

# Enhancing Recreation Step By Step

Stewardship      Service      Growth



## Richland Township Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan

*December 2010*





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### *This project has been funded by:*

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Grant # BRC-TAG-13.6-604.

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# Introduction

## What is this study, and why was it completed?

For many years, Richland Township has recognized that parkland and recreation contribute to everyone's quality of life as they:

- Enhance the sense of community.
- Accentuate scenic beauty.
- Provide opportunities to protect and manage sensitive resource areas and ecological systems.
- Provide recreation for families and individuals of all ages and abilities.
- Are keys to fostering physical and mental health and wellness.

Historically, the focus of recreation in Richland Township has been to enhance the facilities at Richland Community Park. Both professional staff and volunteers have helped make these improvements. Over time, the Township has also expanded programs and the special events it offers its residents.

A Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan is a document which outlines a 10-year strategy for meeting future recreational needs. This type of Plan is the first of its kind in the community. The Township Supervisors recognized the need for such a plan and its potential for improving service, policy and facilities.

Working with a team of recreation planning consultants from Environmental Planning and Design, LLC and Toole Recreation Planning, the project's Study Committee completed a thorough review of existing policies, practices, programs and facilities. The Committee also sought to understand how each of these can be improved to meet the recreation needs of

the future. This Plan is more than a list of specific projects; it outlines a strategy for preserving what is good and expanding the horizons for what is possible in recreation.

## This Plan seeks to:

1. Determine the adequacy of current levels of funding and staffing.
2. Identify programming needs and methods to meet those needs.
3. Identify ways to improve the operation and maintenance of facilities.
4. Identify areas of historic interest, greenways, open space and watersheds, and determine how to utilize them in an overall park plan.
5. Determine and prioritize the need for additional facilities such as: athletic fields, courts, trails, park lands, and open space.
6. Recommend improvements to meet ADA handicap accessibility requirements.
7. Improve maintenance methods and solve safety issues.
8. Identify areas of cooperation with the School District and neighboring municipalities.
9. Identify ways to improve the Township's working relationship with the various youth sport and community groups which use Township recreation facilities.

## A Shift in Current Thinking

The Study Committee recognized the next logical step in the progression of creating a vision for the park system required a shift in current thinking. The Committee worked on new strategies to address current and future recreation services. These strategies are founded on three major themes:

- 1) Stewardship: Take care of what exists today;
- 2) Service: Recognize recreation is a business; and
- 3) Growth: Systematically and responsibly establish plans for the community's parks and recreation.

These themes are also encapsulated in the Plan's Mission Statement and Core Values. The Mission Statement defines a purpose and vision for Richland Township's parks and recreation system. The Core Values are the foundation stones for achieving quality within this system.

### **Mission Statement:**

***To provide and maintain high quality recreation facilities and services which are available to all residents of Richland Township. To make recreation decisions which are sustainable, economical and environmentally sound. To provide recreational opportunities within the financial means of the community and to protect and preserve unique, natural areas of the Township.***

### **Core Values**

#### **1. Diversity**

The park and recreation system should support a variety of programs, facilities and activities that span all age groups and abilities.

#### **2. Attractiveness**

The physical appearance of facilities within the park and recreation system is important, as it makes visitors feel welcome.

#### **3. Safety**

People must be and feel safe while using the facilities in the parks and recreation system.

#### **4. Maintenance**

Cleanliness encourages respect for the facilities and helps establish a value on their preservation.

#### **5. Public Awareness**

Well informed residents help build support for the role recreation plays in improving the quality of life in the community.

#### **6. Customer Service**

Recreation services are an integral part of the Township's responsibility and should be provided in a business-like manner. Park and recreation system users deserve timely and courteous responses from a competent, well-organized and professional staff. Training and professional development are essential to fulfilling this part of the mission.

#### **7. Sustainability**

It is essential for the Township to make parks and recreation decisions which are both ecologically and financially responsible and sustainable.

## How this Document is Organized

The Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan is organized as follows:

1. *Executive Summary:* This section highlights the Plan's goals and primary recommendations.
2. *Background Information:* This chapter provides a series of demographics and other general planning considerations within the Township and surrounding communities.
3. *Assessment of Existing Conditions:* This chapter inventories and analyzes recreation-related:
  - Management,
  - Programs,
  - Facilities,
  - Maintenance and
  - Financing.
4. *Recommendations:* This chapter includes core recommendations, priorities and detailed strategies for the five components outlined above.
5. *Action Plan:* This chapter provides a chart which: 1) prioritizes the recommendations; 2) establishes timeframes for their implementation; and 3) identifies which parties are responsible for initiating action (key stakeholders).
6. *Appendices:* The closing section of the report includes documents pertaining to the public participation process and a series of sample reports referenced within the Assessment and Recommendations chapters.



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## Richland Township's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan Executive Summary

### The Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan seeks to:

1. Determine the adequacy of current levels of funding and staffing.
2. Identify programming needs and methods to meet those needs.
3. Identify ways to improve the operation and maintenance of facilities.
4. Identify areas of historic interest, greenways, open space and watersheds, and determine how to utilize them in an overall park plan.
5. Determine and prioritize the need for additional facilities such as: athletic fields, courts, trails, park lands, and open space.
6. Recommend improvements to meet ADA handicap accessibility requirements.
7. Improve maintenance methods and solve safety issues.
8. Identify areas of cooperation with the School District and neighboring municipalities.
9. Identify ways to improve the Township's working relationship with the various youth sport and community groups which use Township recreation facilities.



For many years, Richland Township has recognized that park land and recreation contribute to a high quality of life by enhancing the sense of community, accentuating scenic beauty, protecting and managing sensitive resource areas, providing recreation for families and individuals of all ages and abilities, and fostering physical wellness and mental health.

Historically, the focus of recreation in Richland Township has been to enhance the facilities at Richland Community Park. Both professional staff and volunteers have helped make these improvements. Over time, the Township has also expanded programs and the special events it offers its residents.

This Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan is a document which outlines a 10-year strategy for meeting future recreational needs.

The Plan is more than a list of specific projects; it outlines a strategy for preserving what is good and expanding the horizons for what is possible in recreation.

# Elements of a Parks and Recreation System

## Organization and Management

Parks and recreation management requires interdisciplinary skills which focus on the care and maintenance of facilities and programs. It is the role of the managers to coordinate and oversee the safe, secure and environmentally-sound operation of the Township's recreation assets in a cost effective manner aimed at their long-term preservation and enhancement.

Their duty is to make sure the day-to-day delivery of parks and recreation services and facilities are satisfactory to the end users and provide an optimal environment for recreation functions. Recreation management incorporates all activities related to keeping a park system running.



## Programs

Programming is a complex component of parks and recreation management. Activities range from special community and family events to team sports to leisure time pursuits for individuals. To effectively involve residents in program offerings, the Township needs to identify what various target audiences want and then determine the proper balance between programs it sponsors and those provided by other organizations. Cooperation with private and non-profit recreation providers is a key to programming success.



## Facilities

Facilities are the building blocks of a parks and recreation system. They are the places where people can go to enjoy themselves. Richland's overall recreation system strives to provide facilities which residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy for active sports, socializing and quiet reflection. Facilities require ongoing evaluation to ensure safety, optimal function and sustainability.



## Maintenance

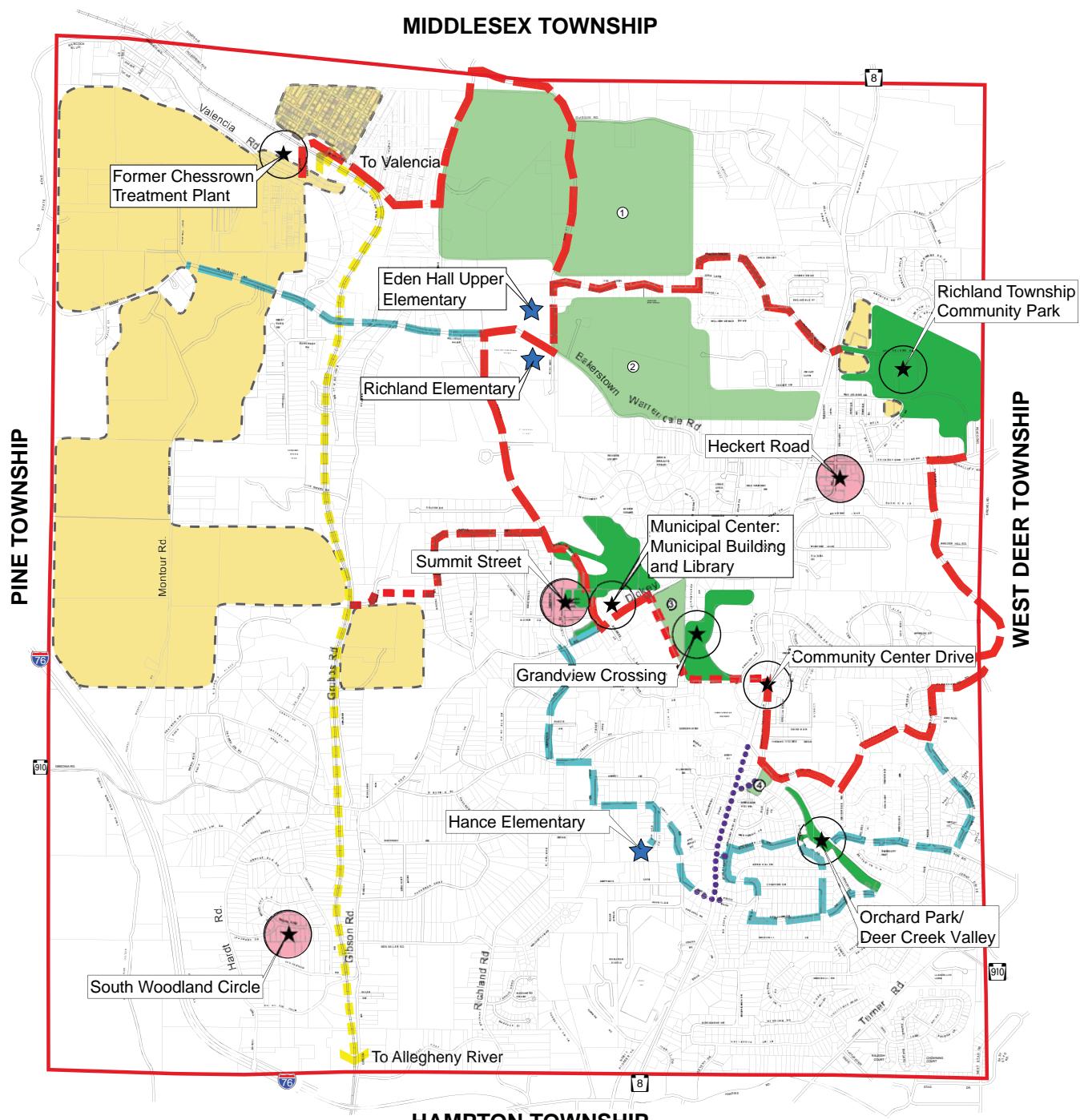
The goal of park maintenance is to provide safe, clean, functional, and attractive Township parks through implementation of an efficient and effective management program. A formal policy sets standards for how maintenance will be performed now and in the future. Key elements include staffing, training and cost-benefit analysis.



## Financing

The purpose of financial management in parks and recreation is the judicious use of capital resources and the careful selection of capital projects to enable Township spending to advance parks and recreation goals.

# Overall Strategic Recreation Plan



# Key Recommendations

## Organization and Management

### Core Recommendation

Match administrative capabilities with needs to enhance the functionality of programs, facilities, maintenance operations, finance and project management

### Priorities

- Organize administration roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes
- Utilize strategic management systems to plan and implement policies, procedures and projects

## Programs

### Core Recommendation

Encourage customer-focused programming

### Priorities

- Create a program management plan that utilizes regular public involvement, program evaluation and outreach
- Focus Township sponsored programs on three areas: nature, fitness and special events
- Strengthen cooperative efforts with youth sports organizations, private and non-profit recreation providers, Pine-Richland School District and neighboring communities

## Facilities

### Core Recommendation

Determine the adequacy of existing facilities. Recommend enhancements, expansions and upgrades. Identify the type, size and number of new facilities appropriate to meet the recreational needs of the Township.

### Priorities

- Acquire additional park lands and sell unused Township-owned vacant properties
- Initiate, update and develop implementation strategies for Master Site Plans, Trail Plans, and Resource Management Plans
- Implement physical, aesthetic and safety improvements according to the availability of staff, volunteers and financial resources

## Maintenance

### Core Recommendation

Formalize Maintenance Management

### Priorities

- Establish responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department
- Provide specialized training for park maintenance through a 5-year employee development program
- Develop a formal management system for maintaining parks and recreation infrastructure

## Financing

### Core Recommendation

Enhance Financial Management Practices

### Priorities

- Continue to support parks and recreation through a mix of Township and non-tax resources
- Optimize efficiency and increase revenues through cost tracking
- Adopt a Mandatory Dedication of Land Ordinance as permitted by the Municipalities Planning Code
- Establish a Friends of the Park Organization

# Background Information

## Background Information

Richland Township is located in Northern Allegheny County, just 18 miles from downtown Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and 9 miles from Cranberry. The semi-rural community features a 100-acre park, a variety of places to shop, neighborhoods with diverse incomes, first class schools, and direct access to major roadways -- State Routes 8 & 910 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-76). The Township encompasses approximately 14.6 square miles.

*2000 US Census Population – 9,231  
(Estimated 2010 Population – 11,000+)*

*Number of Households – 3,508*

*Median Household Income – \$57,672*

*Median Age – 39.9*

*Government Structure – Home Rule Charter Community (former 2nd Class Township)*

*School District – Pine-Richland*

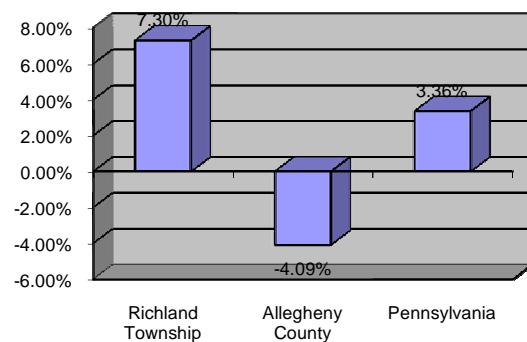
Understanding a community's demographic make-up is important in planning for future improvements to the parks, recreation and open space system. The following information summarizes the Township's socio-economic characteristics which influence parks and recreation decisions in the future.



### Population

In 2000, the population of Richland Township was 9,231, with 4,801 of those residents being female and 4,430 male. Between 1990 and 2000, the population grew from 8,600 to 9,231 residents, which is an increase of 7.3%. In comparison, Allegheny County decreased by 4.09% from 1,336,449 to 1,281,666 persons during the decade, and the Pennsylvania state population rose by only 3.4%.

