with the Allentown Diocese, closed grades 1-8. St. Francis Academy has become an Early Learning Center offering full-day classes for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. In 2023 it reopened as the St. Francis Classical Catholic Academy. Brookside Montessori School teaches elementary age children using the Montessori education system.

Youth Sports

Boyertown Optimist Club – The Boyertown Optimist Club provides youth sports leagues for children of all ages who reside within or attend a school within the boundaries of the Boyertown Area School District. Area parks as well as indoor and outdoor school properties are used for practices and games. The Optimist Club lacrosse and flag football programs utilize Washington Township Park.

- **Field Hockey** – The field hockey program runs from mid-August through mid-October for girls in grades 1-6. Teams are formed by grade level.
- **Biddy Basketball** – The biddy basketball program runs from early November through mid-March with practices, games, championship tournaments, and all-star games. Boys and girls in grades 5-6 are divided into teams by gender.
- **Bobcats Travel Basketball** – The travel basketball program is for boys and girls in grades 4-9. Travel basketball requires participation in away games throughout Southeastern PA. League games begin in December.
- **Junior High Recreation Basketball** – The junior high recreation basketball program is for boys in grades 7-9 and runs from early December through mid-March with clinics, games, and a 3v3 tournament. The teams are comprised of a mixture of all grade levels.
- **Boys and Girls Lacrosse** – The boys lacrosse program is for grades K-8. First-year players in grades K-2 enroll in the Little Scoopers program and practice once a week. Boys in grades 1-2 may also play on grade specific teams. Starting in mid-March practices are held twice a week including Saturday playdays. Boys in grades 3-8 play on teams that compete in the Southeastern PA Youth Lacrosse League practicing twice a week with weekend games. The girls' lacrosse program is for grades 1-6. The season begins in mid-March and runs through late May. Practices are twice a week in the evening with games or playdays held on weekends. Girls' lacrosse teams participate in the Tri-County Area Lacrosse League.
- **Football** – The football program is for boys and girls in grades K-6. Grades K-1 play flag football and grades 2-6 play tackle football on grade-based teams in the Inter-County Football League. Practices are four days per week in August and three days per week after school starts. Games are on Saturdays or Sundays.
- **Cheerleading** – The cheerleading program is open to boys and girls in grades K-6. Cheerleaders support the football program by doing sideline chants and cheers and half-time routines during the games. Clinics and practices start in mid-August followed by games and exhibitions from September through mid-November.
- **Girls Softball** – The girls' softball program is for ages 5-15, with teams organized for 8u, 10u, 12u, and 15u. Softball has spring and fall seasons.

Boyertown Midget Baseball League – The Boyertown Midget Baseball League offers spring and fall baseball seasons for ages 5-18. The Junior Division is Cal Ripken baseball, with Tee ball for ages 5-6, Knee High baseball for ages 7-8, Minors baseball for ages 9-10, and Majors baseball for ages 11-12. The Senior Division is Babe Ruth and American Legion baseball.

Pine Forge Athletic Association – The Pine Forge Athletic Association offers Cal Ripken baseball for ages 5-12, Babe Ruth baseball for ages 13-18, Softball for ages 5-18, and an adapted Buddy Ball baseball program for ages 5-21 with special needs. Baseball and softball tournament and travel programs are also offered. Over 400 boys and girls play baseball and softball each year from March through October on more than 30 teams. The baseball field at Barto Community Park is used by the Pine Forge Athletic Association.

Boyertown Bears American Legion – The Boyertown Bears American Legion baseball team serves ages 13 to 19. Practices and games are held at the Boyertown Bears Stadium.

Boyertown Soccer Club – The Boyertown Soccer Club is a non-profit organization run by volunteers that offers a structured intramural program and a recreational soccer program in the spring and fall for children ages 3-18. Preschool to Kindergarten children meet once per week on Saturday with time split between skills and scrimmage. Grades 1-4 and 5-12 practice twice weekly with games played on Saturdays. Teams in grades 5-12 participate in the Suburban Counties Soccer League. The Boyertown Blast soccer tournament is held in mid-November each year with boys playing on Saturday and girls playing on Sunday. All of the Washington Township soccer fields are used by the Boyertown Soccer Club.

Public Library

Boyertown Community Library – The Boyertown Community Library is a full-service public library serving Washington Township. Part of the Berks County Public Libraries system, the library offers many programs for all ages, including community yoga classes, how-to lessons for adults, adult book discussion groups, adult painting classes, craft classes, and story time for toddlers and preschoolers. Weekly clubs at the library include Adult Anime Club, Scrabble Club, and Monday Morning Book Club. The Friends of the Library sponsors book sales. StoryWalks with free activity kits are held at Boyertown and Bally Community Parks. In addition, the library offers book, magazine, and Ebook loans, audio/video lending services, Internet and fax services, and computer services. A Berks Book Box is located in front of the Washington Township building. Residents are welcome to take a book for free and donate books at any time to the box. Washington Township makes an annual financial contribution to the library.

Swimming Pools

Two outdoor swimming pools are located outside of Washington Township but within the Boyertown Area School District boundaries.

Bally Community Pool – Located in Bally Community Park, the Bally Community Pool is open to all residents of the area with no non-resident fees. Seasonal memberships and daily rates are available for families and individuals. The pool is open daily from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day and weekends only while Boyertown Area School District is in session.

Boyertown Community Pool – The Borough of Boyertown owns the community swimming pool located in Boyertown Community Park and has a lease agreement with the Boyertown YMCA for operation of the pool. The facility has an Olympic-sized pool, splash pad, and locker rooms.

Youth Development

4-H Clubs – Berks County 4-H is available for all youth ages 5-18 and is sponsored by Penn State Cooperative Extension. Program areas focus on animal science, healthy living, STEM, expressive arts, camping, leadership and more. Berks County 4-H has a variety of 4-H clubs to which youth can belong. The Dairy and Livestock Clubs are species-specific and focus on market and dairy project animals. The Horse Clubs focus on learning about horses. The Project Clubs focus on a specific project such as cooking, sewing, rabbits, gardening, robotics, etc.

The Hawk Mountain Council, Boy Scouts of America – Washington Township is served by the Frontier District, Hawk Mountain Council, Boy Scouts of America. The Council serves more than 5,500 young people in Berks County, Schuylkill County, and Carbon County. Over 2,000 volunteers and hundreds of community groups representing educational, religious, non-profit, civic, and business organizations join in partnership with Hawk Mountain Council by chartering over 160 Scouting units (Packs, Troops, Crews, Posts, and STEM Scout Labs). Bally Troop 0586 offers Boy Scout and Cub Scout opportunities to Washington Township children. Special events sponsored by the Frontier District include the Cub Pinewood Derby, Scout Quest, Fishing Rodeo, Twilight Camps, Family Hikes, First Aid Meets, Klondikes, Scout Day at the Bally Pool, and Trunk or Treat.

Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania – The Girls Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania, with the support of volunteers, parents, and community partners, delivers the Girl Scout experience to close to 30,000 girls in nine counties across Eastern Pennsylvania: Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia. Washington Township is served by the Boyertown Service Unit 744 which offers programs in the Boyertown Area School District schools. A Girl Scout resident camp, Camp Laughing Waters, is located on nearly 500 acres near Gilbertsville.

Senior Centers

The closest senior centers to the Township are in Bally and Boyertown Boroughs.

The Center at Spring Street – Managed by Boyertown Area Multi-Service, the Center offers a variety of fitness activities, health screenings, cards, craft classes, and special program opportunities Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Activities for adults ages 55 and over include Matter of Balance Class, Bingo, Country Line Dancing, Musical Entertainment, Knit and Crochet Group, Mah-Jongg, Drumming up Fitness, Get Fit, Chair Dancing, Strong and Fit, and Yoga. In addition to the activities, the Center at Spring Street provides congregate meals at lunchtime and transportation to and from the Center. The Center is sponsored by Berks Encore through the Berks County Office of Aging.

Bally Senior Center – The Bally Senior Center is located in Bally Borough Hall. Half of the building was completely refurbished to house the Senior Center. The structure was a public elementary school for many years before being closed after a school jointure with Boyertown. Borough residency is not a requirement to be a member of the Bally Senior Center. Members must be 55 or older.

Sportsmen's Clubs

Pine Forge Sportsman's Club – The Pine Forge Sportsman's Club is a non-profit 501(c)(4) organization whose mission is to provide area youth with experiences which will pique their interest in outdoor activities. The Club holds a kid's trout rodeo, PA Hunter -Trapper Education courses, and monthly board shoots that are open to the public. The clubhouse is an old two-room schoolhouse. Members have 39 acres of hunting grounds and a 25-yard, 50-yard, and a 100-yard site in range.

Community Rod and Gun Club of Bechtelsville – The Community Rod and Gun Club is a private, members-only club located in Washington Township. It features an outdoor shooting range with a 100-yard pavilion, 50-yard and 25-yard benches, and a freshwater-fed pond. Several events are open to the

public, including competitive board shoots on the first Sunday of the month, shoots for youth ages 8-15, and a youth fishing rodeo.

Boyertown Rod and Gun Association – The Boyertown Rod and Gun Association is a private club that features plinking, muzzleloading, rifle, silhouette, and archery ranges, and a fishing pond. Activities hosted for members include: a trapshooting league, monthly trap shoots, smallbore silhouette shooting, muzzleloader woods walks, claybusters league, and a children’s fishing rodeo.

Community Special Events

The regional area surrounding Washington Township hosts a variety of special events organized by community organizations. A few of those organizations are described below.

Bally Area Recreational Development Society – The Bally Area Recreational Development Society is a community volunteer organization that supports the Bally Community Park and Pool, as well as recreation events for residents in and around Bally Borough. It meets the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at Bally Borough Hall. Fundraisers are held throughout the year to raise money for park and pool improvements and programs, and include a clothing drive, basket raffle, snack shack operation, and chicken pot pie sales. In addition to raising money, the group does hands-on maintenance at the park and sponsors special events including the Bally Craft Show and Bake Sale, Farm Kids Tractor Show, and Bally Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Bechtelsville Recreation Association – The Bechtelsville Recreation Association is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization whose purpose is to assist the Borough of Bechtelsville in raising funds to upgrade and bring life back to the Bechtelsville Community Park. Meetings are the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Borough Hall. Its first project is to rebuild the playground in the park which was removed for safety concerns. The Bechtelsville Recreation Association also plans and conducts community events including Santa in the Park, Easter Egg Hunt, Fall Fest, Community Bonfires, and Community Yard Sales.

Boyertown Park and Recreation Committee – The Boyertown Park and Recreation Committee promotes the use of the Borough parks and raises funds through annual events to help improve and maintain the parks. Events include Earth Day, Boyertown Fun Days, Fall Fest, Electronics Recycling Day, Movies Under the Stars, Bike Night, and Duryea Days.

Volunteer Fire Companies – The area’s fire companies hold various indoor and outdoor fundraising community special events throughout the year.

Bally Lion’s Club – The Bally Lion’s Club sponsors an annual Halloween Parade in Bally Borough.

Private Recreational Sites and Attractions

A variety of recreational sites are located in or near Washington Township for residents to enjoy.

Grandview Speedway – Grandview Speedway is a one-third mile-high banked dirt racetrack located on 40 acres in Washington Township. Since the 1960’s, Grandview Speedway has been presenting wheel-to-wheel NASCAR stock car racing every Saturday night from April and through September, plus special events. The 2023 racing season and schedule is Speedway’s 61st season.

National Centre for Padre Pio – National Centre for Padre Pio was built to resemble Saint Padre Pio’s friary in San Giovanni Rontondo, Italy. The Centre offers a number of outdoor statues, a chapel, and a museum filled with cultural and religious relics. The grounds of the Centre are open to the public for walking, and pavilions are available to rent. The 45-member Exeter R/C Eagles Club utilizes the Centre grounds for its model aviation flying field. The Club has flying zone rules and regulations and standards

for noise control in place. Flying hours are daily from 8 a.m. for helicopters and electrics and 9 a.m. for gas and glow aircraft until dusk.

Boyertown YMCA – YMCA members have access to 15 YMCA locations, land and water group exercise classes, consultations with wellness coaches, babysitting services, indoor and outdoor pools, gymnasium, racquetball courts, and cardio and strength training equipment.