**Figure 1: Population Trends 1990 - 2000**



**Table 1: Nearby Municipalities – Population Comparison for 2000**

Township/Borough	Population
Valencia Borough	384
Bradford Woods Borough	1,149
Ohio Township	3,086
Middlesex Township	5,586
Marshall Township	5,996
Adams Township	6,774
Indiana Township	6,809

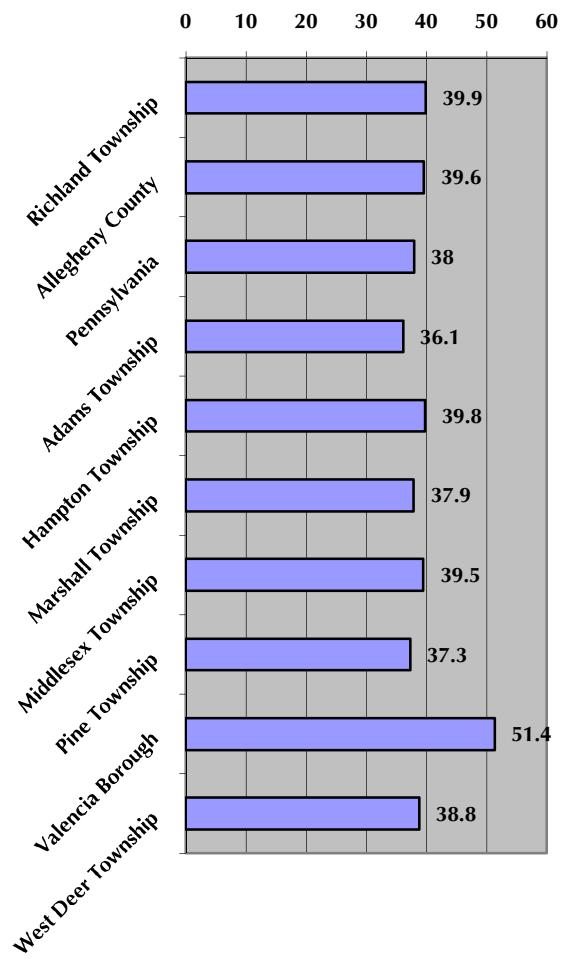
<b>Pine Township</b>	7,683
<b>Franklin Park Borough</b>	11,364
<b>West Deer Township</b>	11,563
<b>Hampton Township</b>	17,526
<b>Cranberry Township</b>	23,625
<b>McCandless Township</b>	29,022
<b>Shaler Township</b>	29,757
<b>Ross Township</b>	32,551

### Age Distribution

An understanding of how the population is distributed among traditional age groups will help determine how to meet the community's recreational needs. The following conclusions have been drawn from 2000 U.S. Census data:

- Of the residents in Richland Township, the largest age group is middle-aged adults (ages 35 to 64) at 43% of the total population. Children (ages under 5 to 19) rank second in total population at 29.5%. Residents over age 65 make up 15.5% of the total population, and young adults (ages 20 to 34) represent the Township's least populated age bracket (12%).
- The large percentage of children living in the Township likely means that there will be continued demand for children's recreation opportunities. Additionally, the high number of "empty nesters" implies a potential future need for more recreation and social opportunities for these residents within the community.
- As the middle-aged and older adults continue to choose Richland Township as their permanent residence, it will be important to align appropriate recreation and social opportunities for these residents and keep the Township's services attractive.

**Figure 2: Median Age**

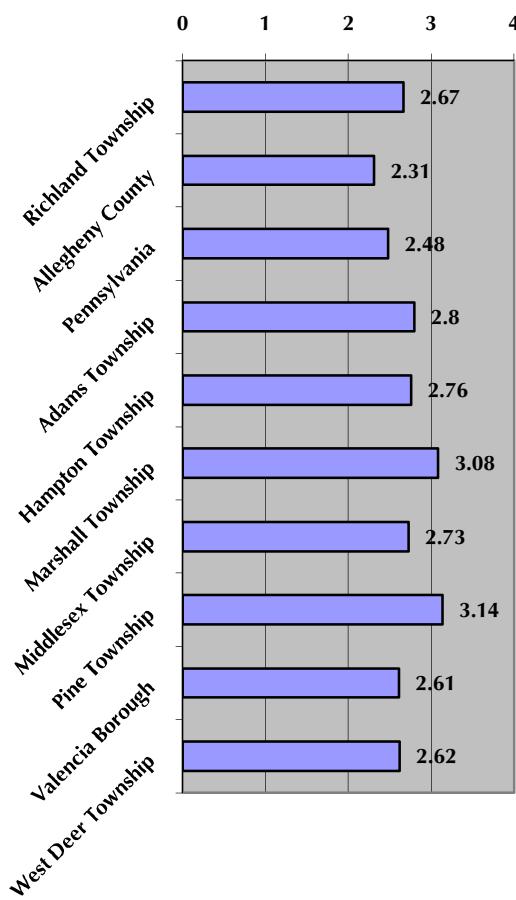


# Background Information

## Household Data

In 2000, more than 3,300 households existed in Richland Township; the average household size was 2.67 persons. This average household size exceeds both Allegheny County (2.31) and the State (2.48).

**Figure 3: Average Household Size 2000**

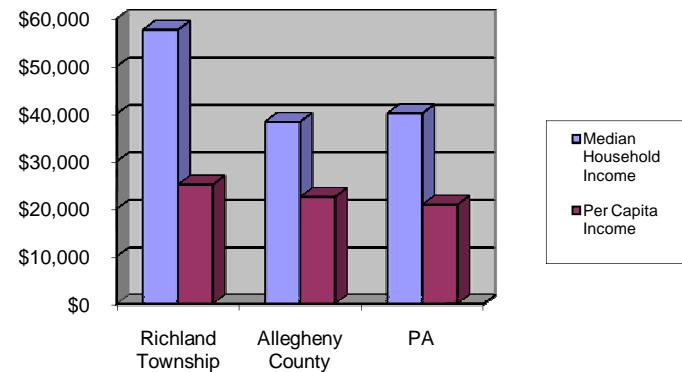


## **Income Comparisons**

General income information is valuable in analyzing the level of recreational service and facility improvements that a Township can support. According to 1999 Census data median (meaning the middle most) household income for Richland was \$57,672. Whereas the State household median was \$40,106 and the

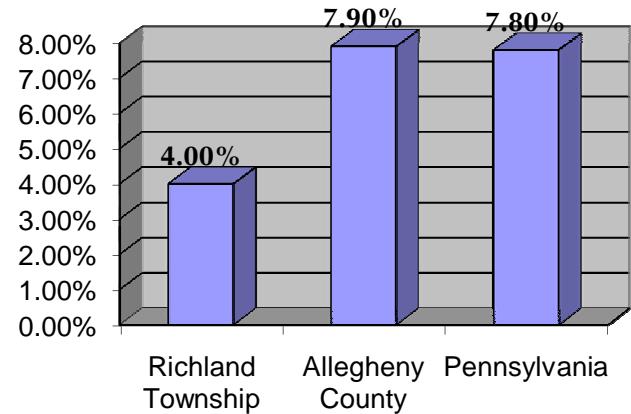
Allegheny County household median income was \$38,328. Similarly, Richland Township's average per capita income in 1999 was \$25,085, which is higher than the County per capita income (\$22,491) and the State per capita income (\$20,880).

**Figure 4A: Income Comparison 1999**



In 2000, only 4.0% of residents in Richland Township were living below the poverty line. This is much lower than the percentage of Allegheny County (7.9%) and Pennsylvania (7.8%) residents living beneath the poverty line.

**Figure 4B: Residents Below the Poverty Line**



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# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Management*

## PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT:

The following review of the Township's management structure and decision making practices evaluates how parks and recreation have been planned and administered and makes recommendations to improve the use of resources to fulfill the recommendations contained within this report.

Parks and recreation administrators are accountable for a vast array of complex and diverse tasks ranging from financial and program planning, to facilities operations/maintenance and implementing of capital improvement projects. Successful systems are rooted in effective management. Determining where to devote energy and to invest resources is essential to providing quality public services.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Richland Township is governed by a Home Rule Charter created by a ballot referendum in 1974. A five member elected Board of Supervisors was established, and given authority as the policy and legislative decision making body for the municipality.

Figure 5 presents the Township's current organizational structure. In practice, parks and recreation functions are shared between three Township departments:

- 1) Administration provides financial management and has overall responsibility for the parks and recreation system;
- 2) Parks and Recreation oversees programs, special events and permitting/scheduling of fields and facilities. The Department is the primary point of contact for individuals and groups which use the park or participate in Township recreation programs; and
- 3) Public Works maintains existing facilities, constructs capital improvements, and assists with program logistics.

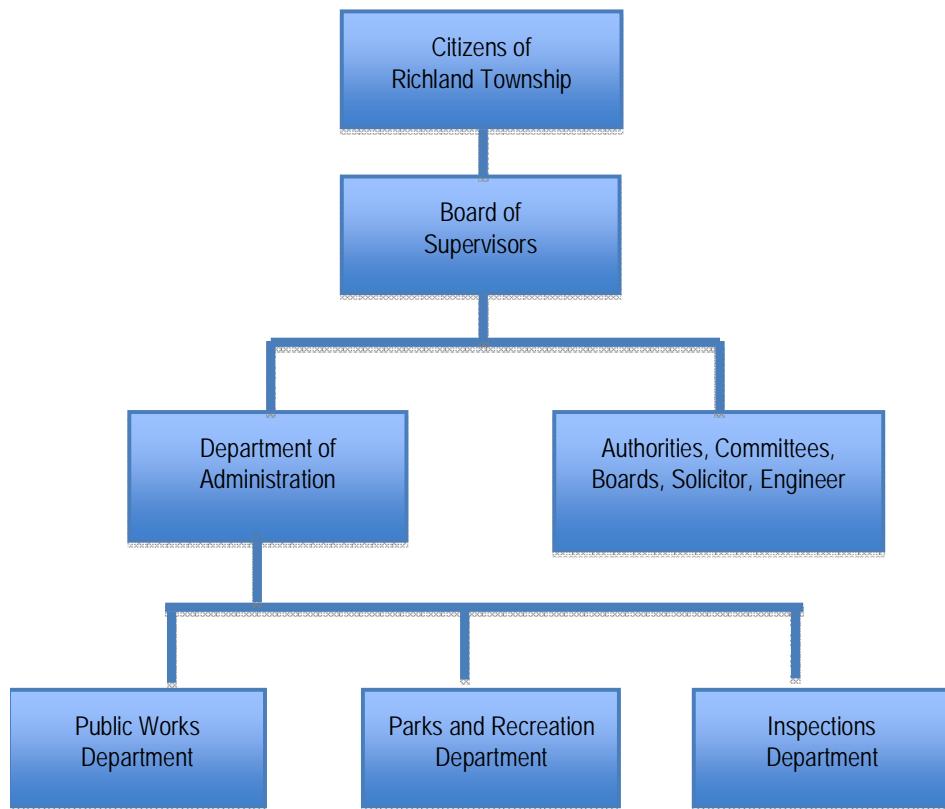
The scope of recreation responsibilities has evolved with increases in both population and resident's interest in local recreation. The growth of youth sports, coupled with increased demand for field space and the loss of vacant land and natural open space to development has heightened the need for local government to manage available recreation facilities more efficiently and to plan for the future. Much of what has been accomplished to date is due to exceptional individual efforts of current and past volunteers, employees and members of the Board of Supervisors. The continuation of this success in the future requires forethought and a unified plan, which are the compelling reasons for undertaking this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Partnerships are also an essential part of community life. The “Pine Richland” name describes many community functions ranging from the school district to community sports and the local youth center located in Richland. Richland needs to build on these partnerships and explore options, including funding through PA DCNR, for combining resources and sharing responsibilities for recreation services with neighboring municipalities, where feasible.

**Figure 5: Richland Township Existing Organization Chart**

### Volunteers

Volunteers provide important contributions to Richland’s park and recreation system. Without their countless hours of hard work the system would not be what it is today. Without their continued efforts it will not be possible for it to advance tomorrow.



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

Management

## Roles and Responsibilities

Municipal Governments have a broad range of mandates related to health, safety and the welfare of citizens. The Township's Administrative Code, established by ordinance in 1976, and amended in 2008, specifies roles and responsibilities of Township officials in various areas including recreation.

Current trends and issues which impact local recreation decisions include: 1) legal requirements, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Pennsylvania's Storm Water Management Act., 2) potential litigation, leading to an increased awareness of accident prevention/risk management issues, 3) demographic changes, typified by an overall population increase and dramatic growth in both the number of elderly and young residents, 4) social issues such as urbanization, crime, drugs, obesity, and the isolation of the elderly. 5) natural resource conservation and environmental issues, and finally 6) trends, leading towards self-directed leisure, passive recreation and increased demand for active recreation.



**The Township Manager is the Township's chief administrative officer.** The manager is responsible for implementing the policies set forth by the elected Board of Supervisors. Under the direction of the Board the Manager performs the following major duties:

- Serves as the Board of Supervisor's representative on a daily basis
- Serves as the Board's single point of contact with other Department Heads
- Directs the efficient operation of all Township Departments
- Plans, organizes and oversees the internal organization of each department including the work activities department heads and the employees they supervise
- Prepares the annual budget, and is responsible for the Township's financial management and purchasing practices
- Implements Capital Improvement projects
- Collects taxes, fees and charges asset by the Board of Supervisors

## Policy and Operating Procedures

Municipal recreation administrators need to develop policies, procedures and guides that contribute to professionalism and accountability. Policy development is an ongoing process. Below is a list of policies which Richland has established:

- Park rules and regulations;
- Barn, Shelter and Field application, rental and usage rules;
- Alcohol beverage permit and usage rules;
- Municipal Building rental and usage policy;
- Field Closure policy

Other examples include:

- Creation of a database for participants;
- Facility scheduling procedures;
- Facility use policies;
- Public recognition system including a logo;
- Press packages;

- Real-time internet site functions;
- Maintenance management program;
- Personnel policy manual;
- Operations manuals;
- Seasonal and part-time staff orientation and training;
- Orientation and training for Park & Recreation Board members;
- and coordination for park and recreation planning projects such as open space conservation and trail and greenway planning.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

Providing professional year-round parks and recreation management is a necessity in Richland Township.

### Part Time Recreation Administration

- Richland Township operates within a framework of creating maximum organizational effectiveness with respect to Township resources.
- The Township values public and private partnerships as well as relationships with the school district, neighboring townships and the community organizations.
- The Board of Supervisors supports parks and recreation through investment and endorsement of major projects and programs.
- Community organizations play a vital role in community recreation, which the Township could not support financially otherwise.
- For a semi-rural community of 11,000 residents, a part-time parks and recreation department is appropriate. As the population grows, the park system will expand and responsibilities increase. It will be important to evaluate staff time and resources to ensure that they are commensurate with providing public

recreation at the standard that the Township wants. Consideration should be given to building a full-time department when the population reaches about 15,000 persons.

### Shared Parks and Recreation Functions

- Three departments are responsible for different aspects of parks and recreation: Administration, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works. Ensuring close coordination between the departments will guarantee that parks are a priority and that the skill sets needed for park maintenance functions are in place.

### Lack of Workload/Cost Tracking System

- Today, operation procedures are generally dependent on the skills and the abilities of the volunteers and staff. Operations should be formalized through a thorough and organized regime; completed tasks and time should be consistently recorded for all staff and volunteer activities (also known as workload cost tracking). Putting this type of system into place will help the Township optimize current operations, provide information for informed decision-making and facilitate continuity throughout the long-term evolution of Township staff and management.



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

Management

## Programs-Focus vs. Customer-Focus

- Although programs are offered and advertised, an overall program management plan has not yet been put into place. Without a clear set of performance objectives, programs tend to be offered that may be beyond their useful life or despite their lack of interest among the public. Successful programs depend on timely data collection, analysis and evolution.

## Determining Best Use of Staff Time and Emphasis on Scheduled Programs

- The emerging recreation trend in the United States is toward self-directed recreation opportunities which residents can do on their own, for example hiking, biking, bird watching cycling and fishing. Emphasis should be on a management plan that focuses on using public parks and outdoor facilities based upon each site's capacity and resources as well as providing opportunities beyond organized sports.

## Determining Effectiveness

- Performance goals and objectives should be documented and shared with all decision makers. Results and outcomes should be used to determine how well the Township is meeting recreation goals and objectives.



## Skill Sets Needed by a Parks and Recreation Director

- Working with elected and appointed officials, community organizations, colleges and non-profits.
- Writing skills, communication skills, computer skills, ability to see the big picture and detail.
- Leadership, ethical behavior, role modeling, enthusiasm, discipline.
- Financial management, analyzing cost recovery, sustainability.
- Contract management, bid processes.
- Business efficiency, problem solving.
- Fundraising, grantsmanship, donations, alternative funding.
- Marketing, promotion, image development, constant improvement.
- Needs Assessment.
- Scheduling, facility management personnel, evaluations hiring, negotiations, staff development and support, conflict resolution.
- Partnership building, professional association, professional training, professional committee involvement.
- CIP development and management.
- Goal setting.
- Risk management.
- Political and strategic thinking, analyzing industry trends.
- Park design, reading technical drawings.
- Park operations and managing park facilities.
- Making and enforcing policies and procedures, customer service.
- Hands on program involvement.
- Registration and league scheduling, facility scheduling.
- ADA ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)) and Consumer Product Safety Commission ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)) Standards.
- Recreation software, information management.

## Policy Formulation

The lack of policies in major parks and recreation areas can cause problems and generate controversy. The formulation of specific use and management policies is needed. Other recreation related policies and plans that could be considered are outlined below. Considerations for undertaking these should be made in context of short-term and long-term department goals and expansion.

- Fiscal Management Policies and Procedures
- Revenue management, fees and charges
- Recreation and maintenance staff recruiting, hiring, training and implementation of staff personnel policies
- Gifts and donations
- Naming of parks and facilities
- Park and Recreation Board mission, roles, responsibilities and training
- Records Management Policy
- Trends Analysis
- Community Involvement Plan
- Recreation Programming and Services Plan
- Program and Service Determinants
- Self-Directed Programs and Services
- Leader-Directed Programs and Services
- Facilitated Programs and Services
- Fee-Based Programs and Services
- Cooperative Programming
- Marketing Plan
- Needs Assessment
- Advertising and Promotion
- Evaluation
- Public Safety and Law Enforcement
- Role of Agency Staff
- Staff Liaison to Law Enforcement Officers
- Handling of Disruptive Behavior
- Traffic Control, Parking Plans, and Crowd Control
- Risk Management Plan
- Statement of Policy
- Risk Management Operations Manual
- Accident and Incident Reports
- Training – Staff, Park and Recreation Board, newly elected members of Board of Supervisors, and Volunteers
- In-Service Training Function
- Succession Planning
- Professional Organization Membership
- Volunteer Management
- Supervision and Evaluation
- Recognition
- Liability Coverage
- Consultants and Contract Employees
- Park Design Standards
- Environmental Policy
- Additional policies related to park use and permits such as use of public address systems, use of parks by for-profit recreation providers, and others as determined important.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Programs*

## PURPOSE OF PROGRAMS

### ASSESSMENT:

Evaluating programs enables the Township to analyze current practices, including cooperative efforts, as well as, private sector and not for profit programming opportunities. In completing the evaluation, a series of recommendations can emerge which are aimed to improve efficiency, direct residents to available programs and serve unfulfilled needs.

### Richland Township supports public recreation opportunities in a number of ways including:

- Offering facilities that citizens can use on their own schedule or rent to host their own events and gatherings.
- Facilitating recreation opportunities provided by community organizations such as sports leagues.
- Collaborating with Pine Township and the Pine Richland School District in recreation facility use and community recreation programs.
- Informing the public about public parks and recreation opportunities through the direct mail newsletter going to every household, the township WEB site, the distribution of fliers, in newspaper articles, in responding to telephone calls and drop-in visitors at the Township building.

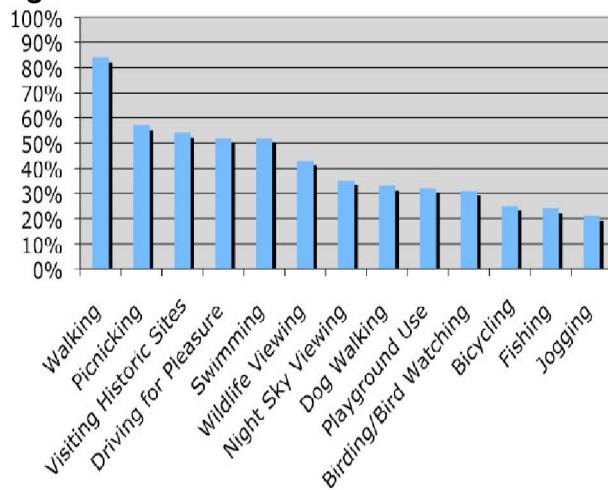
## EXISTING CONDITIONS:

### Inventory of Organized Township Programs

In 2009 Richland Township directly sponsored 38 programs and special events. The offerings are advertised in a bi-annual (Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter) recreation news letter was directly mailed to all residents. The 2009 programs are listed in Tables 2 and 3 according to 6 categories: Special Events, Sports & Fitness, Educational/Recreational, Nature and Environment, The Arts, and Trips.

Participation numbers noted on the chart reflect single registration counts. The numbers do not include spectators. In addition to the Township programs, over 3,600 participants are enrolled in local sports leagues through community athletic associations.

**Figure 6: State-Wide Recreation Trends**



## Recreation

Recreation plays an important role in promoting a strong sense of community by providing settings for people to socialize, share common interests and being a major driver of community interaction and pride. It is widely accepted that parks and recreation influence how a community looks, feels and functions.

**Table 2: Key to Program Inventory**

Key to Richland Township Program Inventory										
Age Group		Class		Format		Gender		Season		Number
C	Children: pre-school	A	Arts	S	Social	F	Female	F/W	September	# of participants
C	Crafts	C	Crafts	SI	Self Improvement	M	Male		through	
Y	Youth	Dc	Dance	C	Competitive	B	Both		March	
5-14 Yrs.		Dr	Drama	PS	Participant/					
T	Teens	E	Environ.		Spectator			S/S	April	
15-18 Yrs.		F	Fitness	SD	Self-Directed				through	
A	Adults	Mt	Mental						August	
19+ Yrs.		Ms	Music							
SC	Senior Citizens	Sp	Sports							
F	Families	So	Social							
		V	Volunteer							

**Table 3: 2009 Organized Program Opportunities**

Program	Age	Gender	Class	Format	Season	#	Comment
<b>Nature and Environment</b>							
Rain Barrel Watershed Workshop	A,SC	B	E	SI	F/W	0	
" Session 2	A,SC	B	E	SI	S/S	20	
Alternative Energy Workshop	A, SC	B	E	SI	F/W	3	
Backyard Composting	A,SC	B	E	SI	S/S	0	New. 22 in 2010
Rabies Clinic	A,SC,F	B	E	SI	S/S	39	
Family Campout & Movie	F	B	E	S,SI	S/S	18	
<b>TOTAL</b>						80	
<b>Trips</b>							
Lancaster County by Rail	A	B	M,S	So	F/W	9	
New England Back Roads	A	B	M,S	So	F/W		Not tracked because trips were offered by other townships.
Allegheny Mountains Amtrak Adventure	A	B	M,S	So	F/W		
" Session 2	A	B	S	So	S/S		
Fall Foliage Dinner Cruise	A	B	S	So	F/W		
Albuquerque NM & Balloon Festival	A	B	M,S	So	F/W		
Fiesta San Antonio	A	B	S	So	S/S		
Mountain Maryland Rail Adventure	A	B	M,S	So	S/S		
Canadian Rockies by Train	A	B	S	So	S/S, F/W		
Trains of the Canadian Rockies	A	B	M,S	So	S/S		
<b>TOTAL</b>						9	

Sources: Richland Township Parks & Recreation Department interviews.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

Programs

**Table 3: 2009 Organized Program Opportunities (con't)**

Program	Age	Gender	Class	Format	Season	#	Comment
<b>Community Events</b>							
Halloween Party	All	B	So	S	F/W	110	
Movies in the Barn	All	B	So	S	F/W	7	
Brunch With Santa	C,Y,F	B	So	S	F/W	91	
Shred It - paper shredding	A	B	E	SD	F/W	35	
" Session 2	A	B	E	SD	S/S	21	
Easter Egg Extravaganza	C,Y,F	B	So	S	S/S	207	
Memorial Day Service	All	B	So	S	S/S	30	Sponsored by American Legion
Trunk Sale	All	B	So,E	S	S/S	55	
Movies in the Park	All, F	B	So	S	S/S	125	6 Friday night movies. Other township movie nights are advertised in the newsletter.
Community Day						8,500	
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>9,181</b>	
<b>Sports &amp; Fitness Programs</b>							
Young Champions Pom/Cheer Program	C/Y/T	B:F	S	S,SI	F/W	18	
" Session 2	C/Y/T	B:F	S	S,SI	F/W	11	
Ice Skating	All	B	Sp/F	So,SI,SD	F/W	0	
Richland Family Adventure Challenge	All,F	B	F, E, Mt	So, SI	S/S		New
Richland Township Team Golf Program	Y,T	B	Sp,F	S,SI	S/S	NA	
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>29</b>	
<b>Educational/Recreational</b>							
Barn Rentals	A,SC	B	So	SD	F/W	NA	
Geocaching	All, F	B	So, E	SD, SI	F/W	10	In cooperation with Pittsburgh Area Geocaching Association and Butler Area Cachers of Note
Valentine Children's Bingo	Y	B	Mt	S	F/W	0	New in 2009. 24 in 2010
TJ and Friends	A, SC	B	All	S	S/S	9	New singles group with wide range of activities, events and trips
Dinosaur Dig		B	E,Mt	S,SI	S/S	20	
Pine & Richland Summer Recreation Program	Y	B	All	All	S/S	144 -36 Rich. Twp.	6 week program at Pine Community Center with swim program at High School.
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>183</b>	
<b>The Arts</b>							
Make and Take Ornaments	Y	B	A	SI	F/W	0	3 signed up - cancelled
Line Dancing	A	B	D	SI,SO	F/W	11	
" Session 2	A	B	D	SI,SO	S/S	9	
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>20</b>	

Most programs are offered at the Community Park. Some events, primarily indoor ones, are held at the municipal building.

Accommodations at Township-sponsored programs for those with disabilities are made as needed. Resident and non-resident fees are charged for most programs to cover direct costs.

Special Events such as Community Day and the Easter Egg Hunt are subsidized by allocations from the Township's General Fund Budget. Labor is provided by the Public Works Department, private sub-contractors and volunteers.

### **Other Recreation Providers**

The Township also cooperates with various youth sports organizations and adult leagues by providing field space for their programs. Table 4 identifies the youth sports leagues in the community. Since many of the same groups using Richland's facilities also use those provided by Pine Township and the Pine Richland School District, all three entities cooperate to maximize availability and accommodate as many groups as possible. Pine and Richland also cooperate to sponsor a six-week summer program for school age children. Community Tours, an ad-hoc committee of recreation directors from 6 North Hills municipalities, provides travel opportunities for adults.

Founded in 1951, the Pine-Richland Youth Center is a non-profit organization located in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. Facilities at the Youth Center are primarily comprised of gymnasiums, meeting space, a baseball field, and a pavilion. Pre-school, youth and teen, and adult programs are offered year round at the facility.

The Richland Swim Club (RSC) is a private Club located on Dickey Road in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania. RSC features a heated pool as well as a separate heated pool for infants and toddlers. RSC also includes three tennis courts, one basketball court, two shuffle board

courts, and a ping pong table for recreational use. Pavilions and gazebos are available for entertaining and dining. The facility is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend.

In addition to the Northern Tier Library, Swim Club and Pine-Richland Youth Center, there are 80 private sector business which offer recreation service and programs.

A listing of the private sector recreation providers is contained within the Plan's Appendix.

Two senior centers under the auspices of the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging serve Richland Township senior adults. They include:

Center North Senior Center  
Nativity Lutheran Church  
4517 Mt. Royal Boulevard  
Allison Park, PA 15101  
Operating Hours: Monday through Friday  
9:00 - 1:30

West Deer Center in the Country  
4834 Rt. 910  
Allison Park, PA 15101  
Operating Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday  
and Thursday 10:00 - 2:00



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Programs*

**Table 4: Sports Leagues in the Pine Richland Community**

League	Sport/Season	Participants	Teams	Fields	Trends and Key Person Interview Highlights
Pine Richland Football	Football  July – First week of November	400  Ages 6 – 12  2007: 3 football teams 3 cheerleading squads  2010: 9 football teams 11 cheerleading squads	9	2 fields in Richland Township Park.  Rent school district fields. Richland Elementary School: two fields including baseball outfield High School: baseball outfield. Use stadium 3-4 times a season	Perceived Needs: one more football field. One lighted field.  Willing to pay portion of cost of lights.  Past Contributions: restrooms, concession stand, press box, irrigation system, scoreboards
	Cheerleading	200  Ages 6 - 12	11	Playground and asphalt basketball courts	
Pine Richland Baseball/Softball Association	Baseball/Softball  Spring, Summer and Fall	800		Richland Township Park: 6 fields  Pine Township Park: 4 fields  School District fields: 5	A lot of competition with other sports for participation and field time. Did not lose any players in 2009. Added t-ball for 4 year olds in 2010.  Perceived Needs: Continued field enhancements including backstops, bleachers/fencing upgrades.  Past Contributions: dugouts, lights, infield and turf improvements.
Pine Richland Soccer Association	Soccer  Spring: April 1 – June 30 Fall: August 24 – November 7.	1,400 with 700 participants in each season.	48 to 60 teams depending on the season.	On a Saturday, they use 18 fields. Use St. Richards, the School District, Pine Township Park, any open grassy space on school grounds. Try to avoid Richland Park fields due to original poor construction.	Challenge to get fields. Other sports needs fields such as field hockey, lacrosse. Participation in most sports is growing. Perceived Needs: Interested in indoor space. Past Contributions: Field Improvements
Church League	Adult Softball	164 participants in 12 or 13 teams. Ages 16 and older.		Field 6 in Richland Township Park and fields in other townships and church grounds. Need 65 foot base paths.	Loves playing in Richland Township Park.
Pine Richland Boys Youth Lacrosse	Boys Lacrosse  March through June. Winter indoor lacrosse in January and February at the Wildlands Center	142  Kindergarten through eighth grade	6	Plays regionally. Uses Richland Township Field 5.	Information requested; no response
Pine Richland Youth Center	Basketball	Recreational: 500 participants  Travel: 124 teams		Pine Richland Youth Center Gym. Pine Richland School District	The Youth Foundation serves the Townships of Pine, Richland, Mars and West Deer; travel leagues serve seven counties.