The State Theatre – The State Theatre Preservation Society is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve and operate the historic 1912 State Theatre in Boyertown through an array of movies, performing arts, and education. While the State Theatre makes money from ticket sales and concessions, its operations are powered by donations to keep the prices affordable. In addition, the State Theatre sponsors an escape room program called Escape the State and rents the theatre for private events.

Fast Tracks Bally – Fast Tracks Bally is a family-oriented slot car racing venue in Bally that features oval, hill climb, drag strip, and flat track racing. It caters to the 1/24 scale and 1/32 scale racer and provides service and parts from many vendors. In addition to building, testing, and racing slot cars, leagues are open to all ages.

Butter Valley Golf Course – Butter Valley is an 18-hole regulation public golf course, disc golf course, Runway Grill, and small airport located adjacent to Washington Township in Upper Hanover Township. The golf course offers lessons, league play, and golf outings in addition to public golf rounds seven days a week. Butter Valley's public landing strip has overrun and clear approaches and is unicom equipped.

Lazy-K Campground – Lazy-K Campground is partially located in Washington Township. It is a family-owned and operated campground with 85 wooded and open trailer sites, tent sites, and a catch and release fishing pond, where no license is required.

Washington Grille and Pub – A fishing pond is located on the property of Washington Grille and Pub restaurant in Washington Township and is open to the public.

Calvary United Church of Christ – The grounds of Calvary United Church of Christ include a baseball field and picnic pavilion.

Master Kim's Black Belt Academy – Master Kim's Black Belt Academy in Bechtelsville offers Tae Kwon Do martial arts classes for children and adults. Kinder Kids martial arts classes for children ages 4 to 7 and Kids martial arts classes for ages 8 to 12 combine traditional martial arts techniques with instruction to teach age-appropriate self-defense skills. While learning Tae Kwon Do, children develop life skills such as concentration, respect, self-discipline, and confidence. The Tae Kwon Do adult classes are for ages 13 and over and incorporate a balanced approach to martial arts training that includes strength training, flexibility, cardio, and positive visualization.

Keystone Steam Fire Engine Company – The Keystone Steam Fire Engine Company is located in Boyertown. The fire station houses a six-lane bowling alley. It offers bowling parties, public bowling, and bowling, billiards, and dart leagues.

Althouse Arboretum – Althouse Arboretum is a collaboration between GreenAllies, a non-profit organization and Upper Pottsgrove Township. The Township purchased 15 acres and the adjoining house, and 1.6 acres was donated to GreenAllies. The property features a children's forest trail, a native plant garden, raised garden beds, two forest classrooms, over one mile of hiking trails, a low ropes course, and an ecofriendly gift shop. Through cross-easement agreements with the Township, the Althouse Arboretum along with Sussel Park and Prout Farm is used as an environmental education center managed and run by GreenAllies at no cost to the Township. GreenAllies is solely funded by grants and donations.

Steinmetz Family Farm – The Steinmetz Family Farm offers: a traveling petting zoo, parties on the farm, goat yoga, rent-a-goat program, baby goat snuggling, public events on the farm, nature walks, wagon rides, scavenger hunts, archery range, axe throwing for adults, and special event rentals. At its week-long summer farm camp children participate in hands-on farm experiences and learn about and care for the animals.

Outdoor Self-Directed Recreation

In addition to the two community parks owned by Washington Township, other nearby park and open space areas are available for residents to enjoy.

State Game Lands and Private Lands – Washington Township contains 152 acres of Pennsylvania State Game Lands #315. In addition, two hundred acres of privately-owned land is open for public hunting under an agreement between two property owners and the Pennsylvania Game Commission. A popular swimming hole, Bally Rocks, is located in the State Game Lands on Forgedale Road.

Bally Borough Park – The 15-acre Bally Borough Park consists of two tennis courts, two grass volleyball courts, one sand volleyball court, one basketball court, one-mile walking path, two pavilions, one playground, one baseball field, and an outdoor swimming pool complex.

Boyertown Community Park – The Boyertown Community Park consists of a playground, two picnic pavilions, a band shell, a one-mile walking trail, an 18-hole disc golf course, and a community swimming pool.

Bechtelsville Community Park – The Bechtelsville Community Park contains tennis courts, basketball courts, paved walkways, baseball field, snack bar building, picnic pavilions, open lawn area, and a stream. The playground equipment has been removed.

Perkiomen Creek West Branch and Swamp Creek – Fishing is permitted along the West Branch of the Perkiomen Creek, which has a high quality/exceptional value designation and is stocked with trout. Swamp Creek is another popular fishing spot.

Homeowner Association Properties – A few homeowner’s associations own recreation facilities that are open to homeowners only, including the Reserve at Bally Spring and Spring Valley Village.

Below is an analysis of the strengths and challenges associated with recreation programming in Washington Township.

Recreation Programming Strengths:

- A variety of community special events are sponsored in neighboring communities throughout the year by recreation committees, fire companies, churches, and other organizations.
- A Recreation Advisory Committee has been formed to focus on parks and recreation in the Township.
- The Township owns outdoor park areas and recreation facilities that can serve as locations for recreation programs and special events.
- The Township building has a community room that could be an indoor location for recreation programs.
- The Boyertown Public Library sponsors a variety of educational and recreational programs.

- The School District is a source of recreational activities, especially for families with school-age children and for residents as spectators at athletic and performing arts events. The School District allows community use of its indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.
- State game lands in the Township provide opportunities for self-directed outdoor recreation. Other parks in neighboring communities serve this need for residents also.

Recreation Programming Challenges:

- There is a lack of community recreation program opportunities in the Township for all ages. Few recreation and activity programs are offered in the Township by any provider.
- There are no special events held in the Township. Residents go to Bally, Bechtelsville, or Boyertown for community special events.
- Beyond youth sports, there are few recreation program opportunities for children throughout the School District area.
- There are limited indoor recreation opportunities in the area.
- Residents must travel outside of the Township for programs such as: health and fitness classes, youth instructional classes, aquatics programs, environmental education, visual arts, adult sports, non-league sports, summer playgrounds and day camps, youth sports, performing arts, teen programming, self-improvement and educational classes, holiday events, senior adult activities, parent-child special events, outdoor adventure, and social recreation activities.
- The population of the Township is not large enough to support a full-time public parks and recreation department. In addition, there are no public parks and recreation departments within the municipalities of the School District.



CHAPTER 8:

Financing & Funding

Financing & Funding

Financing and Funding Assessment

Financing Parks and Recreation

This financial analysis provides a review of the Township’s parks and recreation revenues and expenditures. Washington Township does not break out its wage and benefit expenses for park maintenance work performed by the Roadmaster and Public Works crew. These duties are handled as part of the staff’s normal work schedule.

The Township adopts its annual operating budget no later than December 31 for the next calendar year. Unused budget funds remaining at the end of the year become part of the cash reserves available for allocation by Township Supervisors in the following year’s budget.

In addition to parks and recreation spending, the Township makes an annual contribution to the Boyertown Community Library. In 2022, the Township contribution was \$3,500.

The Roadmaster annually recommends changes to the operating budget and the capital improvement program budget. The Township Manager prepares and submits the budget request for Public Works. The Public Works Department receives sufficient funding to perform park maintenance work, is adequately staffed, and has the equipment needed to get the job done.

Table 8-1 shows the Township parks and recreation actual costs for 2021 and budgeted costs for 2022 and 2023.

Revenue Category	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Beginning Cash	\$55,299	\$45,692	\$109,583
Interest Earnings	\$26	\$30	\$840
Pavilion Rentals	\$600	\$500	\$500
Community Room Rentals	\$370	\$500	\$500
Facility Security Deposits	\$0	\$0	\$0
Open Space Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fee In Lieu of Sidewalk Gehringer Farms	\$0	\$0	\$0
Charitable Donations	\$0	\$0	\$0
Inter-Fund Operating Transfer from General Fund	\$0	\$125,000	\$50,000
Reimbursement for Porta Potty Expenses	\$2,845	\$2,345	\$2,370
Expense Reimbursements	\$90	\$0	\$0
Total Revenue	\$3,931	\$128,375	\$54,210
Total Revenue and Beginning Cash	\$59,230	\$174,067	\$163,793
Expense Category	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Maintenance/Improvements	\$1,099	\$2,500	\$2,500
Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0
Purchase Minor Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Services and Charges	\$0	\$0	\$0
Sanitation/Porta Potty	\$2,460	\$4,800	\$4,800

Table 8-1
Washington Township Parks and Recreation Fund Budget – 2021-2023

Expense Category	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Engineering Expense	\$0	\$70,000	\$70,000
Park Improvements Barto Park	\$8,250	\$25,000	\$49,400
Park Improvements Washington Park	\$1,569	\$12,500	\$12,500
Open Space Improvements Gehringer Road	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000
Capital Purchases	\$0	\$0	\$0
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000
Total Expense	\$13,378	\$140,800	\$165,200
Net Budget	\$45,852	\$33,267	(\$1,407)

Municipal Spending Comparisons for Parks and Recreation

Local municipal spending on parks and recreation in Pennsylvania is extremely diverse and challenging to compare.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources recommends that a minimum of 5 percent of a municipality’s operating budget be spent on parks and recreation. In 2022, the percent of Washington Township’s operating budget spent on parks and recreation was 5.3 percent. The Township per capita spending on parks and recreation was \$31.69. A large portion of the parks and recreation budget in 2022 was an inter-fund transfer of \$125,000 from the General Fund to the Parks and Recreation Fund. In 2021, the Township per capita spending was just \$3.01. In 2020, it was \$1.50. The national average per capita operating budget spending by municipalities on parks and recreation in 2022 was \$93.

Listed below in Table 8-2 is data for similar-sized Townships by population and land area in Berks County. Personnel expenses related to parks are part of the Public Works budgets of the municipalities, as Public Works staff perform park maintenance work in addition to other Public Works duties. The data is from the most recent municipal annual financial reports on file with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Table 8-2
Municipal Spending Comparison for Parks and Recreation - 2020

Township	County	2020 Pop	Land Area Square Miles	Total Operating Budget	Parks & Recreation Spending*	Per Capita Spending on Parks & Recreation
Alsace	Berks	3,834	12.2	\$1,089,434	\$3,525	\$.92
Brecknock	Berks	4,602	17.7	\$1,695,715	\$3,586	\$.78
Caernarvon	Berks	4,234	8.9	\$2,713,586	\$40,489	\$9.56
Colebrookdale	Berks	5,112	8.4	\$2,370,156	\$2,200	\$.43
Douglass	Berks	3,670	12.5	\$1,853,326	\$49,851	\$13.58
Hereford	Berks	2,962	15.4	\$731,783	\$7,952	\$2.68
Oley	Berks	3,810	23.9	\$1,730,742	\$19,100	\$5.01
Richmond	Berks	3,603	23.5	\$1,425,859	\$4,000	\$1.11
Ruscombmanor	Berks	3,996	13.7	\$963,970	\$31,484	\$7.88
Tilden	Berks	3,603	19.0	\$1,508,762	\$29,286	\$8.13
Tulpehocken	Berks	3,415	23.5	\$1,005,902	\$38,730	\$11.34
Union	Berks	3,886	23.4	\$1,368,014	\$22,747	\$5.85
Washington	Berks	4,443	14.1	\$1,711,177	\$6,659	\$1.50

Source: PA Department of Community and Economic Development, Municipal Annual Financial Reports, 2020

*Includes public library contributions

Funding Sources

Sources of Township operating revenue for parks and recreation other than taxes are:

- Picnic pavilion rental fees
- Community room rental fees
- Youth sports group field agreement fees
- Mandatory dedication fees-in-lieu of parkland

The Township Administrative Assistant handles requests for pavilion and community room rentals. A fee schedule is approved each year by the Township Board of Supervisors as part of the annual budget. Those who live within the boundaries of Washington Township are considered as residents for Township facility rentals; those who live elsewhere pay non-resident rates.