3-11

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

### Program Selection

When assessing programs, it is important to recognize that the Program Coordinator manages the field permitting process, develops the newsletter, coordinates the summer program, and responds to public information needs. The programs are largely selected al-a-carte style, and currently, there is no program management plan in place. As in Richland, it is common in an organization where there is limited staff that program information is not regularly collected, tracked and analyzed.

Given these limitations, developing a solid basis of information for decision making is important. With enhanced information, Richland Township can make informed decisions regarding program offerings, staffing, resource allocation, fees, charges and outreach. Timely, accurate information can help the Township to continually improve recreation offerings.

### Tracking Information

While tracking revenue costs and production can be one measure of recreation programming success, the kind of information that is important to have includes the following:

- Number of participants served annually.
- Number of participants that return each year.
- Activities most valued in the Township according to participation.
- Alternatives to the programs offered – that is, if Richland Township did not offer the program, what would the impact be?
- Efforts and contributions of volunteers
- Gaps in service the Parks and Recreation Department could address.
- Societal issues that the Parks and Recreation Department addresses through its programs either directly or indirectly.
- Key demographic characteristics of the participants. Identification of the issues they face and how the programs help them address their issues.

- Identification of the Department's best customers in terms of frequency of registration and/or money paid to participate in township programs.
- Understanding of what participants think about the programs based upon a formalized approach to evaluations and other methods seeking their input.
- Top five benefits of participating in township recreation programs.

The second kind of information important to have in program management is what key stakeholders think about the programs and services. Feedback could be obtained after the distribution of an annual report. This should be done before budget season rather than at the end of the calendar year. It is more useful to have that kind of information when planning the budget than simply as a year-end report.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

### Emerging Trends

In addition to traditional sports and programs, there are a number of emerging athletic oriented activities in the community (e.g. field hockey). As they emerge, incorporating them into the overall program mix is important. Chatham University is planning to build a school of sustainability in the Township. When completed, this will add a new population of college students.

Planning for senior adults should continue in conjunction with Allegheny County for the immediate and short term. Focus should be placed on future generations of active, healthy seniors who are more likely to use community recreation centers throughout their lifetime and on an expanded basis once they retire.

Partnering with commercial recreation-related enterprises usually has the added benefit of providing uniquely qualified specialists that serve as recreation leaders in community recreation programs. A major benefit of the commercial partners is that the Township could advertise their programs in the newsletter. This helps community businesses to gain public visibility through direct mailing to households.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Facilities*

## PURPOSE OF FACILITIES

### ASSESSMENT:

Facilities provide the places where recreation activities can occur. Providing facilities which adequately meet resident needs takes planning and commitment. Understanding those needs and projecting what type of facilities will be provided in the future will allow for the rational development of recreational resources.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Richland Park is the principal location for most of the Township's programmed park and recreation facilities. To a limited extent, the Municipal Building is also used for programming. Several of the Township's other sites have recreation potential, while others do not.

Importantly, some of these spaces serve as natural resource areas for aid in the management of stormwater events. Recommendations on the potential uses or divestment of these sites is discussed in the Recommendations Section.

The following maps identify the general characteristics of the Township's most significant open spaces and land contributing to the future pedestrian network.



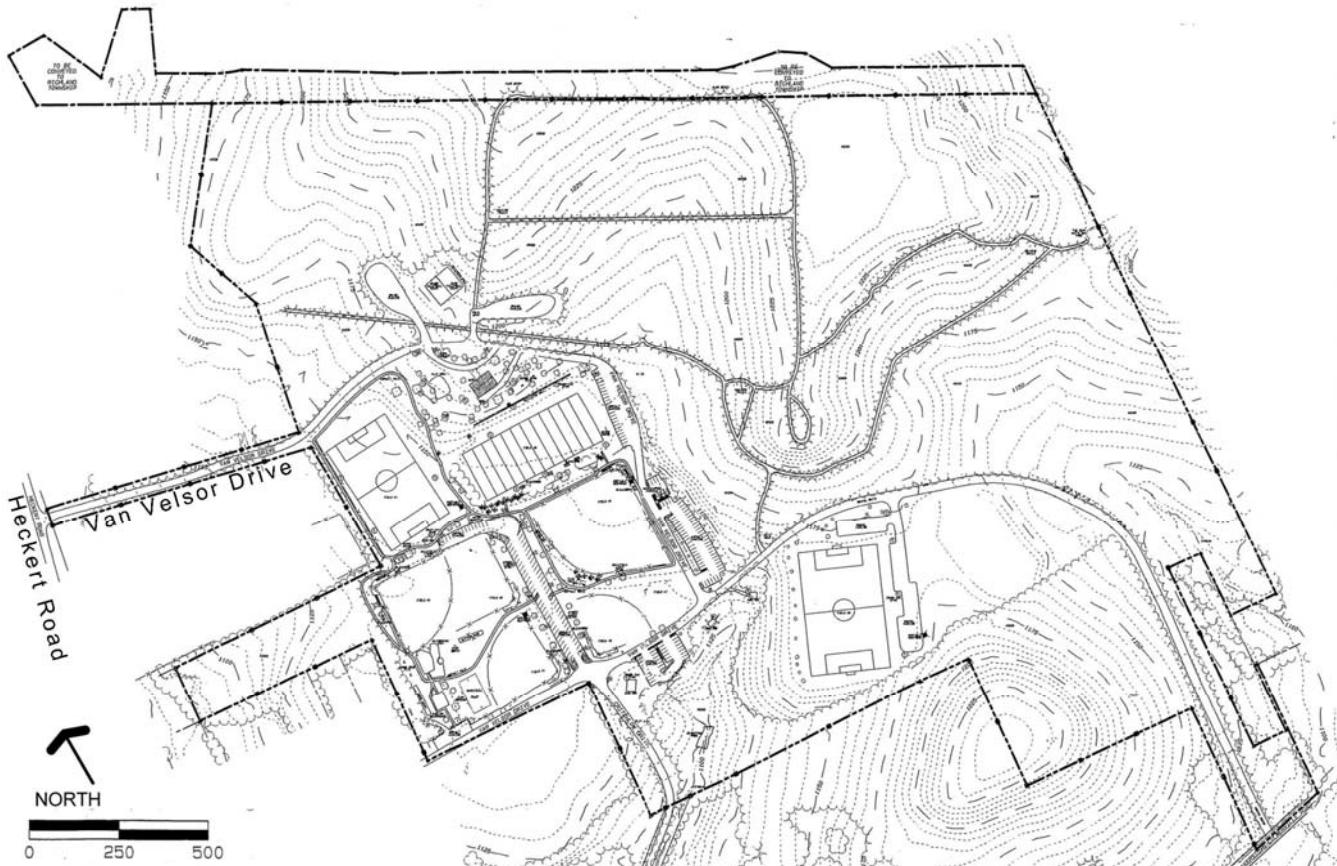
#### Publicly-owned Lands in Richland

- Richland Township Community Park
- Municipal Center Open Space
- Orchard Park/Deer Creek Open Space
- Community Center Drive Green Space
- Grandview Crossing Green Space
- Heckert Road
- South Woodland Circle

## MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

### Richland Township Community Park

**Figure 7**



The primary focus of public recreation in Richland Township is the 100-acre park in Bakerstown. The park provides fields for all local youth sports organizations including: the Pine Richland Baseball Softball Association, Pine-Richland Youth Football, Pine-Richland Soccer, and Pine-Richland Boys Lacrosse. It also hosts the annual Community Day celebration, Halloween Party and Easter Egg hunt. A soccer zone and family play area are currently under construction.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Facilities*

**Table 5: Facilities at Richland Township Community Park**

Facility	Number	Enhancements and Utilities
Field #1 – Baseball/Softball	1	Sideline & outfield & bench, fencing, backstop, benches, bleachers, equipment box
Field #2 – Baseball/Softball	1	Sideline and bench fencing, back stop, benches, soft toss fence, bleachers
Field #3 – Baseball/Softball	1	Sideline, outfield and back stop fencing, bleachers, dugouts, storage room, lights, electric scoreboard
Field #4 – Football/Lacrosse	1	Electric scoreboard, bleachers and goal posts, P.A. system, sprinkler system
Field #5 – Football/Lacrosse	1	Electric scoreboard, goal posts, P.A. system, sprinkler system
Field #6 – Baseball/Softball	1	Sideline, outfield and backstop, fencing, dugouts/storage room, lights, bleachers
Field #7 – T-Ball	1	Backstop, benches
Field #8 – Baseball	1	Sideline, outfield and bench seating, backstop, benches, bleachers
Field #9 – Soccer	1	To open Spring 2012
Field #10 – Micro-Soccer	1	To open Spring 2012
Batting Cages	2	Artificial sports turf surfaces, mesh netting and posts
Volleyball Courts	2	One sand, one grass
Basketball Court	1	Asphalt surface, 2 standard, 2 half courts, backboards and nets
Barn		Full kitchen, public restrooms, ADA



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		accessibility, security system, loft area, basement with storage rooms, tables, chairs
Concession Stand		Public restrooms, concession area, water, picnic cover area with tables
Football Concession Stand		Restrooms, press box, storage room, concession area
Playground #1 – Near Concession Stand	1	Mulch, rubberized base, one modular unit, swings, benches
Playground #2 – Critchlow Drive	1	Pea gravel base, modular unit with swings
Playground #3 – Barn	1	Mulch base, merry-go-round, swing, climbing unit
Pavilion #1 – Near Field #4		Picnic tables, electricity
Pavilion #2, #3 and #4		Tables
Trails		
Fire Pit		Ringed seating
Horseshoe Courts	2	
Bocce Courts	1	Artificial surface

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# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## *Facilities*

### Municipal Center Open Space – Dickey Road Entrance

**Figure 8**

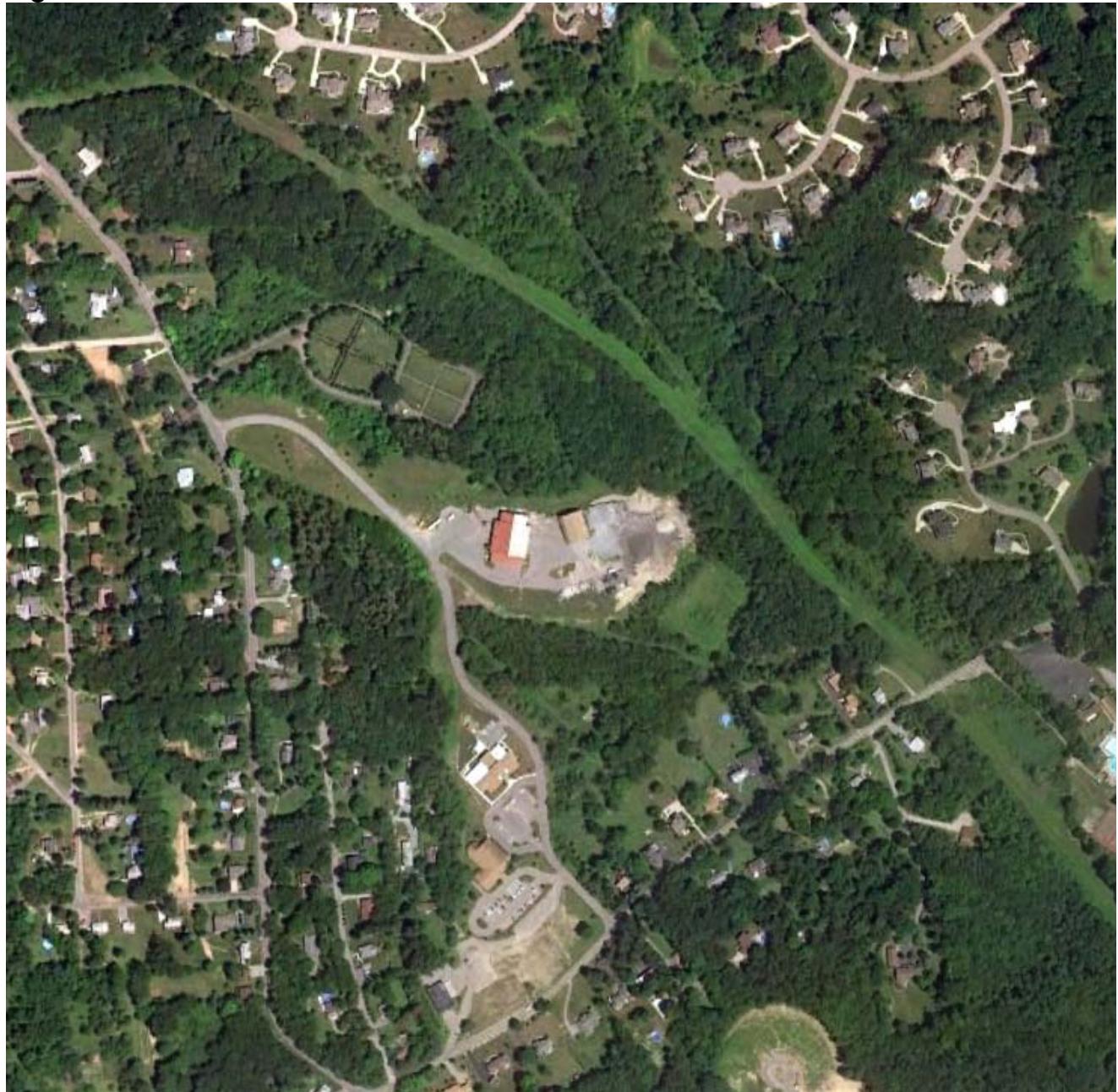


The 50 acre Municipal Center property is home to the Richland Township Municipal Building, Public Works Garage and material storage area, the Northern Tier Public Library and EMS station. There is also an unused lot on Summit Street which does not serve any public purpose and should be considered for sale. An unimproved trail weaves through the wooded portion of the property. Adjacent to Dickey Road, there is a vacant 3 acre tract of rolling land where the former Municipal Building stood. This roadside land is the focus of a more detailed master site plan study that the Township is in the process of completing.

The entire 50 acre Municipal Center Open Space property is shown on the following page.

## Municipal Center Open Space

*Figure 9*



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## *Facilities*

### Orchard Park/Deer Creek Open Space

**Figure 10**

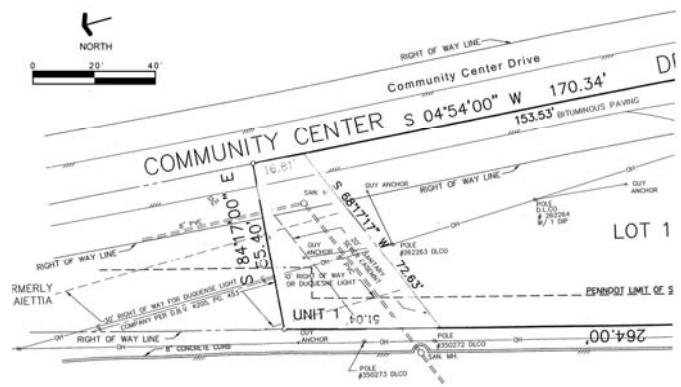


The Orchard Park/Deer Creek Open Space area is Township-owned land located between S.R.910 and the back yards of several residential properties fronting Forestwood, Creekvue and Arborwood Drives. The site, which is relatively long and narrow, encompasses approximately 7.5 acres, and Deer Creek runs the full length of the property. The property includes steep slopes, woodlands, flood plains, wetlands and a meadow where a former sanitary sewage treatment plant operated. Areas near the stream support a riparian habitat environment. Due to topography the property is only accessible through the former treatment plant property. This land is also the focus of a more detailed master site plan study that the Township is in the process of completing.



## The Community Center Drive Green Space

**Figure 11**



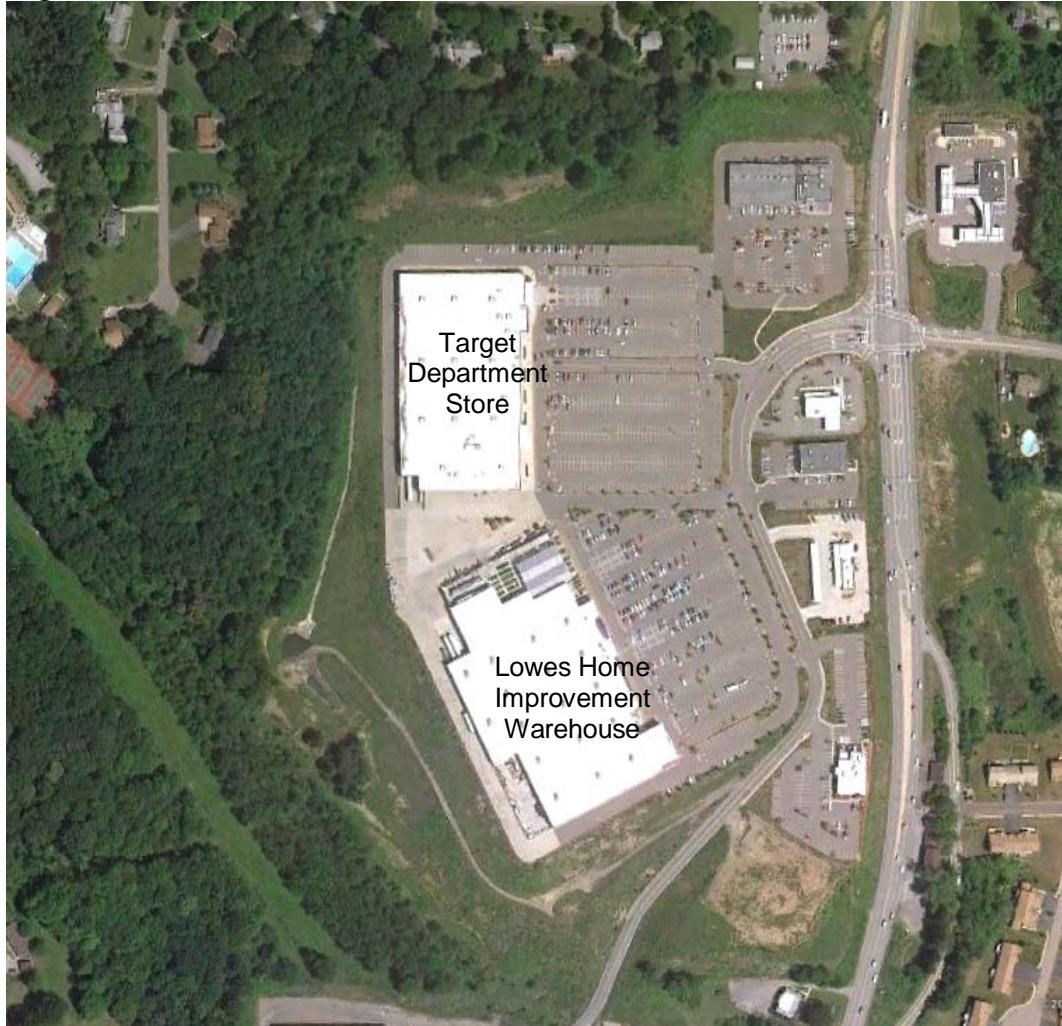
The Community Drive Parcel (only .04 acres) is located between S.R. 8 and Community Center Drive north of the Northtowne Square traffic signal. Although very small, the property has the potential to serve as a link within a future Township-wide trail network.

## Assessment of Existing Conditions

## *Facilities*

## Grandview Crossing Green Space

*Figure 12*



This 24+ acre site was donated to the Township by the developers of the Grandview Crossing retail development as a conservation parcel. Consequently, the use of the site is limited. The varying topography and the stream corridor present opportunities for limited passive recreation; including a trail connection to the Municipal Center and the Township's eastern neighborhoods.

In addition to the properties shown, the Heckert Road and South Woodland Circle properties, both owned by the Township, are small properties that historically have not contributed to the Township's overall public recreation and open space system.

## OTHER AREA FACILITIES

In addition to the parks and open spaces throughout the Township, several facilities are available for reservation and rental through the Pine-Richland School District. The School District operates several schools throughout the area including Pine-Richland High School, Pine-Richland Middle School, Eden Hall Upper Elementary School, Hance Elementary School, Richland Elementary School and Wexford Elementary School, and most have facilities available for rental through the School District. Facilities available (as of August 2010) for a fee include:

**Table 6: Pine Richland School District Facilities**

LOCATION	FACILITIES	NO.
High School	<i>Indoor:</i>	
	Gymnasium	2
	Fitness Area	1
	Pool	1
	Wrestling Room	1
	Spirit Room	1
	<i>Outdoor:</i>	
	Baseball/Softball Fields	4
	Soccer Fields	1
	Stadium/with Track	1
	Tennis Courts	5
Middle School	<i>Indoor:</i>	
	Gymnasium	2
	Fitness Area	1
	<i>Outdoor:</i>	
	Courtyard	1
Eden Hall Upper Elementary	<i>Indoor:</i>	
	Gymnasium	1
	Fitness Area	1
	<i>Outdoor:</i>	
	Basketball Courts	1
	Playground Structure	1
	Soccer Fields	forthcoming
	Multi-purpose Field	forthcoming

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## *Facilities*

**Table 6: Pine Richland School District Facilities (cont.)**

LOCATION	FACILITIES	NO.
Hance Elementary	<i>Indoors:</i>	
	Gymnasium	
	<i>Outdoor:</i>	
	Basketball Courts	1
	Playground Structure	1
	Multi-Purpose Field	1
	Soccer Fields	1
Richland Elementary	<i>Indoors:</i>	
	Gymnasium	2
	<i>Outdoor:</i>	
	Basketball Courts	1
	Playground Structure	1
	Multi-Purpose Field	1
	Baseball/Softball Fields	2
	Soccer Fields	2
Santacroce Stadium	Tennis Courts	3
	Multi-purpose Field/Track	1
Wexford Elementary	<i>Indoors:</i>	
	Gymnasium	1
	<i>Outdoors:</i>	
	Playground Structure	1
	Baseball/Softball Field	1

Additionally, the Pine Richland High School offers year-round usage of their aquatics facilities, including swimming lessons and reserved lanes for adults and children.

Pine Township also offers recreation facilities to residents in the area:

**Table 7: Pine Township Facilities**

COMMUNITY PARK	
Facility	No.
Baseball/Soccer Fields	4
Soccer Fields	2
Playground	2
Sand Volleyball	2
Pavilions	2
Concession stand with restroom	1
Bocce Court	1
Hiking/Nature Trail	1
Basketball Court	1
Children's Pre-School Playground	1
Fishing Lake	1
COMMUNITY CENTER	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-purpose - Community - Meeting rooms &amp; kitchen for catering.</li> <li>• Gymnasium and walking track.</li> <li>• Exercise rooms - Fitness area &amp; Tot room.</li> </ul>	



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Facilities

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

#### NRPA Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the recognized authority for guidelines and standards regarding park size ([www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org)). Those listed below identify the minimum and maximum size ranges according to various park types. The subsequent analysis compares the NRPA standards to Richland's existing facilities.

**Mini-parks** service small, distinct neighborhoods, or supplement school or private recreation facilities and generally are reached by walking. The recommended service area of such parks is less than 1/4 mile radius and the desirable size is 1 acre or less. NRPA standards recommend a 1/4 to 1/2 acre mini-park per 1,000 residents. Richland has no mini-parks, and perceives no demand for their availability. Consequently, due to the miniparks' limited potential usage and high maintenance costs, none are proposed.

**Neighborhood parks** provide intense recreational activities including court games, walking trails, picnicking, and playgrounds. Neighborhood parks are suited for intense development and should be easily accessible by safe walking or bike access to neighborhoods. The recommended service area (1/4 to 1/2 mile radius), which generally serves the immediate neighborhood, and the desirable size is 15 acres or more. NRPA standards recommend a standard of 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 residents, respectively. Given the scale of the Township's existing facilities and absence of mini-parks, the radius for this analysis was calculated at 0.5 miles.

**Community parks** are the most identifiable feature in a township's recreation system. They may contain landmarks, such as the Richland Barn, multi-purpose fields for intense recreation, and tranquil areas of natural beauty. Since they are intended to service the entire community, they are primarily accessible by vehicle and generally have a service radius of 1

to 2 miles. To accommodate the activities which this type of park intends to serve, the desirable size is 25 acres or more. Given Richland's semi-rural status and low population density, a 3 mile radius was customized for the analysis.

**Regional parks**, as their title implies, are large parks (250 acres or more) which service more than one municipality. Typically these facilities service populations located within 5 to 25 miles of their boarders and are accessible by vehicle. Planning Standards recommend 20 acres per 1,000 residents.

Many regional recreation opportunities exist for Richland Township residents. Most park facilities are provided by the State or County governments. Others, such as Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve and Tom's Run Conservation Area, are respectively owned and administered by the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Given the abundance of regional recreation opportunities, there is no need for the Township to duplicate these facilities. Making Township residents aware of these opportunities should be a major part of programming.

#### Projected Park Land Needs

If all of the residential land in Richland Township were developed to the full extent permitted under the present zoning ordinance, the Township's population would reach about 20,000 persons. Given the distribution of residential properties and the nature of the Township's highway system, community-scale versus neighborhood facilities should be prioritized for active recreation. Acquiring 80 additional acres of land for public park purposes would bring the Township into compliance with NRPA standards. The ideal ratio for the use of this land would be 30 acres for active recreation and 50 acres for passive recreation.

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Table 8: Acreage Distribution

Class.	Public Facility / Public Open Space	Total Acreage (ac)	Radius (mile)	Total Service Area (ac)	Acreage Distribution					
					Inside Richland			Outside Richland		
					(ac) <sup>1</sup>	% <sup>2</sup>	(ac) <sup>3</sup>	(ac)	%	(ac)
N <sup>4</sup>	Community Center Drive Open Space	0.04	0.5	502	502	100.0%	0.0	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Edgehill Drive	0.46	0.5	502	502	100.0%	0.5	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Former Chessrown Plant	1	0.5	502	502	100.0%	1.0	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Orchard Park /Deer Creek Valley Open Space	7.53	0.5	502	502	100.0%	7.5	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Heckert Road	0.34	0.5	502	502	100.0%	0.3	N/A	N/A	N/A
	South Woodland Circle	0.71	0.5	502	502	100.0%	0.7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Subtotal						10.1				
C/S	Bairdford Park	90	3	18,086	745	4.1%	3.7	17,341	95.9%	86.3
	Grandview Crossing	24.31	3	18,086	9,255	51.2%	12.4	8,831	48.8%	11.9
	Hampton Community Park	645	3	18,086	1,627	9.0%	58.0	16,459	91.0%	587.0
	Municipal Center Open Space	53.7	3	18,086	9,362	51.8%	27.8	8,724	48.2%	25.9
	Pine Community Park	109	3	18,086	785	4.3%	4.7	17,301	95.7%	104.3
	Richland Township Community Park	117	3	18,086	7,140	39.5%	46.2	10,946	60.5%	70.8
Subtotal						152.9				
Subtotal						886.1				
R	Moraine State Park	16,128	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	120.2	1,246,638	99.3%	16,007.8
	Crooked Creek Lake Park	3,074	25	1,256,000	5,500	0.4%	13.5	1,250,500	99.6%	3,060.5
	Hartwood Acres	645	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	4.8	1,246,638	99.25%	640.2
	North Park	3,075	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	22.9	1,246,638	99.3%	3,052.1
	Deer Lakes County Park	1,183	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	8.8	1,246,638	99.3%	1,174.2
	Brush Creek Park	687	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	5.1	1,246,638	99.25%	681.9
	Brady's Run Park	2,000	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	14.9	1,246,638	99.3%	1,985.1
	Old Economy Park	400	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	3.0	1,246,638	99.3%	397.0
	Northmoreland Park	548	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	4.1	1,246,638	99.25%	543.9
	State Game Land #203	1,240	25	1,256,000	9,362	0.7%	9.2	1,246,638	99.3%	1,230.8
Subtotal						206.6				
Grand Total						369.5				
Grand Total						24,820.9				

#### Notes

Classification Abbreviation: N: Neighborhood Park; C: Community Park; R: Regional Park; S: Special Use

1: Acreage in the Township included in the facility / open space service area.

2: Percentage of the Township within the facility / open space service area.

3: Portion of facility / open space that contributes to the Township's recreation / open space needs.