The community room can be rented for activities such as parties, meetings, dinners, and other gatherings and accommodates 60 to 70 people comfortably. It is equipped with a kitchen sink, refrigerator, microwave oven, standard stove, air conditioning, and counter space. Rental fees are for four hours of use. Additional hours are available at \$15/hour. Township residents are charged \$150 (\$60 for rental and \$90 security deposit); non-residents pay \$175 (\$75 for rental and \$100 security deposit). Township Committee members may rent the community room for \$100 (\$40 for rental and \$60 security deposit) at a one-time use per year per family. Meetings of community groups may be held for \$75 (\$25 for rental and \$50 security deposit).

Each of the Township's two community parks have one large picnic pavilion with electricity, nine six-foot picnic tables, and two eight-foot handicapped accessible picnic tables. Both pavilions have port-o-potties nearby, walking paths that lead from the parking lots to the pavilions and port-o-potties, and small playgrounds. Pavilion rental fees for Washington Township residents are \$100 (\$50 for rental and \$50 security deposit); non-residents fees are \$150 (\$100 for rental and \$50 security deposit).

Table 8-3 shows the number of facility rentals and revenue earned in 2022.

Table 8-3 Community Room and Pavilion Rentals 2022		
Facility	Total # of Rentals	Total Revenue
Community Room	8	\$555
Picnic Pavilions	9	\$500
Totals	17	\$1,055

Financing and Funding Strengths:

- The Township has begun to make a more significant financial investment in parks and recreation in 2022 and 2023.
- Non-resident rates are charged for community room and picnic pavilion rental.
- Washington Township will receive assistance with grant funding through its membership in the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee.

- Washington Township has a mandatory dedication ordinance in place to accept park land or fees-in-lieu of park land donation by developers.
- Youth sports groups pay for field maintenance activities and reimburse the Township for porta potty costs.

Financing and Funding Challenges:

- The community room and picnic pavilions are rented infrequently.
- In 2022, Washington Township spent 5.3% of its operating budget on parks and recreation or \$31.69 per capita. Spending is well below the \$93 per capita national average spending on parks and recreation.
- Except for 2022, the Township has one of the lowest per capita spending amounts on parks and recreation among the comparable municipalities. Of the 14 municipalities, Washington Township is the fifth lowest in per capita spending.
- Very little park and recreation revenue is generated to help to offset any parks and recreation expenses of the Township.



CHAPTER 9:

Plan Goals & Recommendations

Plan Goals & Recommendations

This Plan is dedicated to moving Washington Township into its future role for parks and recreation. Washington Township's commitment to implementing this Plan will ensure that its parks and recreation system is essential to quality of life and plays a vital role in supporting the health and well-being of residents and visitors.

Great parks and recreation systems don't just happen. They require a guiding vision and a sustained set of strategies for bringing that vision to reality. This Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan outlines Washington Township's vision for the future of its parks, natural areas, trails, and recreation programming, and shares strategies for how to achieve this vision.

The Washington Township mission statement, vision statement, and core goals for parks and recreation have been prepared to guide development, operation, and programming of the Township parks and recreation system over the next 10 years. The mission statement defines the Township's purpose for its parks and recreation system, while the vision statement presents the Township's desire for its future. The core goals are guiding principles that directly support the mission and vision and define and prioritize the work required to implement this Plan.

Mission Statement – We focus on preserving our natural resources and providing parks, trails, and recreation activities for residents to enjoy the outdoors, connect with others, make memories, and improve health.

Vision Statement – Our safe and accessible parks and recreation system inspires all residents to be active outdoors and involved in the community.

Core Goals – The Plan sets out five core goals to support the Township's mission and vision for parks and recreation.

Core Goal 1 – Renewal, Investment, and Stewardship – We will address the maintenance and improvement needs of parks, trails, and recreation facilities to protect the environment and keep amenities in top shape for safe and enjoyable use.

Core Goal 2 – Recreation for All – We will ensure the right of all people to play, learn, and explore outdoors by removing barriers to participation and fostering an inclusive culture.

Core Goal 3 – Health and Wellness – We will promote outdoor physical and social activity by providing safe and welcoming recreation places, spaces, and programs.

Core Goal 4 – Relationship and Capacity Building – We will collaborate with neighboring municipalities, partners, and residents to provide exceptional parks and recreation opportunities for our community.

Core Goal 5 – Awareness – We will do everything possible to make our parks, natural areas, and trails better used tomorrow than they are today.

Recommendations are based on the Plan's five core goals to provide Washington Township with the tools that will lead it to: 1) do the best job possible to enhance and sustain its parks and recreation system; 2) provide memorable community events and programs that celebrate the Township's natural

and cultural heritage; and 3) ensure that residents enjoy the benefits of health, nature, and nurture that public parks, trails, and open spaces bring.

This Plan sets out an ambitious vision for the future of Washington Township's parks and recreation system. Realizing this vision will require:

- A commitment to the municipal funding necessary to improve and enhance Washington Township park areas, recreation facilities, recreation programs, and trails and to preserve natural areas and open space.
- Expanded community involvement, through volunteering, fundraising, partnerships, and support for new initiatives.

Goal 1 – Renewal, Investment, and Stewardship – We will address the maintenance and improvement needs of parks, trails, and recreation facilities to protect natural resources and keep amenities in top shape for safe and enjoyable use.

Recommendation 1.1 – Develop a Written Maintenance Plan – While the current park maintenance scheduling system is working, a written maintenance plan would provide a variety of additional benefits and information about the park system that become more important as resources are stretched, facilities increase, or staff transitions occur. A maintenance plan describes the annual routine work and preventative maintenance that is needed at the parks and includes an inventory of the facilities at each site, what time of year and the frequency with which maintenance tasks should occur, and the acceptable standard of care in each park and facility that describes what they should look like when maintenance is completed. A written maintenance plan will benefit the Township with work scheduling and making sure that everyone's expectations for maintenance are on the same page. The annual inspection of parks during early spring is important to identify and correct problems. When Township staff is on-site to mow the grass or perform other duties, routine park inspections should be done and documented in writing.

Recommendation 1.2 – Identify the Feasibility of Outsourcing Specific Park Maintenance Tasks – Costs are not necessarily minimized by performing all work activities with Township staff. Contractors can play a vital role in supplementing the staff by performing work in a more efficient and cost-effective manner or by providing specialized tools and equipment. Tasks to consider contracting out include mowing, particularly of the small open space parcels, and landscape care.

Recommendation 1.3 – Continue to Invest Funds to Acquire, Develop, Maintain, and Program Park, Trail, and Open Space Areas – The adoption of this Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan will improve the Township's chances of receiving state grants for parks and recreation improvements. Township capital funds will be needed to match grant funds. It will be important to employ a number of financial strategies to improve the parks and recreation system to include:

- Increasing the Township operating budget spending for parks and recreation maintenance as the new park properties are opened to the public.
- Applying for grants and foundation funds to leverage Township funds for park and trail planning and development.
- Developing a multi-year Township capital budget for park and trail projects.

- Including a mix of private financial resources and strategic alliances with other organizations.
- Budgeting Township funds to offer community special events and recreation programs.
- Monitoring the collection and use of fees-in-lieu of parkland dedication from residential subdivisions and non-residential land developments.
- Modifying the municipal ordinance to streamline the calculation of land dedication and fee-in-lieu and tie the calculation to the fair market value of land.

Recommendation 1.4 – Consider Technology Improvements – As park facilities are updated, technological improvements such as solar powered park benches with cell phone charging stations and solar powered compacting trash cans should be considered.

Recommendation 1.5 – Divest Small Park Parcels with Limited Recreation Potential or Ecological Benefit – The Township should consider selling Cubbler Court Open Space and Westfield Drive Open Space and reinvest the proceeds into the larger municipal parks. If these small parcels are not sold to a contiguous landowner or other interested party, the tracts should be planted as native meadows to minimize ongoing maintenance.

Forgedale Park is a small park parcel, however its location along the West Branch Perkiomen Creek provides protection to the creek and riparian buffer area. There is no public access to the park and the site size and configuration do not allow for safe access to be developed. Washington Township should not promote Forgedale Park as a public park but should continue to maintain it as a protected open space.

Recommendation 1.6 – Develop Trails in Parks to Provide Opportunities for Recreation and Fitness and Wellness – Washington Township parks have been developed with minimal trails and walkways. Walking on trails and pathways was the most popular experience residents are seeking when visiting parks, based on the online survey findings. Eight-foot-wide multi-use trails should be developed to encircle Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park, with minor loop trails for diversity in walking patterns. Washington Township Park includes three parcels which, when connected with trails and boardwalk, will extend from north of Niantic Road to the Washington Elementary School and explore the wetland area west of the municipal sewage treatment plant as illustrated on the Washington Township Park Trail Concept Plan

Recommendation 1.7 – Develop Safe Crossings of Roadways Separating Park Parcels – Washington Township Park is separated into two areas by Niantic Road and Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands parcels are separated by Hoffmansville Road. Washington Township Park should be improved with a safe crossing close to the Victoria Drive intersection as illustrated on the Washington Township Park Trail Concept Plan. This crossing will connect residential areas to Washington Elementary School. Safe sight distance for a pedestrian crossing should be verified in this location and safety improvements to include signs and a crosswalk should be installed. When the Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands are master planned, a safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing off Hoffmansville Road with safety measures should be defined.

Recommendation 1.8 – Develop a Trail Master Plan for Washington Township – The Washington Township Greenways and Trails Map illustrate two trails routes that connect the municipal parks. These trail routes should be studied in detail through a Trail Master Plan. One route connects Washington Township Park to Washington Elementary School and Barto Community Park and the other trail connects Washington Township Park to the Reserve at Bally Spring/Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands. The Trail Master Plan should explore how to make safe road crossings, the potential of acquiring easements from willing private landowners, route

and alternative route alignments, operation and maintenance implications, and other pertinent factors.

Recommendation 1.9 – Master Plan Existing and Future Parks – Washington Township Park, Barto Community Park, and the future park comprised of the Reserve at Bally Springs Property, Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands, and Hoffman Estates Open Space should be master planned to maximize the recreation potential and protect the headwaters of Middle Creek and other significant natural resources. While Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park Trail Concept Plans show conceptual layout for trails, the plans do not incorporate other improvements to enhance the parks and provide recreation and support features residents’ desire. A full master planning process should be undertaken to reimagine the parks. The Barto Community Park Master Plan should include the additional land to be dedicated to the Township as a result of the Barto Road realignment.

Park master plans should be developed following the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PADCNR) Master Site Development Plan planning process. This includes working with a landscape architect or other design professional with experience planning public parks and obtaining public input via multiple engagement strategies. Park master plans should create parks that are inviting and project a ‘sense of place,’ introduce facilities desired by residents, develop gathering areas for socializing, support recreation programs, provide convenience facilities such as benches along trails, and protect environmental features. The park master plans should incorporate recreation facilities that residents want. Based on the online survey residents want park sites that provide opportunities for spending time outdoors, walking on trails, and hiking with family and friends. The survey results ranked the following facilities as Very Important or Somewhat Important: walking paths/trails, shade/tree areas, nature trails, restrooms, sitting areas, fully accessible playground, and youth playground/tot lot. Other resident input indicated that pickleball courts and improved playgrounds are desired. Residents also want the parks to be dog-friendly, where dogs are allowed on-leash. The level of interest in additional sports fields is very low.

Recommendation 1.10 – Develop Playgrounds to be Safe, Dynamic Spaces – Playgrounds should be developed to be safe, dynamic spaces that excite children to be active and play while comfortably accommodating parents and caregivers. A safe playground complies with the guidelines of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Guidelines for Public Playground Safety which requires playgrounds to be age segregated into a tot area for children 2-5 years old and a separate youth area for children 5-12 years old. Plazas should be developed with gathering areas to separate the tot and youth areas. Playgrounds must be located within an area of safety surfacing that is specifically designed to meet safety criteria for falls and located to encompass the safety zones for each piece of play equipment. Playgrounds should be developed as a space, not just play equipment placed in mulch. Benches for caregivers and a pavilion for a story-telling area, craft and recreation program area, birthday parties, and traditional picnics should be included. Shade should be included by incorporating shade sails, shade trees, or a pavilion. Consideration should also be given to including areas for pavement games.