4: Classification does not include 114 acres of open space previously dedicated as part of residential developments (Beech St, Chadwick Manor, Parkview Estates, Richland Highlands, Willow Ridge, Yorktown)

**Table 9: Acreage Surplus/Deficiencies**

2000 Population	9,231
2009 Population Projection <sup>1</sup>	11,474
2020 Population Projection <sup>2</sup>	12,809
Buildout Population Projector	18,724

Classification <sup>3</sup>	Typical NRPA Definition	Typical Min. Size	Service Area Radius	Acreage Req'mt per 1,000 Pop. <sup>3</sup>	Current Township-wide Park, Recreation and Open Space Inventory <sup>4</sup>	2000		2009		2020		Build-out		
						Acreage Needed as per Pop. Statistics	Existing Surplus or Deficit ( )	Acreage Needed as per Pop. Statistics	Existing Surplus or Deficit ( )	Acreage Needed as per 2015 Pop. Proj.	Future Surplus or Deficit ( )	Acreage Needed as per 2050 Pop. Proj.	Future Surplus or Deficit ( )	
						acres	acres	acres	acres	acres	acres	acres	acres	
Neighborhood	Walk to park; intense recreational activities; 100% developed	.25-5	0.5	2.0	10	18	(8)	23	(13)	26	(16)	37	(27)	
Community/Special Use	Drive to park; variable intensity of recreational activities; max. 80% developed	20	3	8.0	153	74	79	92	61	102	51	150	3	
Regional	Drive to park; natural areas with some resource based activities; max 20% developed	250	25	20.0	206	185	21	229	(23)	256	(50)	374	(168)	
				Subtotal	30.0	369	277	92	344	25	384	(15)	561	(192)

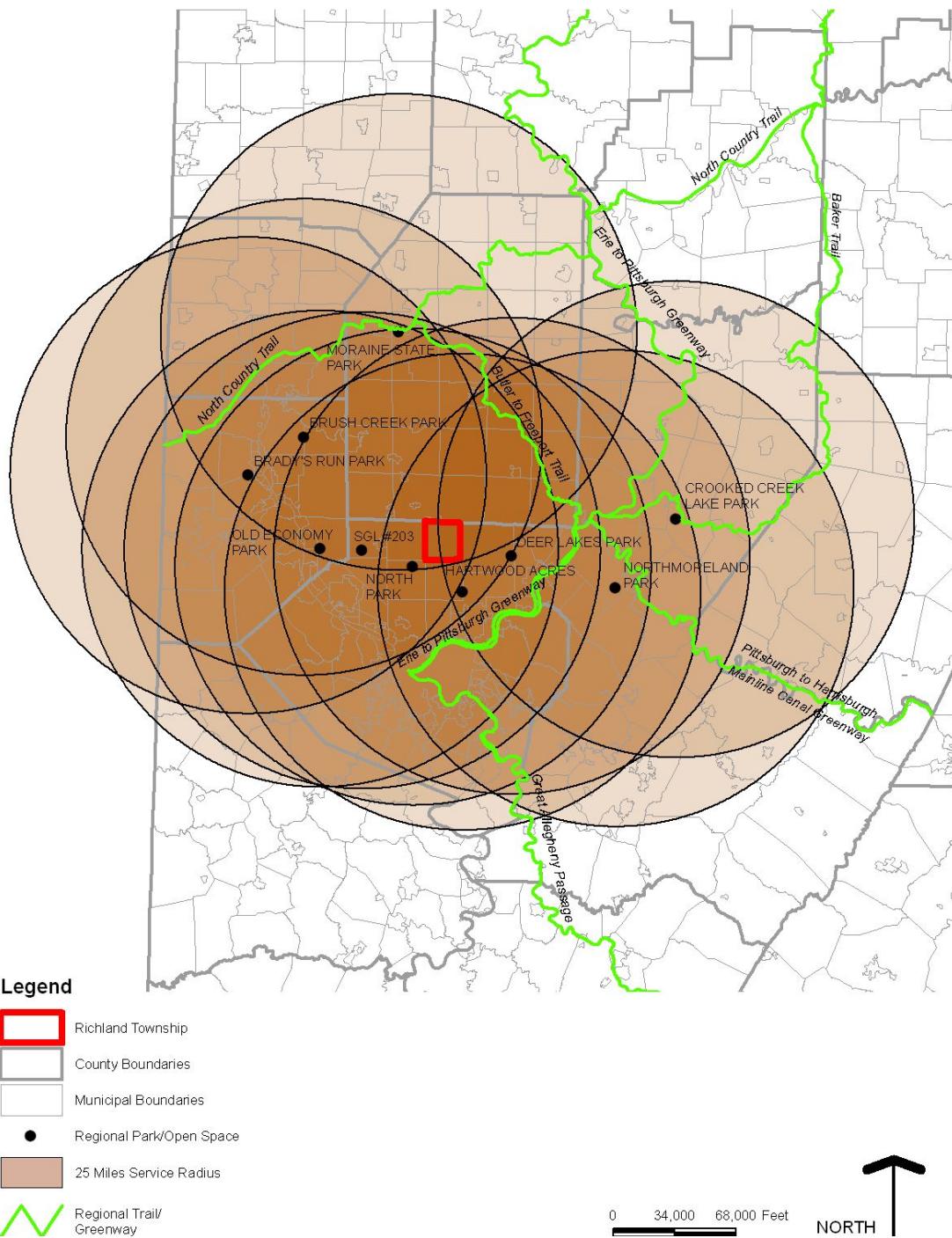
**Notes**

- 1 Based on the 2000 US Census Household Population and Household Type by Tenure figures and the Richland Township Yearly Permit Summary for New Dwelling Units and Commercial Buildings
- 2 Based on calculating 2000 US Census household size (2.67) x 50 newly occupied homes per year (=133.5) through a 10 year period (1,335 residents)
- 3 Based on National Recreation and Park Association standards.
- 4 Includes Municipal, County and State (Forest, Park and Gameland) facilities.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

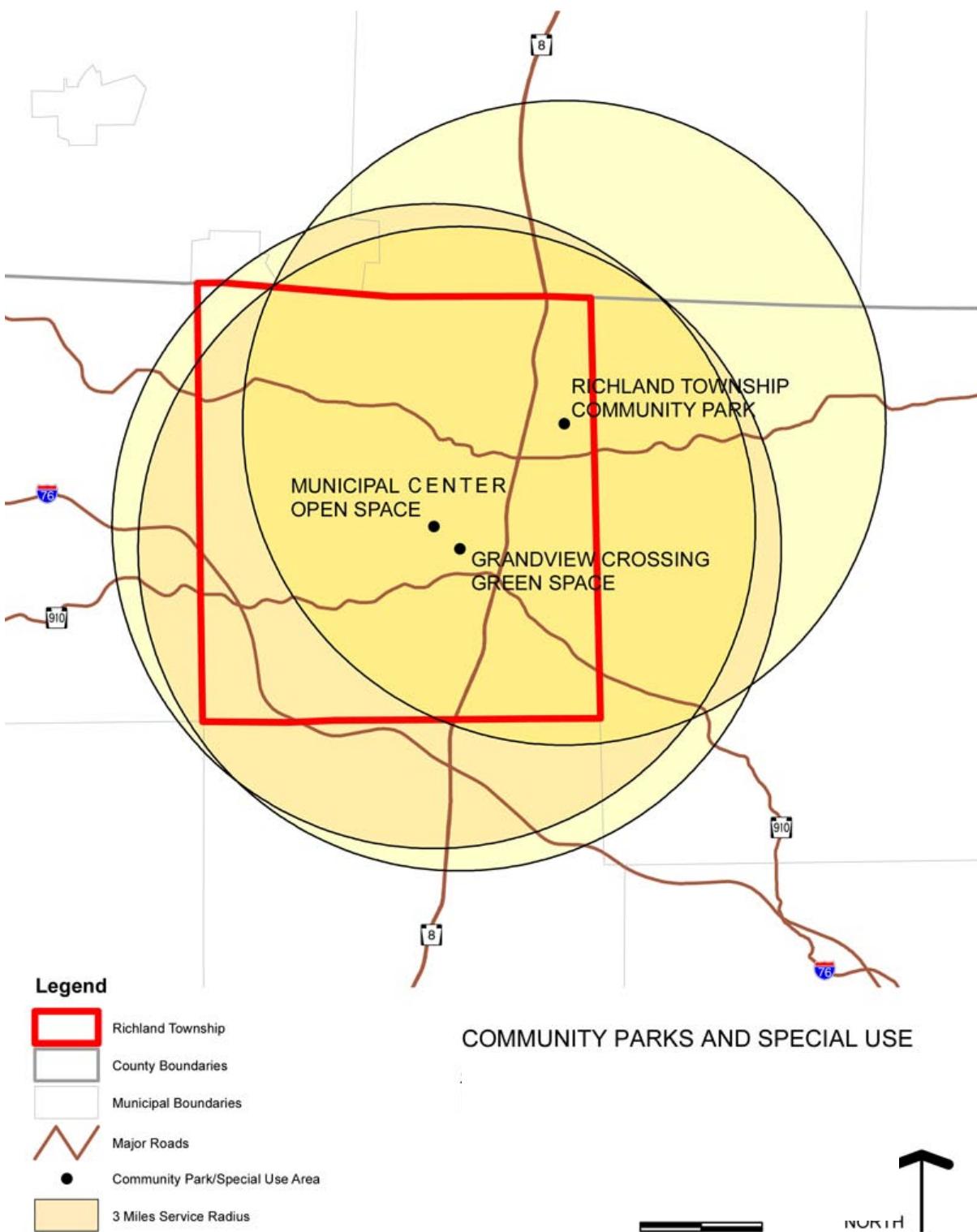
## Facilities

Figure 13: Regional Park Areas





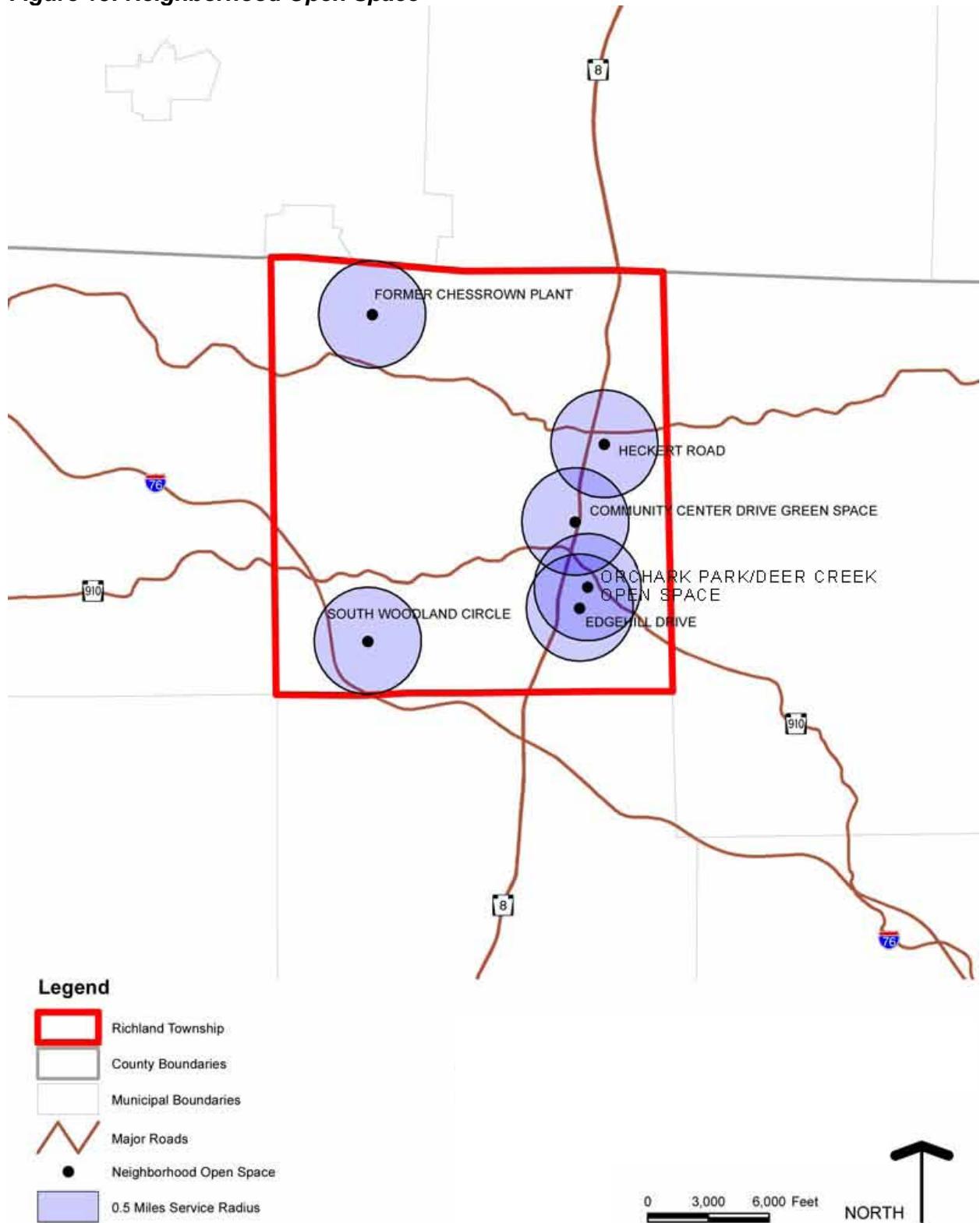
**Figure 14: Community Park and Special Use Areas**



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Facilities

Figure 15: Neighborhood Open Space



## ADA OBSERVATIONS:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is the short-hand name for a law adopted by Congress which prohibits discrimination against person with disabilities in a way which is similar to how the Civil Rights Act of 1964 made discrimination based on race, religion, sex or national origins illegal. The Act defines disability as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity". On September 15, 2010, the Department of Justice published in the Federal Register the Final Regulations for Titles II and III, and the adopted the New ADA Standards for Accessible Design, with some changes ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)). These regulations will go into effect on March 15, 2011. Compliance with the 2010 Standards is permitted immediately, but not required until March 15, 2012.

The Act prohibits discrimination by all public agencies, and pertains to physical access to programs and facilities. It applies to all "new construction" and also is applicable to existing facilities. Under the Act the failure to remove architectural barriers which are "readily achievable" can be considered discriminatory. Therefore, as part of this plan's planning and analysis process the consultant undertook an assessment of the conditions at Richland Park to assist in determining what improvement/fixes to existing facilities the Township may be capable of accomplishing. The observations are grouped into two categories; 1) access and 2) parking.

### Access

#### *Seating Areas*

Many of the older bleachers and seating areas at the park are not ADA accessible. Access to these areas should be provided in phases by means of installing a smooth and stable pathway. Companion seating should also be installed.



Figure 16 - ADA Seating Access a clear, firm course path needs to be provided to all fixed seating areas.



Figure 17 – ADA Seating Access, an area with fixed seating, the fire pit area also needs to be accessible and have applicable companion seating.

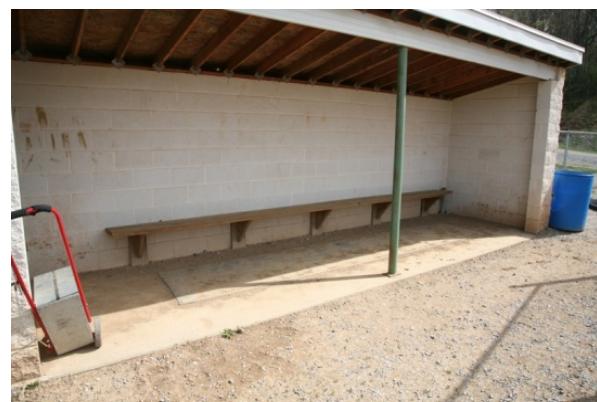


Figure 18 – ADA Seating accessibility within dugouts needs to be addressed.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Facilities*

## *Pedestrian Routes*

As these photographs show, some facilities lack a formal pathway. Others, which do have paved or stable surfaces, exceed the maximum slopes and grades permitted under the U.S. Department of Justice ADA Standards for Accessible Design regulations. Where compliance can be achieved without unreasonable expense, these barriers should be removed.



Figure 19 and 20 – ADA Access Routes



Figure 21 and 22 - ADA Cross Slope

In other locations, there are areas where a formal path needs to be constructed between major activity areas. More about access from parking is outlined on the following page.

## Parking

Size and scope of new parking areas in the park are ADA compliant. Connecting those lots to facilities and paths by means of painted, accessible routes and improved signage should be a priority of the Township's barrier removal effort.

To build on these observations, the Township should complete an ADA self-evaluation of its current municipal facilities. The evaluation will provide an improved understanding of accessibility deficiencies and identify strategies for bringing facilities, services and programs into compliance with ADA guidelines. A consultant specializing in accessibility law and evaluations could assist in the review. A sample of a self-evaluation from another community is included in the Appendix.



Figure 23-26: Parking Circulation and ADA Signage needs erected

## Turf management and other field considerations

Over many years the playing fields at Richland were installed by a combination of volunteers and private contractors. With the exception of Field #5 and the new soccer zone, none of the fields were installed according to an engineered specification. Consequently, the grade, subsurface conditions, amount of top soil, and quality of grass on each of the field varies. For many years, the maintenance of the turf and infields was left to the youth sports groups who used the fields. The Township was responsible for only mowing the grass. In the early 1990's, the Township hired a consultant to test the fields and develop a field turf maintenance plan. That maintenance schedule, with minor modifications, is currently being followed.

Based upon site views and sampling of the roots/soil, two main issues were discovered; 1) root zone depth, and 2) excessive clover cover.

Currently the range of depth to heavy clay/rock varies from 1 to 4.5". The recommendation for adequate grass performance is a minimum of 6" of soil with 8" to 12" of base. The shallowness of the top soil makes the grass susceptible to drought and disease. Given this limitation, field conditions should be regularly monitored and soil tests taken so that the maintenance program can be adjusted to improve turf quality. Plans for new fields should rely upon the advice of a landscape architect or sports field management expert.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Facilities*



Figure 27 and 28 – Field #2



Figures 29 and 30 - Lower Flat Field #2  
Bare Spots and Shallow Root Zone



Figure 31 and 32 – Field #5



Figure 33 – Clover Cover Field #5



Figure 35 and 36 – Field #6 and #8 Shallow root zone



Figure 37 - Field Clover Cover



Figure 34 – Field #6 Grading to be reworked

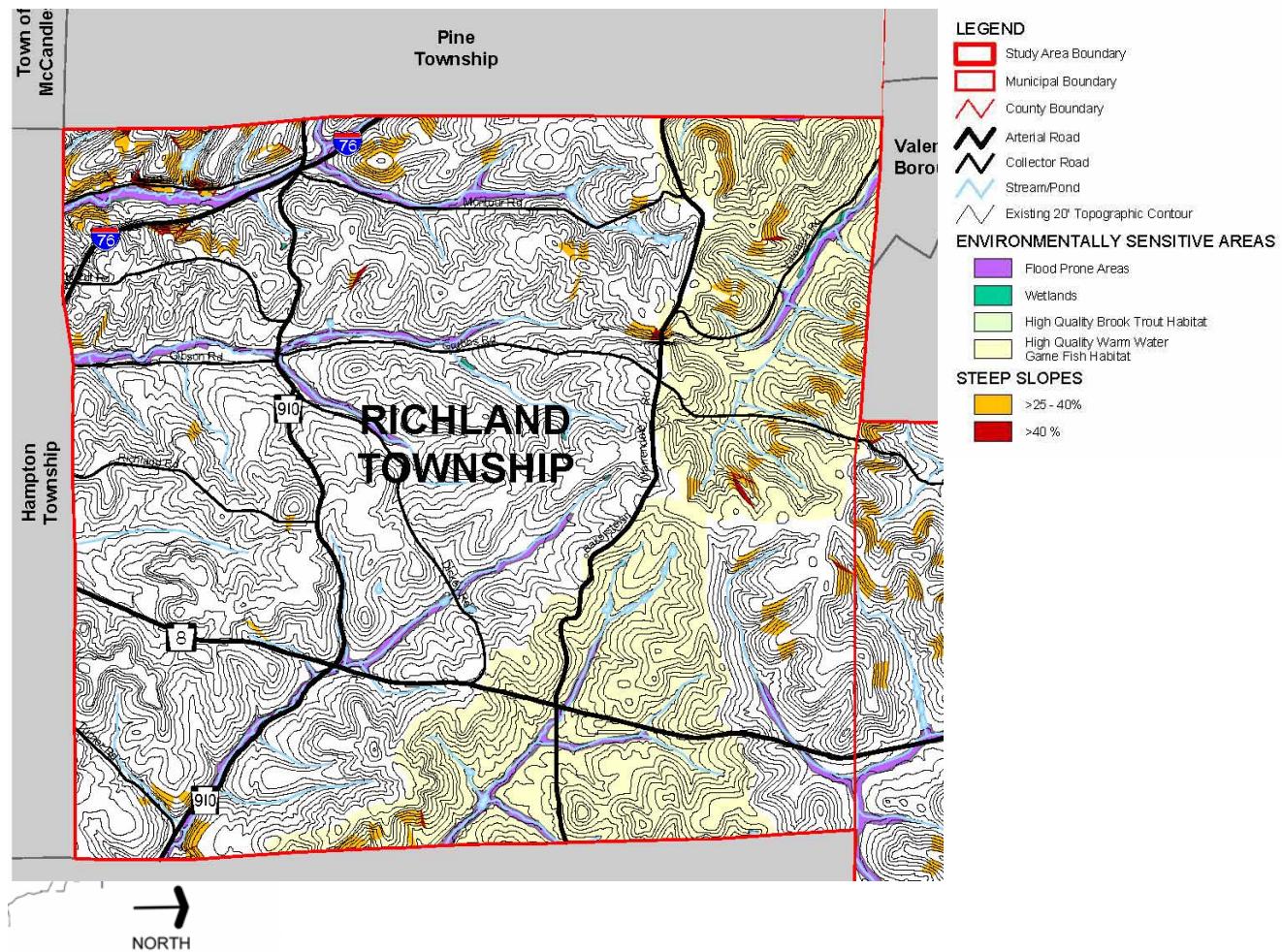
# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Facilities

### NATURAL RESOURCES:

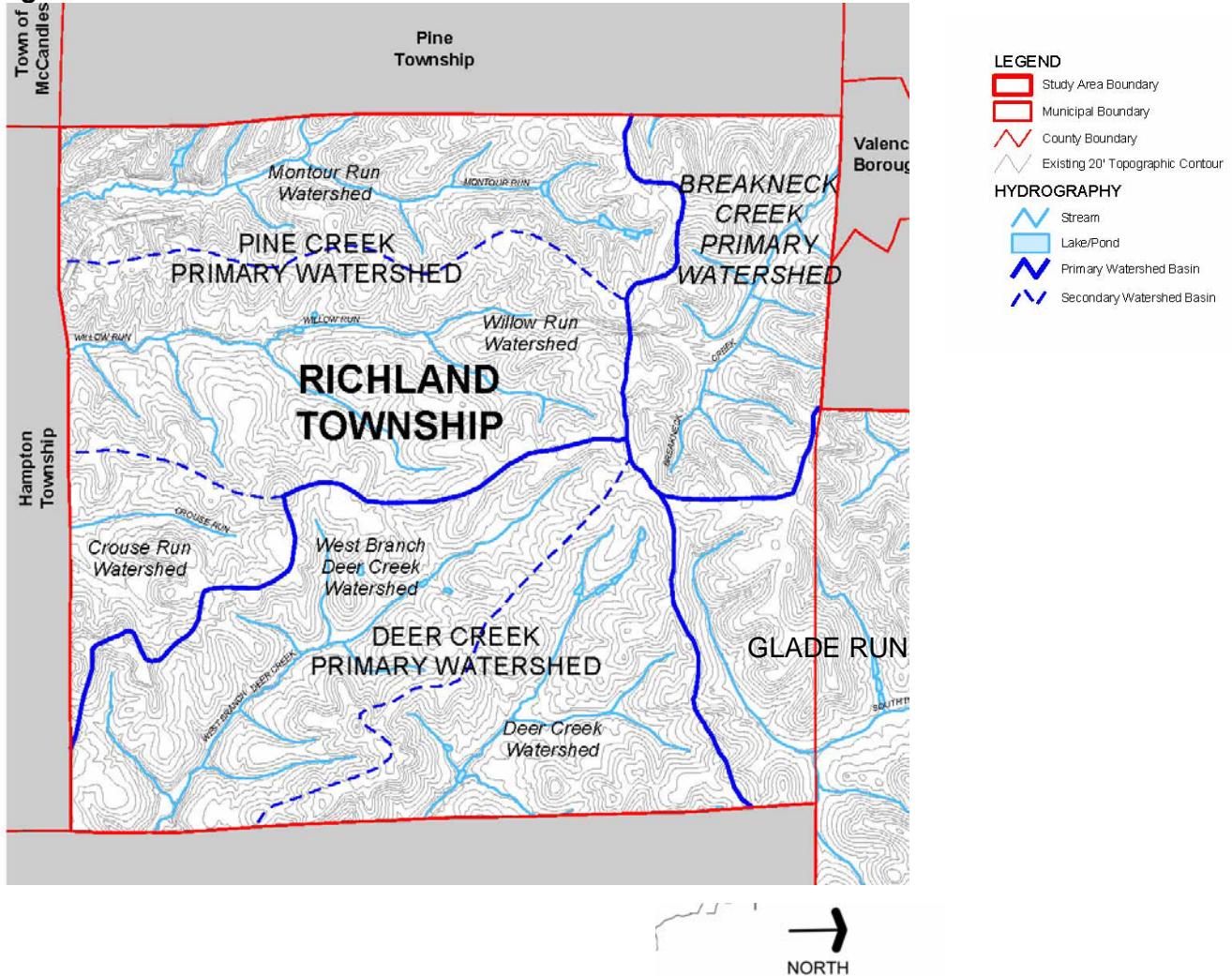
Based on natural resource information compiled by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC), several types of environmentally sensitive areas are found within Richland Township. Environmentally sensitive areas inventoried as part of the municipality's planning efforts include the location and relationship of flood prone areas, wetlands, high quality brook trout and high quality warm water game fish habitat areas. In addition, steep slopes, those greater than 25%, are also illustrated. From the analysis, these sensitive slope characteristics are scattered throughout Township and are not typically found in large, expansive areas.

**Figure 38: Environmentally Sensitive Areas**



One of the most significant elements of the Township's natural resource considerations is the extent of high quality watershed areas. More than 25% of Richland's land area is in a watershed that consists of high quality and exceptional value streams as designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. These areas, such as the Pine Creek and Deer Creek Corridors, are also identified as significant features in other planning efforts such as Allegheny County's Conservation Corridors Plan. In relationship to each of the Township's total area, the proportion of land within these "high quality watersheds" is unique to most other communities in the Southwestern Pennsylvania region. The existence of these streams presents the Township with some unique opportunities to maintain the important habitat areas, provide recreational opportunities for fishing, retain their riparian vegetation and to leverage their significance as a quality of life aspect. As identified on the following map excerpt from the community's Comprehensive Plan, Richland Township can be subdivided into four primary watersheds: Pine Creek, Deer Creek, Glade Run and Breakneck Creek. Glade Run is the predominate watershed within the neighboring Middlesex Township.

**Figure 39: Watersheds**



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

*Maintenance*

## PURPOSE OF MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT:

Parks are more than just ball fields and playgrounds— they are year-round hubs for creating healthy family bonds, reducing isolation of the elderly, contributing to youth development, experiencing nature, and building a sense of community. To that end, parks need to be clean, safe and inviting. A formal maintenance management plan will serve Richland Township in caring for the public parks over the long term.

### Maintenance

Maintenance is the single largest recurring expenditure in parks and recreation. Over the lifetime of a park, about 75% of its cost is in maintenance while only about 25% is in acquisition, development, design and construction (Lay, 1978).

A maintenance management plan sets forth the process by which Richland Township would plan, direct, control and evaluate the care of park and recreation facilities. The township's parks should reflect an effective level of service; an inviting, clean and attractive appearance; and the reality of fiscal and human resource limitations of the Township. The development and implementation of a formalized park maintenance management system is always a work in progress. It enables elected and appointed officials, managers, planners, and funding bodies to plan and allocate resources effectively, negotiate partnerships, set park policy and work with community organizations and citizens in creating public and private partnerships in caring for the parks. In this way, decision-makers will be able to gauge not only the initial affordability of a park, but also create strategies for creatively managing parks through both public and private resources.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Presently, Richland Township has a four pronged approach to park maintenance.

- The Board of Supervisors and the Township Manager are responsible for park and recreation planning and budgeting. The Parks and Recreation Board provides recommendations.
- The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining the public parks and recreation facilities.
- The Recreation Program Coordinator is responsible for field scheduling and manages the permitting process. As the primary contact for park users, the Coordinator is frequently the person made aware of maintenance problems and communicates with the Manager and the Public Works Director over needed repairs.
- Volunteers and contracted companies perform field maintenance tasks.

While the Township has been effective in maintenance, there is no comprehensive organization of maintenance policies, facts and figures to guide the level of effort and tasks performed. In comparison to the Township's other departments (e.g. Public Works), recordkeeping associated with parks and recreation has been significantly less formalized and thorough. In 2010, the Public Works Department will spend 500 hours on routine maintenance tasks and 1,000 hours on special park projects. The park maintenance budget is \$104,600; this compiles to a per acre cost of \$1,026. This includes township work force and contracted services. It does not include the value of volunteer maintenance services.

### Goals and Guidelines

Written goals and guidelines establish concrete standards and practices that are enduring and long-lived. Writing down all aspects of maintenance management serves to institutionalize practices that can be carried out no matter who is involved or in charge.

**The goal of park maintenance in Richland Township is to provide safe, clean, functional, and attractive township parks through implementation of an efficient and effective management program.**

The following guidelines can be used to formalize the Township's approach to park maintenance operations. The guidelines would apply to both Township employees and contractors and for volunteers who assume responsibility for park maintenance tasks.

- All maintenance will be accomplished in a manner displaying respect and concern for the environment as well as public and private property. Maintenance practices that are rooted in a strong conservation ethic should be adopted.
- Maintenance tasks will be accomplished in a way that does not endanger the health or safety of the employees nor the public.
- Maintenance practices will be rooted in the best information available regarding science involved in the care of natural resources, turf, and recreation facilities to ensure their viability and vitality.
- All maintenance tasks will be performed as quickly and economically as possible without any loss in efficiency.
- All equipment and materials will be operated and maintained in such a way as to insure safe, effective use and long life.
- Work will be scheduled in such a manner as to make the most use of the resources of other community organizations who are involved or who may become involved.
- Preventive maintenance will be used in a continuing effort to avoid major problems and correct minor ones.
- All maintenance work will be performed with a sense of pride.