Recommendation 1.11 – Acquire Land for the Conservation of Open Space and Trail Development – Washington Township should continue to acquire open space land for conservation of natural resources and the development of trails and trail linkages. Protecting the West Branch Perkiomen Creek and Swamp Creek through acquisition and easements for riparian buffer protection and expansion and floodplain restoration will enhance water quality and provide areas for floodwaters. The Township should explore the adoption of an Official Map to reserve land for public purposes such as parkland, greenways, easements, and trails.

Recommendation 1.12 – Enhance Parks by Naturalizing Non-Programmed Areas – Greening parks through the introduction of meadows, pollinator and rain gardens, wetland and riparian buffer plantings, reforestation areas, and other strategies will provide ecological benefits. Trees should be

planted throughout the parks and areas of managed lawn and landscaping should be minimized. Natural areas that are strategically incorporated can reduce maintenance costs, enhance the setting for park visitors, and allow maintenance staff to re-focus the time spent on grass mowing to other park maintenance tasks. Natural areas and green infrastructure in public settings provide resiliency to address, in part, the effects of climate change and can serve as demonstration areas to share greening ideas with landowners. The Township should install interpretative signs that introduce greening concepts and explain the benefits of native meadows, reforestation, rain gardens, and other greening strategies.

Recommendation 1.13 – Educate Residential Property Owners on Green Practices – The Township Environmental Advisory Council and Recreation Advisory Committee should work together to sponsor public programs and workshops on green practices that residents can implement at home to help the environment. A series of environmental education programs for all ages can be sponsored as well.

Goal 2 – Recreation for All – We will ensure the right of all people to play, learn, and explore outdoors by removing barriers to participation and fostering an inclusive culture.

Recommendation 2.1 – Adopt a Written Inclusion Statement – Promoting and valuing the involvement of all persons in recreation program offerings and at park areas and recreation facilities is important. An inclusion statement such as this should be adopted and placed on the Township website: *Washington Township values diversity as a community asset and is committed to creating inclusive parks and recreation spaces, places, and programs that promote the dignity and respect of all users of its services and facilities regardless of age, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, economic background, country of origin, or religious practices.*

Recommendation 2.2 – Make Accessibility Improvements to Meet the Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – A prioritized schedule for addressing the necessary accessibility improvements in each park should be developed. Facility improvements such as accessible routes to facilities, playgrounds with accessible play features and safety surfacing, accessible picnic tables, and athletic courts and fields with accessible accommodations for players and spectators will allow physically disabled visitors to enjoy the outdoors and are important amenities for older people.

Recommendation 2.3 – Provide Accessibility Information – Providing information on park facility accessibility on the Township website and through social media would prepare park visitors who need accommodations for what they will or will not be able to access when they arrive at the park.

Goal 3 – Health and Wellness – We promote outdoor physical and social activity by providing safe and welcoming recreation places, spaces, and programs.

Recommendation 3.1 – Sponsor Community Recreation Programs and Special Events at the Township Parks – Township-sponsored community special events and recreation programs should be planned and offered by the Recreation Advisory Committee at each park. To accomplish this, additional volunteers and partnerships with local businesses, libraries, churches, and community groups will be needed. Potential events to consider include food truck and music festival; weekly summer concert series; pumpkin hunt, carving, and costume contest; candy cane hunt; fall family hayride and bonfire night; family bingo; dog Easter egg hunt; all-ages yoga night; bark in the park day; and weekly farmers market and produce swaps. Business sponsorships should be pursued for community activities.

Recommendation 3.2 – Revise the Park Rules and Regulations – To coincide with how the public wants to use the parks, the current park rules and regulations should be reevaluated to allow for activities such as on-leash dog walking and bike riding. Doing so will bring more residents into the parks to enjoy them. Other rules and regulations updates can be undertaken as well.

Goal 4 – Relationship and Capacity Building – We will collaborate with neighboring municipalities, partners, and residents to provide exceptional parks and recreation opportunities for our community.

Recommendation 4.1 – Re-Form the Township Recreation Advisory Committee as a Parks and Recreation Board – The Township should adopt an ordinance to form a Parks and Recreation Board, as permitted by the Second-Class Township Code, which details the board’s powers, duties, responsibilities, and organization. The current Washington Township Recreation Advisory Committee members should be appointed to the Parks and Recreation Board and new members should be added to fill vacant positions. To focus its efforts, the Parks and Recreation Board should define its roles, responsibilities, and expectations for service in writing; adopt a code of ethics and pledge of commitment; and adopt board officer position descriptions and board by-laws. This group will be the chief advocate for parks and recreation and will be the leading force behind the implementation of this Plan. Its major activities will include:

- Coordinating the promotion of the recreation opportunities available to residents including improvement of Township website parks and recreation information.
- Planning and conducting recreation programs and family special events at Township parks and recruiting volunteers to help.
- Drafting an annual budget for parks and recreation for Township approval.
- Monitoring community parks and recreation needs.
- Updating, as needed, use and maintenance agreements between the Township and the youth sports organizations that utilize Township park facilities, including fees charged.
- Reviewing subdivision and land development proposals.
- Monitoring the collection and use of fees-in-lieu of open space dedication for parks and recreation.
- Promoting cooperative efforts with neighboring municipalities to improve and expand community recreation program opportunities available to Township residents.
- Keeping abreast of neighboring municipalities, school district, and other organization plans for parks and recreation to plan improvements to the Township parks and recreation system within the context of the regional community and to avoid unnecessary duplication of recreation facilities.
- Working to implement this Plan’s recommendations.

Recommendation 4.2 – Explore Public-Private Partnerships to Develop a Trail to Link Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park and Expand Passive Parks and Recreation Opportunities – The potential trail will require the willing cooperation of the Boyertown Area School District, National Centre for Padre Pio, and Longacre Dairy Bar, and coordination with PennDOT. The National Centre for Padre Pio is a 54-acre property across the street from Barto Community Park that currently allows public access. Longacre Dairy Bar owns 10 acres of land adjacent to the West Branch Perkiomen Creek and the Padre Pio property. The trail would begin at Washington Township Park and extend along the south side of Niantic Road across parkland and Washington Elementary School property to the intersection with PA Route 100. A traffic signal provides safe crossing of PA Route 100. The trail should extend to the north a short distance to Longacre Dairy Bar and south, off-road, and parallel to PA Route 100. It should then cross the West Branch Perkiomen Creek on the existing bridge modified with safety accommodations on a new bridge west of the roadway. The trail should continue south along PA Route 100 to Barto Road or turn west onto lands of the National Centre for Padre Pio to connect to Barto Community Park. Opportunities also exist for the Township to work with Padre Pio to install walking and biking paths around the property. The Pennsylvania Recreational Use of Land and Water Act offers liability protection to private landowners that allow public access (free of charge) to their lands on paved and unpaved trails as well as multiple other recreational activities.

Recommendation 4.3 – Explore Recreation Programming Funded Regionally – None of the municipalities that make up the Boyertown Area School District have a full-time parks and recreation department. Funding recreation programming regionally should be explored. With the help of the other School District municipalities, and the School District itself, a large number and variety of programs could be offered, and all age groups could be served. The Township should approach the other municipalities to find out their interest in working together to form a regional recreation commission. A DCNR Peer-to-Peer technical assistance grant (\$18,000 with a \$1,800 local match) is available to conduct a study to explore regional recreation programming.

Recommendation 4.4 – Explore Shared Use of the Washington Township Elementary School Property as a School-Community Park – A shared use agreement is a formal agreement between two separate government entities setting forth the terms and conditions for the shared use of public property. Each party under a shared use agreement may help to fund the development, operation, and maintenance of the facilities that will be shared. The elementary school property has recreational facilities that are available for public use and is adjacent to Washington Township Park. A shared use agreement will allow the Township to apply for grant funding that is not available to the School District for potential improvements to School District property for public recreation.

Recommendation 4.5 – Begin Joint Meetings Between the Township Recreation Advisory Committee, Bally Area Recreational Development Society, and Bechtelsville Recreation Association – Holding informal roundtable meetings a few times a year with these groups is an excellent way to begin collaborating with the neighboring boroughs on parks and recreation projects. These discussions will lead to future opportunities to best serve Township residents with parks and recreation services close to home without duplication.

Recommendation 4.6 – Continue Membership in the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC) – Washington Township joined PARRC in 2023 and is one of eight member municipalities in three counties plus representatives from the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation. PARRC seeks grants and private funding in support of parks and recreation projects throughout the region through the PARRC Foundation, a 501c3 organization formed to support PARRC'S mission.

Goal 5 – Awareness – We will do everything possible to make our parks, natural areas, and trails better used tomorrow than they are today.

Recommendation 5.1 – Expand Promotion of Township Park Areas, Recreation Facilities, and Recreation Opportunities Available to Residents – To encourage resident use and participation, expanded promotion of park areas and the recreation program opportunities currently available to them, whether the programs are sponsored by the library, school district, youth sports group, or other groups, is needed. To begin to better promote the Township parks and recreation system, the following actions should be implemented:

- Adopt the mission statement and vision statement presented in this Plan.
- Develop a parks and recreation system logo.
- Design and install new unified park entrance signs and standard park rules and regulations signs utilizing the logo.
- Develop a Township Facebook page to promote the recreation opportunities available to residents.
- Include information on parks and recreation in the Township newsletter.

Recommendation 5.2 – Improve the Township Website Parks and Recreation Page – Improvements to the Township website should include:

- Each of the community parks is shown as one park, not separate parcels.
- Elimination of references to the small open space parcels which are not currently used for passive recreation.
- Elimination of references to Forgedale Park as a park. There is no public access to the park and the site size and configuration do not allow for safe access to be developed. The parcel should be referred to as Forgedale Open Space.
- Photos of the recreation facilities available at each park, including photos of the community room and picnic pavilions.
- Consolidation of the community room rental information and addition of the Washington Township Park picnic pavilion to the pavilion rental information.
- Accessibility information for each of the parks.
- Information on how to reserve fields at the parks.
- Website links to community recreation providers and regional outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Meeting minutes for the Recreation Advisory Committee, contact information, meeting dates, etc.



CHAPTER 10:
Action Plan

Action Plan

The Action Plan sets forth the time frame for the actions that Washington Township will undertake over the short, medium, and long term through 2034 to address the recommendations of this Plan. The Action Plan is organized around the Plan’s five goals.

Priority Recommendations

The Comprehensive Recreation, Parks & Open Space Plan Study Committee identified five recommendations for priority action. These initial actions will set the stage for future success and provide momentum for the other initiatives recommended in this Plan.

4.1 Re-form the Township Recreation Advisory Committee as a Parks and Recreation Board – Form a Washington Township Parks and Recreation Board by ordinance and appoint the current Recreation Advisory Committee members as new board members.

1.8 Master Plan Existing and Future Parks – Park master plans should be developed for Barto Community Park, Washington Township Park, Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands, and new neighborhood and community parks. The Barto Community Park Master Plan should be prioritized to determine how best to incorporate the new acreage associated with the Barto Road and Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands residential development land swaps.

3.1 Sponsor Community Recreation Programs and Special Events at the Township Parks – The Washington Township Recreation Advisory Committee (Parks and Recreation Board) should determine the special events that could be held in the community and identify volunteers and partners needed to organize, promote, and undertake special events.

2.2 Make Accessibility Improvements to Meet the Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Develop a comprehensive list of accessibility (ADA) improvements needed within each parks site. Prioritize ADA improvements to meet ADA compliance and undertake ADA improvements that can be completed by municipal work forces. Incorporate the costs of larger more extensive ADA improvements into the municipal park improvement budget and undertake based on a prioritized schedule.

1.7 Develop Safe Crossings of Roadways Separating Park Parcels – Develop safe road crossing of Niantic Road at Washington Township Park with installation of a crosswalk, approach signs, and other safety measures.

Washington Township Comprehensive Recreation, Parks & Open Space Plan – Action Plan

Goal 1 – Renewal, Investment, and Stewardship

Action Item Symbol: √ Start Project → Continue Implementation	Cost / Source / Responsibilities	2024-2026	2027-2029	2030-2034+
1.1 Develop a Written Maintenance Plan				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalize written descriptions of annual routine work and preventative maintenance for each park site. 	Washington Township	√	→	→

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create forms for documentation of annual spring and routine inspections that identify maintenance needs. 		√	→	→
1.2 Identify the Feasibility of Outsourcing Specific Park Maintenance Tasks				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generate feasibility studies to identify maintenance tasks that could be outsourced to outside contractors that would improve efficiency, lower cost, and require specialized tools and equipment. 	Washington Township/ Staff time	√	→	→
1.3 Continue to Invest Funds to Acquire, Develop, Maintain, and Program Park, Trail, and Open Space Areas				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the municipal park maintenance budget as properties are acquired and open for public use. ▪ Prepare grant and foundation applications to fund park and trail development. ▪ Develop a multi-year capital budget for park and trail development. ▪ Budget funds for special events and recreation programs. ▪ Pursue collaborative opportunities with private financial resources and other organizations. ▪ Monitor the collection of fees-in-lieu of for parkland dedication and consider fee-in-lieu for non-residential land development. 	Washington Township/Staff time	√	→	→
1.4 Consider Technology Improvements				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider adding sustainable technology improvements like solar powered cell phone changing stations as part of park development projects. 	\$TBD/Washington Township	√	→	→
1.5 Divest Small Park Parcels with Limited Recreation Potential or Ecological Benefit				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore divesting of Cubbler Court Open Space, Westfield Drive Open Space, and Phase Q-1 Lot B and reinvest proceeds into municipal parks. 	Washington Township/Staff time	√		
1.6 Develop Trails in Parks to Provide Opportunities for Recreation, Fitness, and Wellness				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop trails in Washington Township Park based on the Trail Concept Plan. ▪ Develop trails (and pickleball court) in Barto Community Park based on the Trail Concept Plan. ▪ Develop trails in Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands based on the recommendations of the park master plan. 	\$1,010,100/Washington Township/DCNR \$466,500/Washington Township/DCNR \$TBD/Washington Township/DCNR	√	√	√
1.7 Develop Safe Crossings of Roadways Separating Park Parcels				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Install improvements to enhance the safe crossing of Niantic Road at Washington Township Park. ▪ Install improvements to enhance the safe crossing of Hoffmansville Road at Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands. 	\$TBD/Washington Township	√		√
1.8 Develop a Trail Master Plan for Washington Township				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Washington Township Trail Master Plan. 	\$85,000/Washington Township/DCNR			√
1.9 Master Plan Existing and Future Parks				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Master Plan Barto Community Park ▪ Master Plan Washington Township Park ▪ Master Plan Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands 	\$60,000/Washington Township/DCNR \$60,000/Washington Township/DCNR \$85,000/Washington Township/DCNR	√	√	√
1.10 Develop Playgrounds to be Safe, Dynamic Spaces				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Redesign and enhance existing playgrounds to be age-segregated and provide gathering areas for caregivers. Complete as part of master plans in Recommendation 1.9 	\$TBD/Washington Township/DCNR	√	√	
1.11 Acquire Land for the Conservation of Open Space and Trail Development				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acquire land for the conservation of natural resources and development of trails and trail linkages. 	\$TBD/Washington Township/ Staff time	√	→	→
1.12 Enhance Parks by Naturalizing Non-Programmed Areas				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce greening strategies into municipal parks and open spaces for environmental and maintenance 	\$TBD/Washington Township/DCNR	√	→	→

benefits. Strategies determined as part of master plans in Recommendation 1.9				
1.13 Educate Residential Property Owners on Green Practices				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working together the Township Environmental Advisory Council and Recreation Advisory Committee should sponsor public programs providing “green practices” education. 	Washington Township	√	→	

Goal 2 – Recreation for All				
Action Item	Cost / Source / Responsibilities	2024-2026	2027-2029	2030-2034+
Symbol: √ Start Project → Continue Implementation				
2.1 Adopt a Written Inclusion Statement				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the involvement of all people in recreation programs, park areas, and recreation facilities and foster an inclusive culture. Celebrate the Township’s diverse population by adopting and posting a written inclusion statement. 	Washington Township	√		
2.2 Make Accessibility Improvements to Meet the Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a prioritized schedule of action steps to address accessibility improvements in each park. Address accessibility improvements. 	\$TBD/Washington Township	√	→	→
2.3 Provide Accessibility Information				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information about accessibility accommodations in municipal parks on the Township websites and social media. 	Washington Township/Staff time	√	→	→

Goal 3 – Health and Wellness				
Action Item	Cost / Source / Responsibilities	2024-2026	2027-2029	2030-2034+
Symbol: √ Start Project → Continue Implementation				
3.1 Sponsor Community Recreation Programs and Special Events at the Township Parks				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Township-sponsored special events; organized and planned by the Recreation Advisory Committee utilizing aid from volunteers, partnerships, and sponsorships. 	Recreation Advisory Committee	√	→	→
3.2 Revise the Park Rules and Regulations				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-evaluate and update park rules and regulations. Consider allowing on-leash dog walking and bike riding in the parks. 	Washington Township	√		

Goal 4 – Relationship and Capacity Building				
Action Item	Cost / Source / Responsibilities	2024-2026	2027-2029	2030-2034+
Symbol: √ Start Project → Continue Implementation				
4.1 Re-form the Township Recreation Advisory Committee as a Parks and Recreation Board				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt an ordinance that outlines the powers, duties, responsibilities, and organization of a Parks and Recreation Board. 	Washington Township/Staff time	√		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint the Recreation Advisory Committee members to the Parks and Recreation Board. 	Washington Township	√		
4.2 Explore Public-Private Partnerships to Develop a Trail to Link Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park and Expand Passive Parks and Recreation Opportunities				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the findings of the Washington Township Trail Feasibility Study, undertake outreach with willing landowners identified along the potential trail route. 	Washington Township/Staff time			√
4.3 Explore Recreation Programming Funded Regionally				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to the municipalities of the Boyertown Area School District to ascertain the interest in 	Washington Township/Staff time	√		

working together to form a regional recreation commission.

- Submit a Peer-to-Peer grant to PA DCNR for technical assistance to conduct a study to explore regional recreation programming. Washington Township and Boyertown Area School District municipalities/Staff time ✓

4.4 Explore Shared Use of the Washington Township Elementary School Property as a School – Community Park

Reach out to the Boyertown Area School District to explore the potential of shared community use of the Washington Township Elementary School site for public recreation.	Washington Township/Staff time		✓	
Develop a shared use agreement for the property as a School-Community Park.	Washington Township and Boyertown Area School District/Staff time		✓	

4.5 Begin Joint Meetings Between the Township Recreation Advisory Committee, Bally Area Recreational Development Society, and Bechtelsville Recreation Association

- Meet with area recreation groups several times per year to discuss collaboration opportunities and individual recreation initiatives to avoid duplication. Washington Twp. Recreation Advisory Committee ✓ → →

4.6 Continue Membership in the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC)

Continue to participate in the PARRC efforts and work with PARRC to pursue grants identified in this Plan	Washington Township/Staff time	✓	→	→
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Goal 5 – Awareness

Action Item	Cost / Source / Responsibilities	2024-2026	2027-2029	2030-2034+
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Symbol: ✓ Start Project → Continue Implementation

5.1 Expand Promotion of Township Park Areas, Recreation Facilities, and Recreation Opportunities Available to Residents

- Adopt the mission statement, vision statement, tagline, and core values presented in this Plan and promote them on the Township website, newsletter, and through social media. Washington Township/Staff time ✓
- Develop a Parks and Recreation logo and utilize it on all materials. \$TBD/Washington Township/Staff time ✓
- Develop design standards for park entrance signs and rules and regulations signage that has the Parks and Recreation logo. \$TBD/Washington Township/Staff time ✓
- Rename Washington Township Park Annex and Washington Township Treatment Plant to Washington Township Park. Washington Township ✓
- Rename Barto Community Park and Barto Community Park Athletic Field to Barto Community Park. Washington Township ✓
- Combine Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands Properties and Hoffman Estates Open Space as one new park. Washington Township ✓ → →
- Promote recreation opportunities and information in the Township newsletter. Washington Township/Staff time ✓ → →

5.2 Improve the Township Website Parks and Recreation Page

Show each community park as one cohesive park.	Washington Township	✓		
Eliminate references to small open space parcels.	Washington Township	✓		
Eliminate reference to Forgedale Park.	Washington Township	✓		
Illustrate recreation opportunities and facilities at each park with photos.	Washington Township	✓	→	→
Consolidate rental information for the community room and pavilions.	Washington Township	✓		
Provide accessibility information for each park.	Washington Township	✓		
Provide field reservation information.	Washington Township	✓	→	→
List website links to recreation providers in the region.	Washington Township	✓	→	→
Upload Recreation Advisory Committee meeting minutes and list contact information and meeting dates.	Washington Township/Staff time	✓	→	→



APPENDIX A:

Online Opinion Survey Summary

Online Opinion Survey Summary



Landscape Architects

19 South Newberry Street
York, Pennsylvania 17401
(717) 812-9959 phone
www.ysmla.com

Online Recreation Opinion Summary of Findings

To: Washington Township
Comprehensive Recreation, Parks,
and Open Space Plan - Study
Committee

Copy:

From: Ann Yost, YSM

Date: September 28, 2023

Re: Online Opinion Survey of Findings

Survey Data and Demographics:

- Survey Online Posting Period: January 31, 2023 to September 20, 2023 – 232 days.
- Responses: 185 people logged onto the on-line survey. Estimated completion rate: 75%
- Survey Composition: 17 questions, including 4 that asked for demographic information, 3 open-end question, and the opportunity to add an email address to get updates about future public participation opportunities.
- Respondent Residence Breakdown: 90.9% reside in Washington Township, 3.0% reside elsewhere.
- Respondent gender: 34.6% male, 63.0% female, 2.4% prefer not to answer
- Respondent Age Group Breakdown:
 - 18-24 years old: 3.0%
 - 25-39 years old: 24.2%
 - 40-54 years old: 29.7%
 - 55-64 years old: 18.8%
 - 65-74 years old: 18.8%
 - 75 years old and older: 5.5%
- Household Demographic Breakdown:
 - Preschool Children (under 4 years old): 21.5%
 - Young children (ages 5-9): 27.0%

- Older child (10-17 years old): 32.5%
- Adults: 52.8%
- Older adults: 44.8%
- Single head of household: 6.8%
- People with a disability: 9.8%
- Dogs: 49.7%

Survey Summary:

■ **The most popular experiences respondents look for when visiting parks and recreation areas are:**

- **Walking on trails/pathways (83.1%)**
- **Enjoying time with friends/family (53.6%)**
- **Spending time outdoors (52.5%)**
- **Hiking (51.4%)**

The lowest response rates were for:

- Volunteering (3.8%)
- Organized adult sports activities (10.9%)
- Organized youth sports activities (18.0%)
- Self-directed athletic court/field use (20.2%)

Spending time outside, walking on trails and hiking with friends and family are the primary experience respondents indicate they want to visit parks.

The *Other* category received 29 comments. Pickleball was mentioned 6 times.

■ **Respondents indicate that the following initiative should be the High Priority (HP) for parks and recreation in Washington Township over the next ten years. Combined High Priority and Medium Priority (HP+MP).**

- **Maintain existing park areas and recreation facilities (HP 71.0%) (HP+MP 98.3%)**
- **Conserve open space and natural resources (HP 67.8%) (HP+MP 95.6%)**
- **Develop walking/biking connections between schools/parks/neighborhoods (HP 65.6%) (HP+MP 93.9%)**
- **Develop longer distance walking/biking trails (HP 63.9%) (HP+MP 88.9%)**

Investing in the existing park facilities and improving what exists is the priority for park investment; followed by developing trails. Conserving open space is also a priority.

The highest respondent percentages for the Low Priority category include:

- Build athletic fields (LP 49.1%)
- Expand nature education opportunities (LP 30.3%)

Adding additional athletic fields has low support.

The *Other* category received 28 comments. Developing a dog park was mentioned 8 times.

- **When asked what was one thing that should be done to improve parks and recreation in the Dover area, 142 responses were provided.**
 - 51 responses mentioned trails, safe walking and biking.
 - 14 respondents mentioned allow access for dogs/dog park.
 - 14 respondents mentioned improvement to playground/playground equipment.
 - 5 respondents mentioned pickleball.
- **The following questions were asked about benefits of local parks and recreation and can be correlated to the same questions asked on a NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) national survey conducted in 2016 by Penn State University.**

Household benefit for local parks and recreation opportunities			
	A great deal	Somewhat	Not at all
Washington Township	41%	50%	9%
NRPA	41%	40%	19%
Washington Township benefit from local parks and recreation opportunities			
	A great deal	Somewhat	Not at all
Washington Township	56%	42%	2%
NRPA	63%	29%	8%

- **When asked how often members of your household visit each park, respondents answered:**
 - **Seasonally, was the highest responses for Washington Township Park (35.1%) and Bally Community Park (38.6%).**
 - **Never, was the highest response for Barto Community Park (32.8%) and Community Park (Bechtelsville Borough) (55.8%).**
 - **Not aware of this park/facility, was the highest responses for PA State Game Lands – Bally Rocks (44.2%).**

- **When asked how important it is to expand or add recreation facilities the following were considered Very important (VI) or Very Important + Somewhat Important (VI+SI):**
 - **Walking paths/trail (VI 81.2%) (VI+SI 97.7%)**
 - **Restrooms (VI 73.1%) (VI+SI 95.3%)**
 - **Nature trails (VI 69.8%) (VI+SI 96.5%)**
 - **Shade/tree areas (VI 69.4%) (VI+SI 96.5%)**
 - **Sitting areas (VI 61.8%) (VI+SI 93.5%)**
 - **Bicycle trails (VI 59.4%) (VI+SI 93.9%)**
 - **Fully accessible (all abilities) playground (VI 58.8%) (VI+SI 89.7%)**
 - **Youth Playground/Tot Lot (VI 55.5%) (VI+SI 87.2%)**

The responses correspond to the experiences that visitors are looking for in parks. To enjoy time outside in nature, walking and relaxing. Playgrounds enhancements are more important than other facility improvements other than trails.

Walking paths/trails remain high when VI+SI considered, however restrooms fall to 4th highest behind shade/tree areas and nature trails.

The highest response percentage for Not Needed (NN) included:

- **Gaga ball pit (NN 66.9%)**
- **Lacrosse field (NN 62.1%)**
- **Skate park (NN 53.8%)**
- **Ninja challenge course (NN 53.4%)**

Respondents are not looking for unique recreation facilities.

The *Other* response receive 12 comments.

- **When asked how satisfied respondents were with specific park features, none of the options received a rating of Very Satisfied as the highest ranking. The highest ranking for Satisfied responses were:**

- Availability of picnic pavilions (S 56.0)
- Cleanliness of grounds/environment (S 51.9%)
- Overall maintenance of park areas and recreation facilities (S 51.9%)
- Feeling of safety and security while spending time in parks (S 51.9%)
- Availability of parking (S 51.9%)

The highest ranking for Dissatisfied responses were:

- Availability of trails/walkways (D 51.9%)
- Availability of restrooms (D 41.8%)

74 respondents provided follow-up detail on their dissatisfied responses. Dissatisfaction with the availability of walking/hiking/biking trails/paths was mentioned 28 times.

- **89.7% of respondents stated that they were open to the possibility of cooperation between Washington Township and neighboring municipalities for increased grant opportunities to enhance and expand community recreation facilities and recreation programs in the region.**
- **Respondents provided 42 comments under the Additional Comments section.**
- **62 Respondents provided their email address for park updates and volunteer opportunities.**



APPENDIX B:

Board Member Responsibilities

Board Member Responsibilities

What Does a Recreation and Parks Board Do?

A recreation and parks board watches over and often administers recreation and parks services for municipalities. To be an effective board, it's important for you to know your responsibilities and level of authority. In fact, the success of your board depends on how well you and your fellow board members understand your role and how to accomplish your work. Your elected officials also influence your board's success to a great extent. When your advisory board produces good results and earns the respect of elected officials, they may be willing to give you full authority to carry out your assigned responsibilities.

Board Roles and Responsibilities

Give Advice and Provide Recommendations – A board advises its elected officials on all aspects of municipal recreation and parks services including setting policies and accepting grants, gifts, donations, personal property, or real estate.

Evaluate Services – A board helps insure that quality municipal recreation and parks services are provided by giving feedback to elected officials. Members 1) observe recreation programs and interact with participants, 2) visit park areas and recreation facilities and evaluate how well they are maintained, 3) assess how recreation and parks services are managed to identify accomplishments, problems, and future direction, and 4) report findings to municipal staff and elected officials.

Determine Budget Needs and Monitor Finances – A board helps to determine community needs and establish priorities for spending to ensure that funds are available to provide an adequate system of park areas, recreation facilities, and programs. The extent that a board is involved in budgeting varies with municipalities and available staff. At a minimum, a board should fully understand how recreation and parks services are funded, make recommendations on operating and capital budget needs as well as fees and charges, and monitor the recreation and parks budget throughout the year. Some boards draft the budget and submit it to the governing body for approval. Others supplement the budget through a variety of methods including fund raising events, sponsorships, and donations. In addition to the operating budget, a board should be involved in adopting a longer-term capital budget.

Become Knowledgeable about Funding Sources – A board should know which federal, state, and county grant programs it is eligible to apply for, as well as the foundations that may supply monetary support for recreation and parks.

Develop Relationships – Creating and maintaining cooperative working relationships with citizens, community organizations, businesses, elected officials, school districts, and government agencies is essential for a board to improve services and effectively serve its community.

Serve as Liaisons – A board promotes the need for and importance of recreation and parks services to the general public and municipal governing body. Unless citizens and elected officials are kept informed with progress reports, they can't be expected to support recreation and parks services. When it's necessary, boards serve as a buffer between staff, elected officials, and special interest groups.

Plan for the Future – A board develops goals, inventories the existing park areas, recreation facilities, and programs within the community, determines what the needs are, and sets priorities. This process is

typically done in cooperation with elected officials and through the development of a comprehensive recreation, park, and open space plan. Boards also help to develop individual park master plans and establish short and long-range park development goals. Boards should focus on cooperative planning with neighboring municipalities whenever possible.

Implement Plans – A board is an action-oriented advocacy group that helps to get plans implemented. It should be involved in all major decisions that involve expenditures, particularly those concerning land acquisition and park facility development.

Coordinate Services – A board researches recreation and parks related services provided by other community organizations and coordinates activities with them. This encourages maximum use of facilities and lower cost recreation services.

Recommend Programs – A board sets recreation program goals and helps to make decisions on the types of programs to offer. Board members participate in activities and special events and monitor them to see community reaction to programs and recommend improvements. Some advisory boards are responsible for all aspects of recreation programming including planning, staffing, promoting, and registration.

Help to Hire Staff – If the municipal budget allows for this, a board helps to define the duties and responsibilities, conduct the search and interview process, and recommend the best recreation and parks director candidate for part-time or full-time employment. Helping with the selection of the director who will manage the recreation system is one of the board's most important tasks. The board also advises on the hiring of additional staff like seasonal employees if no director exists.

Promote and Publicize Services – A board promotes parks, recreation facilities, and recreation programs and services to the community by distributing materials, interacting with residents at sponsored events, and sending press releases about activities to the media.

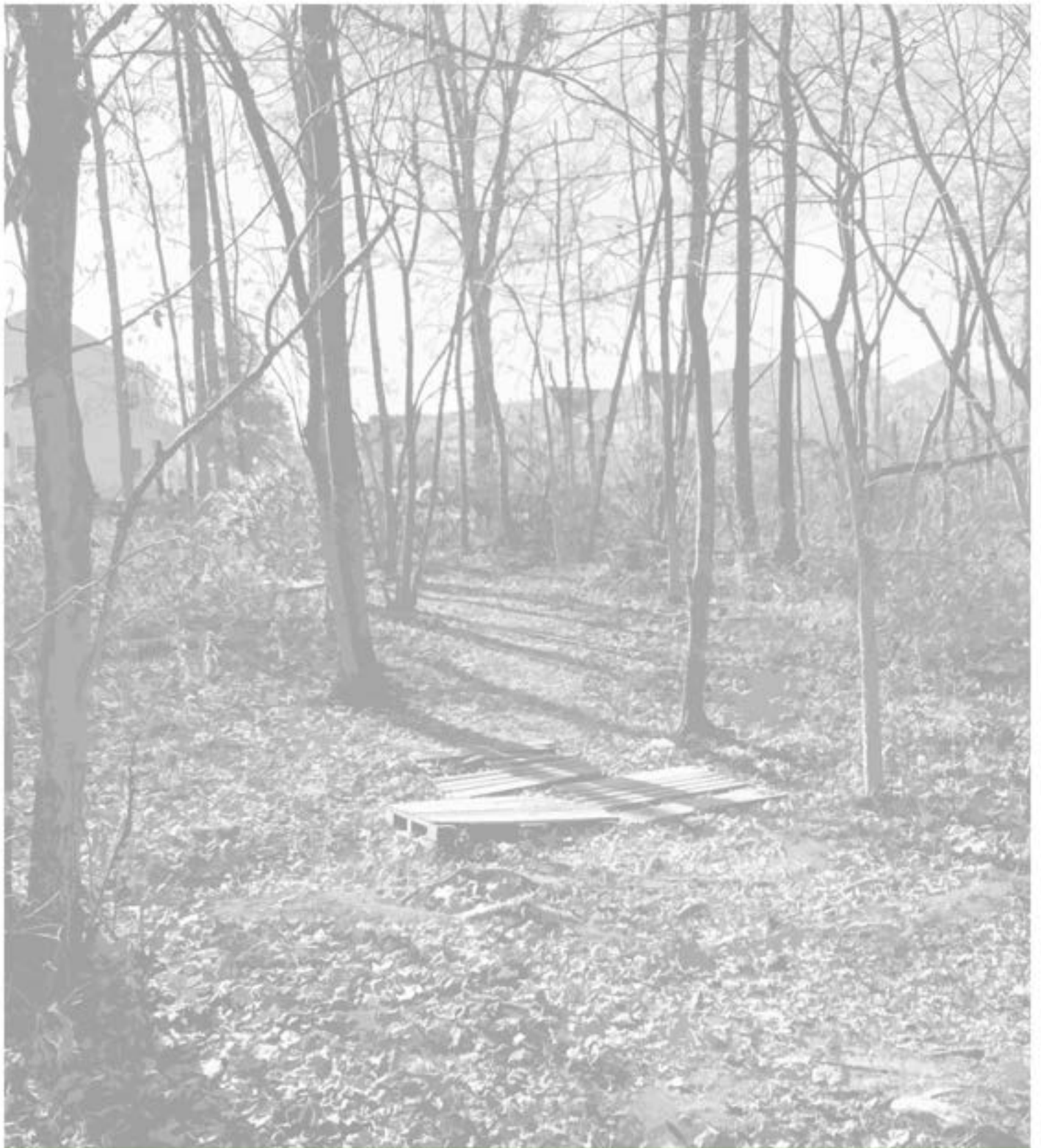
Inform Community and Build Public Support – A board serves as an ambassador and grassroots connection for recreation and parks by supporting programs and services, working to enhance its image, defending policies and programs, keeping elected officials and citizens informed about progress, and enlisting their help and support. It's important for a board to educate local residents about recreation and parks and build public support for services.

Encourage Citizen Participation and Input – A board serves as a community forum for new ideas, programs, policies, and procedures for recreation and parks. To improve recreation and parks operations, boards welcome citizen involvement by seeking suggestions and constructive criticism. A board surveys residents to ask what they think are the most important recreation needs of the municipality. The survey results help set priorities and convince local officials that there's popular support to improve and expand recreation and parks services. A recreation and parks board continually seeks feedback and asks questions like these to find out what citizens and fellow board members think: How well are we meeting your needs? Why do you visit our parks or participate in our programs? When you think of our services what words come to mind? How could we serve you better? What is our key strength? What is our biggest weakness?

Recruit, Orient, and Train Members – It's part of a board's responsibility to recruit and orient new board members. To learn more about the recreation and parks industry and provide effective services, the board should join the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS). This nonprofit organization is Pennsylvania's leader in providing recreation and parks resource materials and educational conferences and workshops. Board members should be encouraged to attend training opportunities and have their expenses covered by the municipality. It's an excellent opportunity to meet board members from other communities.

Stay Knowledgeable About Legislation – A board works for legislation that positively impacts recreation and parks and contacts legislators at the local, state, and national levels for their support.

Understand the Scope of Authority – A board must read and be familiar with its bylaws and abide by them, and understand its authority, structure, and legal responsibilities.



APPENDIX C:

Board Member Pledge of Commitment

Board Member Pledge of Commitment

Board Member Pledge of Commitment

As a member of the _____ recreation and parks board, I promise to:

1. Stay informed on the proper duties, responsibilities, and functions of a board member and carry them out to the best of my ability.
2. Come well prepared to meetings having read and reviewed all materials provided to me.
3. Take part in discussions and be a good listener.
4. Seek out training sessions to learn more about recreation and parks.
5. Be willing to give my time and energy to my position.
6. Respect those with differing views and opinions and work harmoniously with them.
7. Vote according to my convictions and support board decisions.
8. Speak up at a board meeting when I disagree with an action.
9. Work to build support for recreation and parks in my community.
10. Welcome suggestions and constructive criticism from citizens.
11. Represent the interests of the entire community.
12. Visit park areas and recreation programs so that I can see them in operation first-hand.
13. Explain and promote the board's services to the public.
14. Be aware of community needs.
15. Be progressive and positive in my outlook.
16. Devote the time necessary to attend community, board, and committee meetings and work on committee assignments.
17. Attend board retreats and special work sessions.
18. Recruit quality members for the board.
19. Pay attention to the board's finances.
20. Talk often with my elected officials to get their support for board initiatives and understand their priorities and goals.
21. Review, sign, and comply with the board Code of Ethics.
22. Realize when I am no longer contributing and step down from my position.
23. Resign if I can't live up to this pledge.

Board Member Signature _____ Date _____



APPENDIX D:

Park & Recreation Board Duties & Responsibilities

Park & Recreation Board Duties & Responsibilities

Examples of Recreation and Parks Board Duties and Responsibilities

Planning – The Board annually defines specific strategies and objectives to fulfill its mission and goals. The Board also assists in updating the comprehensive recreation, parks and open space plan.

Committees – Members are appointed to chair committees as needed by the Board Chair. They serve until their successors are appointed or their function is completed. Committee chair report at each board meeting summarizing all action by their committee since the last meeting. Membership on all committees is open to any interested individual (does not have to be a Recreation and Parks Board member). The committee chair recruits his or her own committee members.

Promotion and Publicity – Members promote programs and services to the community by distributing materials (flyers, posters, etc.), providing photos, etc.

Liaison – Members are the grassroots connection to the community and interact with citizens, community organizations, agencies, businesses, elected officials, and government agencies.

Finances – The Board ensures that adequate funds are available by actively working to supplement the budget through a variety of methods including conducting fund raising events and soliciting sponsorships and donations. To be effective all Board members must take an active hands-on role in this process.

Activities – Members assist with planning and conducting recreation programs and special events. This may involve a range of responsibilities.

Advice – The Board serves as a forum to discuss new ideas, programs, procedures, land acquisition, and development.

Evaluation – The Board provides feedback concerning how programs met established objectives both from their personal observation and from interaction with participants.

Meeting Attendance – Members are expected to attend and take an active role in all meetings.



APPENDIX E:

Local Government Recreation & Parks

Local Government Recreation & Parks

The Role of Local Government Recreation and Parks

To provide opportunities that guarantee every resident quality recreation experiences.

This is accomplished by 1) developing and maintaining park areas and recreation facilities for citizens to enjoy, and at the same time, protecting and preserving the environment for future generations and 2) offering recreation programs and services that are consistent with citizens' needs and interests and add to their health, sense of wellbeing, and sense of community.

Why is an Advisory Recreation and Parks Board a Good Idea?

A recreation and parks board is a group of conscientious volunteers who work to improve life in your community by providing citizens with close-to-home park areas, recreation facilities, and recreation programs. This board benefits your community by:

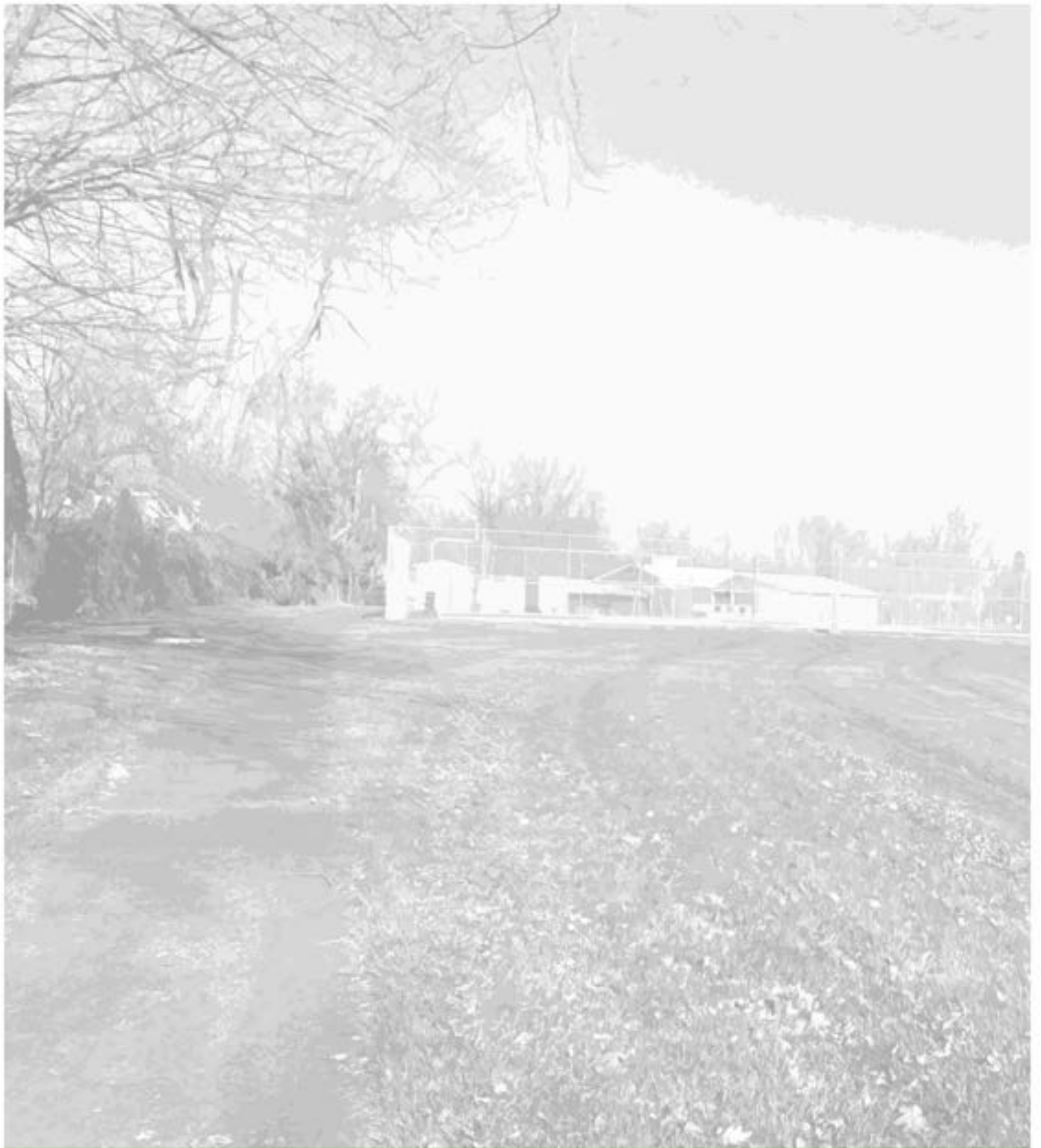
- Being aware of the needs and viewpoints of their neighbors, friends, and fellow citizens. A board helps your municipality become more customer-driven by providing ongoing public input. As the eyes and ears of your community, a board also knows how and when to broach a subject with residents.
- Selling the worth of recreation and parks to elected officials. As citizens themselves, a board carries clout and political influence. Elected officials listen to voters. A board can gain financial support for parks and programs and can effectively negotiate with elected officials.
- Developing the recreation and parks vision of your community, helping your municipality become forward thinking, and encouraging it to be proactive rather than reactive.
- Extending the capability of your local government by providing support for the operation of your recreation and parks system, especially if your community has no staff.
- Enhancing the image, developing community pride in, and enlisting public support for your recreation and parks system. A board helps spread the word about your great parks and programs.
- Monitoring the public expenditures of citizen tax dollars and raising funds to supplement budgeted funds.
- Serving as a buffer between citizens, recreation and parks directors, other municipal staff, and elected officials on controversial issues.
- Providing continuity from year-to-year for the operation of your recreation and parks system.
- Planning and conducting recreation programs and special events and involving more citizens as volunteers.

How are Recreation and Parks Boards Created?

Pennsylvania municipalities must pass an ordinance at a public meeting of the governing body that spells out the board's title, number of members (depending on governmental unit, this is designated by law), powers, duties, responsibilities, and organizational structure. All municipalities in Pennsylvania have the ability to create a recreation and parks board.

Fulfilling the role of a recreation and parks board takes money and time, plus one essential ingredient - people. Recreation and parks is the only municipal service where participation is a matter of choice. Think about it. Other services that local government provides like police protection, roads, water, and sewer are not like that. To develop municipal park areas and recreation programs that residents will use, it's important to know their needs and interests. How do you find out what they are?

Forming a recreation and parks board, a group of people that represents all residents and focuses its attention on local recreation and parks needs, is part of the answer. Recreation and parks board members are citizen advocates who play a key role in determining, implementing, and gaining financial support for recreation and parks services. As an advisory board it may only make recommendations to your governing body. It has no legal powers or ability to implement its recommendations. Members do, however, offer lots of people power. A board allows for the vital involvement and participation of citizens that is necessary to meet your community's needs. Municipal recreation and parks is strengthened as the board gains more spheres of influence and more people who are interested in the success of your services. Even though a recreation and parks board only makes recommendations, it will affect the policy decision making of your elected officials because of its people power.



APPENDIX F:

Sample Recreation & Parks Board Ordinance

Sample Recreation & Parks Board Ordinance

Sample Second Class Township Recreation & Parks Board Ordinance

Every Pennsylvania form of government is governed by municipal codes. The codes permit municipalities to create recreation and parks boards but differ in requirements. For example, the Second Class Township Code permits 5-7 members to be appointed to such boards while the Borough Code permits 5-9 members. Check with your municipal solicitor for applicable code requirements. Generally, the ordinance creating a board should detail its powers, duties, responsibilities, and organization.

ORDINANCE NO. 1

AN ORDINANCE CREATING AN ADVISORY RECREATION BOARD; ESTABLISHING THE NUMBER AND TERM OF THE MEMBERS; AND DESIGNATING DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE BOARD.

The Board of Supervisors of Blue Township, White County, hereby ordains as follows:

Section 1. Establishment of Board. There is hereby created, pursuant to Section 2204 of the Second Class Township Code (act of May 1, 1933, P.L. 103, No. 69; reenacted July 10, 1947, P.L. 1481; reenacted and amended Nov. 9, 1995, P.L. 350, No. 60) a board to be known as the Blue Township Advisory Recreation and Parks Board ("Board"). The Board shall be composed of seven residents of this township.

Section 2. Appointment and Terms of Office. Members of the Board shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Board members shall serve for terms of five years, or until their successors are appointed, except that members first appointed shall be appointed so that the terms of not more than two members expire annually. All persons appointed shall serve their full terms unless they voluntarily resign or are removed by the Board of Supervisors for dereliction or neglect of duty. Vacancies occurring otherwise than by expiration of term shall be for the unexpired term and shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments.

2. Whenever possible, due consideration will be given to representation from various geographic sections within the township, so that all members shall not be from the same general area.

Section 3. Service Without Pay. Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed by the township for all expenses incurred in performing their duties.

Section 4. Advisory Role. The Board is to be advisory and shall coordinate its activities with the elected officials, planning commission, and other such local governmental bodies.

Section 5. Organization of Board. The members of the Board shall elect a chairperson and secretary and select all other necessary officers to serve for a period of one year. The Board may adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of all business within its jurisdiction and exercise powers and functions concerning parks and recreation facilities as may be delegated to it by the Board of Supervisors.

Section 6. Authority of the Board. The Board shall have the following powers:

1. Identify the open space, recreation, park and trail needs of the township.
2. Plan and supervise recreation programs approved by the Board of Supervisors.

3. Recommend plans, programs, and policies regarding the provision of recreation and park services.
4. Advise the Board of Supervisors in the acquisition and development of parklands.
5. Undertake recreation and park tasks as requested by the Board of Supervisors.

Section 7. Reporting. The Board shall keep minutes of its meetings, which it shall submit to the Board of Supervisors. The Board shall submit an annual report to the Board of Supervisors, including an analysis of the adequacy and effectiveness of community recreation areas, facilities and leadership.

Section 8. Annual Budget. The Board, at such times as directed by the Board of Supervisors, shall annually submit for approval to the Board of Supervisors a proposed budget for the ensuing year, setting forth all proposed expenditures, salaries, and programs with sufficient justification. The Board shall not in any manner obligate the Board of Supervisors to make payment of any township funds until the same is appropriated by the Board of Supervisors.

ADOPTED this 1st day of June _____. The ordinance shall become effective five days after adoption.

Board of Supervisors of Blue Township

By _____, Chairperson

_____, Vice Chair

_____, Member



APPENDIX G:

Parks & Recreation Board By-Laws

Parks & Recreation Board By-Laws

BY-LAWS

MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

ARTICLE I. NAME

A. This Board is known as the Muhlenberg Township Parks and Recreation Board hereinafter referred to as "the Board."

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

A. Assist the Muhlenberg Township Commissioners in enhancing community life for all present and future residents and employees of Township businesses by providing adequate opportunities to fulfill their recreation needs and desires.

B. Serve as a liaison between the Director of Parks and Recreation, the Board of Commissioners, and the citizens of the Township.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

A. The Board shall consist of seven voting members appointed by the Board of Commissioners from the Township at large. Each member shall have one vote.

B. The Director of Parks and Recreation shall serve as the chief administrative officer of the Board but shall not be entitled to vote.

C. Members shall serve five (5) year terms which shall conclude on December 31 of their fifth year. Terms of office shall be staggered in such a manner at least one but no more than two expire annually. Vacancies shall be filled by the Board of Commissioners in like manner as original appointments except the term of office is restricted to the unexpired term of the member being replaced.

D. The Board of Commissioners may, on the recommendation of the Board, remove any member for misconduct or neglect of duty.

E. The Board of Commissioners may, on recommendation of the Board, designate a member who has served fifteen (15) or more years and who because of illness, infirmities, advanced age, or other legitimate reason as determined by the Board must relinquish active status as a Member Emeritus. Such a member has no voting rights.

F. Board members shall serve without monetary compensation. Members shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred because of participation in conferences, and workshops in accordance with existing policies of the Township.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

A. The officers of this Board shall be a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and a Secretary. The Officers shall be elected at the organization meeting in January to serve for one year or until a successor shall be elected. Vacancies in office shall be filled immediately by special election.

B. **Chairman.** The Chairman shall preside at all meetings, appoint committees, call special meetings when he/she deems it advisable, represent the Board at public affairs, and perform all such duties as usually handled by a Chairman, except when such duties are properly delegated. The Chairman may succeed himself or herself and shall be elected from among the members who have served more than one (1) year.

C. **Vice Chairman.** The Vice Chairman of the Board in the absence of the Chairman shall perform all the duties of the chairman. In the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman, the Board shall elect a Chairman Pro Tempore who shall perform the duties of Chairman. The Vice Chairman shall be charged with the responsibility to see that all standing and temporary committees function as planned by the Board.

D. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall perform the usual duties pertaining to the office. The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a full and true permanent record of all meetings of the Board including both regular and special meetings. The Secretary shall also attend to all correspondence as may be required by the Board.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

A. Regular meetings shall be held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, January through October and the first Wednesday of December each year unless otherwise agreed upon by the Board.

B. Special meetings may be called by the President or on the written request of at least three (3) members and after a minimum of five (5) days' notice to the Board.

C. All regular meetings are to be held at the Parks & Recreation Office, 555 Raymond Street, Reading, PA 19605.

D. The meetings shall convene at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise agreed.

E. The first regular meeting in January of each year shall be called the organizational meeting. The purpose of this meeting shall be the election and installation of officers, the presentation of the annual report, and other business.

F. Four voting members shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting.

G. The vote of one half plus one member in attendance at a meeting shall constitute a majority for the transaction of all business.

H. All meetings are open to the public and shall be advertised at least once in a newspaper of general circulation.

I. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with procedures prescribed in the by-

laws and decisions reached only after full consideration and debate on the issue in question.

J. The following shall be the order of business of the Parks and Recreation Board but the Rules of Order may be suspended and any matters considered or postponed by action of the board.

1. Call to Order
2. Public Portion
3. Minutes of Prior Meeting(s)
4. Department Reports
5. Old Business
6. New Business
7. Correspondence & Contacts
8. Board Member Comments
9. Next Meeting
10. Adjournment

ARTICLE VI. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD

- A. Define Department objectives and establish plans, policies, and standards required to meet these objectives.
- B. Establish and periodically update a comprehensive recreation and park plan.
- C. Provide an adequate system of recreation areas/facilities and programs/services.
- D. Promote and explain Department programs and services to the community and explain the needs and desires of the community to the Township Commissioners.
- E. Serve as a forum for the introduction of new ideas, programs, policies, and procedures.
- F. Advise the Board of Commissioners of the acceptance of any open space, grant, gift, or donation for the recreation and park program.
- G. Assist the Director prepare an annual operating and capital budget proposal for the Board of Commissioners.
- H. Establish fee and charges for Department programs and services.
- I. Assist the board of Commissioners select the Director of Parks & Recreation and/or additional staff and help define their duties and responsibilities.
- J. Advise the Director concerning all matters of Department operations and administration.
- K. Evaluate the services of the Department in relation to established objectives.
- L. Aid in coordinating the services and programs of other agencies, both public and private, providing recreation in the community.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

A. Standing Committees.

There shall be one (1) Standing Committee, the League Executive Committee.

1. The Committee shall review and rule on all protests submitted by teams participating in Department league programs. These decisions are final.
2. The Committee shall review any incident of player/team misconduct brought before it by the Director of Parks and Recreation for determination of appropriate disciplinary action. These decisions may be appealed to the Parks and Recreation board by either the Director of Parks and Recreation or the individual(s) affected.
3. The Committee shall review and recommend any rule changes to the Board for all league programs.

B. Special Committees

Special Committees may also be appointed from time to time as the Board Chairman deems necessary to address specific subject.

C. Appointment and Personnel of Committees.

All Committees shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board at the annual meeting or as soon thereafter as possible, and serve until their successors are appointed or their function is completed. The Chairman and Director of Parks and Recreation shall serve ex officio on all committees.

The League Executive Committee shall consist of two (2) members of the Board, the Director of Parks and Recreation, and two (2) player representatives. The director shall vote only in the event of a tie.

D. Committee Reports.

All action by a Committee shall be reported by the Committee Chairman to the board at its next meeting.

E. Handicapped Grievance Committee Representative.

One member shall be appointed annually to serve on this Committee to investigate and resolve any grievance filed regarding the provision of Township services to handicapped individuals. Membership on this Committee is the Director or Engineering, Committee Chairman, and one member each from the Health and Parks & Recreation Board.

ARTICLE VIII. CONFORMANCE WITH LAWS, ORDINANCES, RULES, AND REGULATIONS

A. The Board shall at all times comply with all laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations as may be adopted from time to time governing public park and recreation.

ARTICLE IX. NON-DISCRIMINATION

A. The Board shall not discriminate in any manner against any person by reason of face, color, national origin, religious creed, ancestry, age, sex, handicap, or political affiliation.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

A. These by-laws may be amended by the membership of the board at a meeting at which there is a quorum, held after reasonable notice to the members of the board and upon concurrence of the Muhlenberg Township Board of Commissioners.

APPROVED BY:

Date



APPENDIX H:

Capital Improvement Program

Capital Improvement Program

The recommendations of this Plan will require Washington Township to make both capital and operating investment. Capital costs are influenced by a variety of factors. The size of the construction project, the type of construction, costs of materials, and many other factors will influence construction costs. Some municipalities use their own work forces to complete park capital improvement projects or tackle specific items such as demolition and site preparation or paving. This can save considerable costs. A municipality may secure capital improvement funds through grants, donations, or developer payment of fee-in-lieu of mandatory dedication. Typically, grants will require a commitment from the municipality of a cash match based on a percentage of the overall project cost.

Master plans are recommended for the three parks in Washington Township. As part of the master planning process, detailed probable construction cost opinions will be prepared for the recommended improvements. The Capital Improvement Program below provides estimates for the recommended planning projects. Although park master plans developed through a comprehensive planning process, which includes public input, will provide the best blueprint for park improvements, the need for trails and accessible routes throughout Washington Township Park and Barto Community Park were identified in this Plan. Trail Concept Plans were developed for the two community parks and capital improvement costs have been estimated based on these plans.

The capital improvement costs below are generalized cost opinions based on the best available information. These costs should be used for planning and initial budgeting purposes. The costs are estimated without the benefit of property line or topographic surveys, park master plans, engineering studies or drawings, etc. These cost opinions are based on Pennsylvania prevailing wages for year 2023 construction. Design, survey, engineering, contractor bond, insurance, and contingency costs have been included based on typical percentage of the projected development costs. Costs for identifiable items such as benches and trash receptacles may appear inflated due to inclusion of freight and installation costs and consideration of PA prevailing wages. Costs have been estimated to illustrate a typical project, although decisions by the municipality relative to material selection, quality, and quantity will influence costs.

Master plans and feasibility studies are recommended for the three municipal parks and proposed trails in Washington Township. Estimated fees for these planning projects assume that the projects will be partially funded by PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and will follow their Master Site Plan and Trail Feasibility Study scopes of work. If master plans and feasibility studies are self-funded, the fee may be reduced to align with a reduced scope of work that may exclude elements such as a formal report and/or background data.

Washington Township Capital Improvement Program (CIP)					
Park Planning/ Improvements	Quantity	Cost Opinion	2024-2026	2027-2029	2030-2034+
Planning Projects					
Washington Township Park Master Plan		\$60,000		√	
Barto Community Park Master Plan		\$60,000	√		
Naigle Nature Preserve & Woodlands Master Plan		\$75,000		√	
Washington Township Trail Feasibility Study		\$85,000			√
Washington Township Park					
Site Prep/Earthwork	LS	\$1,000			
Erosion Control/Stormwater	LS	\$40,000			
Bituminous Trail	LS	\$360,000			
Roadway Cross Walks/Signs	1	\$3,000			
Park Cross Walks	2	\$3,000			
Boardwalk	LS	\$250,000			
Benches	5	\$10,000			
Directional Signs	LS	\$1,000			
Planting – Shade Trees	LS	\$4,000			
Seeding	LS	\$10,000			
Contingencies (15%)	LS	\$102,300			
Bond, Mobilization, Layout (12%)	LS	\$94,100			
Professional Fees/Design, Engineering, Survey, Permits (15%)	LS	\$131,700			
TOTAL Washington Township Park		\$1,010,100	√		
Barto Community Park					
Site Prep/Earthwork	LS	\$6,000			
Erosion Control/Stormwater	LS	\$10,000			
Bituminous Trail	1	\$174,000			
Pickleball Courts	LS	\$74,000			
Small Pavilion w Concrete Pad	1	\$30,000			
Benches	4	\$8,000			
Planting – Shade Trees/Vegetative Screen	LS	\$8,000			
Seeding	LS	\$5,000			
Contingencies (15%)	LS	\$47,200			
Bond, Mobilization, Layout (12%)	LS	\$43,500			
Professional Fees/Design, Engineering, Survey, Permits (15%)	LS	\$60,800			
TOTAL Barto Community Park		\$466,500		√	