## **KEY CONSIDERATIONS:**

### **Maintenance Standards**

Maintenance standards provide a common framework for all involved including contractors, volunteers, maintenance staff, administration, partners, sponsors, park visitors and the citizens. It will enable elected and appointed officials and parks and recreation management to set policies on use, fees and charges, volunteer requirements, staffing levels, contractual service requirements, and other issues that may emerge. It will also enable the Township to communicate with the public about natural resource protection, park maintenance requirements, field use capacity and the ability of the Township to undertake additional citizen demands on the parks with the resources that the Township has available.

With concern for sustainability and environmental protection at the forefront, people are recognizing the importance of conservation as opposed to a traditional regime of mowing and trimming. Natural maintenance is vital for effective wildlife and habitat management; it is essential to inform the public about the requirements for effective maintenance as well as for naturalized maintenance. Setting maintenance standards will formalize that Richland Township is committed to maintaining the parks in a sustainable manner.



# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Maintenance

### NRPA Standards: An Approach

The National Recreation and Park Association advocates a system of maintenance modes for parks which refer to the degree ranging from most intensive to least intensive ([www.npra.org](http://www.npra.org)). The optimal level of care will vary from one location to another as well as from one area within a park to another. Richland Township can use the modes as guidelines to direct resources towards where the need is greatest and the benefit the most. It is most important to note that not all facilities or locations within facilities should or could be maintained at the highest level; the goal is to achieve the level of care appropriate to Richland Township's financial and human resources. This would help Richland decision makers recognize and understand the Township's capacity to undertake new facilities or that adjusting maintenance programs and quality standards as necessary when circumstances change or opportunities emerge. The modes range as follows<sup>1</sup>:

**Mode I - State of the Art Maintenance** applies to high quality diverse landscapes associated with high traffic areas such as government grounds, plazas or campuses. Because of the very intensive work requirements and associated costs, it is unlikely that Richland Township would set this as a standard for any facility; but it is important to keep in the quality scale should the Township ever need to place an area or facility at this level.

**Mode II - High Level Maintenance** is associated with well-developed public areas including government grounds or very highly visited park areas or features. The Richland Township Municipal Building falls into this category. This is the level of maintenance that would be the goal for the most used recreation facilities and sites, but given the staff and funding available, it may not be achievable for

all areas desired. In Richland Township, athletic fields should fall into this category.

**Mode III - Moderate Level Maintenance** is used for locations that have moderate to low levels of visitation or development or for facilities that because of budget restriction, cannot afford to go to a higher level of maintenance. The perimeter areas of Richland Park as well as the family recreation areas could fall into this category.

**Assigning quality standards is an important process that requires discussion, deliberation, and consensus building. Setting standards will also launch discussion on park policies regarding use, fees and charges, volunteerism and permitting for sports.**

**The Park and Recreation Board could be charged with recommending standards for the Richland Township Community Park as one of their important roles and functions. Input from Public Works, elected and appointed officials, sports leagues, permittees and the general citizenry will be an important factor in setting standards.**

**Mode IV - Moderately Low Level Maintenance** is used for locations that are affected by budget restrictions that cannot afford a higher level of care.

**Mode V<sup>2</sup> - High Visitation Natural Areas** applies to natural areas and facilities such as trails, trail heads, nature center grounds, entries, and parking areas with access to natural areas.

**Mode VI - Minimum Level Maintenance** is used for large natural areas, open spaces or parks that are undeveloped.

<sup>1</sup> National Recreation and Park Association. **Operational Guidelines for Grounds Management.** NRPA: Ashburn, VA. 2001. Pp 20 – 25.

<sup>2</sup> National Recreation and Park Association. **Park Maintenance Standards.** NRPA: Alexandria, VA. 1986. p. 9-10.

## **Risk Management**

Having safe facilities for visitors as well as protecting the public investment is essential to Richland Township; public perception that the parks are safe is important to their success.

Risk Management is a standard operating practice of parks and recreation agencies. Risk includes the possibility that harm could result from a hazard that would cause personal injury, death, property damage, economic loss or damage to the environment. To manage risk in township parks, three management steps are needed:

**Risk Identification and Assessment** – It is necessary to identify all of the sources of potential hazards in the park. Richland Township needs to have knowledge at all times of any risk related to the park. This includes park conditions, the employees or volunteers that might make the Township subject to liability as the result of how they complete their duties and any other liability of the township parks and recreation department.

**Risk Assessment** – Richland Township could work with its insurance carrier to evaluate the park and departmental operating practices to assess the probability of risk. This would also include tracking any incidents or injuries reported.

**Risk Management Plan** - The Risk Management Plan is important for both safe operations as well as in establishing credibility in case of litigation. Some insurance carriers provide assistance and even grants to undertake such planning projects. The plan should include the following documents all of which should be reviewed by the township solicitor:

- Statement that the Township is committed to safety for citizens, employees and facilities
- Program registration information
- Accident forms
- Health forms if appropriate
- Participation forms and waivers
- Rental agreements and leases
- Program dates and documents
- Operations information and policies
- Reports for maintenance and procedures
- Inspection program and reports

## **A Tool for Risk Management**

Routine scheduled maintenance provides the foundation for effective park security and risk management. When park visitors see that a facility is well cared for, the risk of vandalism and other undesirable social behaviors tends to diminish. The best security is not people in uniforms but people in parks playing and enjoying being outside.

## **Sustainable Park Design and Maintenance**

Often, park design and maintenance focuses on recreation to the detriment of a park's natural resources. The focus needs to be on establishing and managing the parks in a way that enables responsible public use which is in harmony with the environment. Richland Township has the opportunity to define the appearance of parks as natural areas and recreational sites. Effective signage about nature helps to build support for a more environmentally sound approach to park design and maintenance. Adopting maintenance practices that conserve natural resources require planning, training, expertise and public education. A sample of these types of practices can be found in the Appendix.

## Assessment of Existing Conditions

## *Maintenance*

## Benefits of Sustainable Park Maintenance Practices

Sustainable park maintenance practices save money, and the protection of our resources is good both for people and the environment. Connection with nature helps citizens to reduce their stress and mental fatigue and contributes to their sense of well-being. Areas with natural features help citizens develop social ties that foster strong neighborhoods and sense of community.

## Volunteers

Volunteers are often considered the means to managing parks and recreation at the least cost. Although volunteers are important, they are not free. Volunteers require recruiting, training, supervision, coordination, support, and recognition. Currently, the Township staff's capacity for extensive volunteer coordination and oversight (beyond the level which is offered today) is limited. Volunteerism efforts should concentrate on major organizations or volunteers of such caliber that can work independently, such as Eagle Scouts. It is also important to note that volunteers are not substitutes for park maintenance expertise and staff. Richland Township parks require reliable, dependable, knowledgeable workers in the area of sports turf management, natural resource management, park security, and related services. The Township should institute a training program to send their workers to develop expertise in these areas over time. Some funding within Public Works is allocated for attendance at meetings or conferences and should be used for such activities. Allocating one to two percent of the parks and recreation operating budget should be the benchmark. Although volunteers usually cannot perform to the level required due to their time limitations and demands in their own lives, a new trend in volunteerism is emerging, and Richland Township has already benefitted in this way through ballfield maintenance performed by

a dedicated volunteer. Demographic changes resulting in a larger retirement population of active, healthy, well-educated residents may yield a significant volunteer cadre. Indications are that this group would be interested in using their education and expertise for the community benefit in areas such as environmental conservation and education.

## Contractual Maintenance

Richland Township contracts out mowing and turf care. The major advantage to this is that the Township does not have to purchase or maintain the major and minor equipment needed to perform these tasks. This alone is a major cost saving. The disadvantage is that the turf management program may not be updated as conditions change and adjustments need made at the caliber required to attain the quality of fields desired.

## Cyclic Maintenance

Cyclic maintenance deals with the normal replacement of capital items such as a roof. Cyclic repairs are a function of weather, use, and other unforeseen events. The American Public Works Association recommends budgeting two to four percent of the development costs annually to establish as a capital reserve account for cyclic repairs. Advances in technology will also impact the future costs based upon changes in design and materials. Cyclic maintenance is a function of effective ongoing maintenance. Deferred maintenance leads to costly rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities that could cost up to seven times as much as performing routine maintenance.

**Table 10: Park Cyclic Repairs**

Item	Time frame
Pavilions	20 years
Re-paving (parking areas, access roads and pathways)	15 years
Playground (equipment and safety surfaces	10 years
Furniture (such as litter receptacles, benches, etc.)	15 Years

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Financing

### PURPOSE OF FINANCING ASSESSMENT:

Richland Township has a budget philosophy rooted in a deep sense of responsibility to the taxpayers and a strong commitment to excellent public service. Living within the means of the community is of the utmost importance. Elected and appointed officials give strong consideration to undertaking capital improvements or programs with respect to both capital costs and their long term requirements for financial support. Because of this sound approach to financial management, the Township has been able to undertake major parks and recreation improvements over the last twenty years that benefit the citizens of today as well as many generations yet to come.

**The purpose of the financing assessment is to review how the financial aspects of parks and recreation are supported, managed and directed toward meeting community goals and with respect to the Township's resources and make recommendations for future improvements.**

### EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The two major areas to be considered in financing are capital improvements and operations.

- An operating budget supports the daily operation of parks and recreation. The largest category is personnel covering salaries, wages, and benefits. An operations budget can be funded through taxes, user fees & charges, grants, gifts, donations, partnerships, and sponsorships.
- A capital improvement budget is used for improvements that cost more than \$10,000 and last more than five years. Such improvements include park and recreation

facility development, purchase of major equipment, or the rehabilitation of existing facilities. It could also include land acquisition. Ways to fund capital improvements include municipal funds, grants and gifts, fundraising, donations, bond issues, partnerships, mandatory dedication of parkland, and loans.

### Operating Budget

The operating budget includes both revenues and expenditures as reported in Tables 11 and 12.

### Revenues

Table 9 presents the revenues for Richland Township's Parks and Recreation Department for 2005 through 2009. The Township derives revenues for parks and recreation operations from the General Fund through tax revenues, program fees, contributions, concessions, rentals and other fees. The Township generates funds for capital improvements through fees assessed on building permits for new residential construction. These fees are earmarked for capital projects. For 2010, the Township projects revenues to be about \$39,000 in income from program fees and charges and \$28,800 in recreation fees through building permits. In 2010, the Township budgeted \$141,300 in tax support for Parks and Recreation. This is about \$32.88 per household.

The Township also transfers year-end general fund surpluses to the General Capital Reserve Fund where they can be used to finance park-related capital improvements. The 2010 allocation of \$360,000 is programmed in this fund for recreation/park capital projects in Richland Township Community Park.

The largest category of expenses is associated with maintenance.

**Table 11: Revenues**

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
<b>Revenues</b>					
Community Day Concessions	1,963	2,438	1,965	2,317	1,353
Use – rental permits	25,145	25,704	26,804	19,143	18,610
Program Contributions	3,500	5,411	4,255	4,050	4,890
Program Registration	4,645	5,230	5,089	4,916	2,773
Other Fees	2,855	4,478	3,396	3,457	3,048
Sub-total	38,108	43,261	41,509	33,883	30,674
New Residential Construction	20,754	23,800	29,140	23,800	36,750
Recreation Fees					

**Table 12: 2010 General Fund Parks and Recreation Budget Allocation**

Personal Services/Administration	\$16,000
Personal Services/Taxes	\$2,500
Consulting Services	\$35,000
Liability Insurance	\$3,500
Meetings & Conferences	0
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$57,000</b>
<b>Recreation</b>	
Recreation Supplies	\$2,500
Classes and Programs	\$10,000
<b>Total Recreation</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>
<b>Park Maintenance</b>	
Personal Services/Public Works	\$35,000
Repair Supplies	\$4,000
Property Insurance	\$1,800
Electricity	\$3,000
Water	\$800
Contracted Repair of Property	\$23,000
Contracted Mowing	\$20,000
Cleaning and Maintenance	\$17,000
<b>Total Park Maintenance</b>	<b>\$104,600</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET</b>	<b>\$174,100</b>
<b>Capital Budget</b>	
Capital Construction	\$40,000
Capital Purchases	\$3,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$43,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$217,100</b>

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Financing

### Other Means of Support

In addition to the revenues from taxes, fees, charges, concessions, and new residential construction fees, the Township has other important means of support.

### Volunteers

The Parks and Recreation Board contribute important assistance in terms of critical thought regarding public parks and recreation as well as providing the labor needed to carry out programs especially the special events.

One of the Park and Recreation Board members, Anton Krysa, has made it his mission to care for the Richland Township baseball fields. He spends countless hours cultivating, repairing, dragging and raking the fields. To his credit, the baseball fields are among the finest in the area. In addition to the tasks he performs, he also works with the sports team leaders in instructing them in methods to undertake tasks that advance his work, such as how to drag the infields. The leagues, a key stakeholder in Richland Township Park, and township officials recognize the importance of his work and the value of his contributions.

Sports Leagues contribute tens of thousands of hours annually in running athletic programs year round. The leagues provide organization, supervision, coaching, training, registration, fundraising, advertising, promotion and facility care. For example, in 2008 the Pine Richland Youth Football Association, at its own expense, constructed a concession stand with restrooms and a broadcast booth on Field #4. The Association also installed a sprinkler system on Fields #4 and #5. The Pine Richland Baseball Softball Association has partnered with Richland Township annually to help pay for park improvements including field lights, dug-outs, batting cages, infield improvements and a playground.

### Joint Ventures in Parks and Recreation

The Township joins with community sports leagues to make improvements to parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, Richland Township regularly joins forces with several other providers in offering recreation opportunities such as summer recreation programs, movie nights with other municipalities and co-sponsoring trips and tours.

### Benchmarks

As part of this plan, local parks and recreation departments were asked to complete a questionnaire developed by the planning team to provide information about their parkland, recreation facilities, programs, and financing. Information on the following page presents their responses along with data from Richland Township. The information in this table should be used as a tool for informed decision making rather than absolute standards. Since municipal parks and recreation department differ in many ways, any two departments can be successful yet have very different experiences with regard to certain measures. A deviation between the Richland Township figures and figures from other municipalities is not necessarily good or bad, it merely indicates additional analysis may be required. As a rule, the larger the difference, the greater the need for further investigation.

### Per Capita Investment (State and National Comparisons)

Based upon a population estimate of 11,474 and the 2010 parks and recreation expenditures, Richland Township is spending about \$15.17 per capita. The average per capita municipal investment in parks and recreation in Pennsylvania is about \$27.74. The \$27.74 average is based upon the latest Pennsylvania Budget and Salary Survey for parks and recreation agencies conducted in 2002 and adjusted to the 2010 dollar value.

The average national per capita municipal investment is \$65 according to the Trust for Public Land. In Richland Township each household will pay about \$32.88 for parks and recreation. In the Richland area, the following municipalities reported their per capita investment in parks and recreation as follows:

- Franklin Park Borough \$36.32
- Marshall Township \$50.62
- Ross Township \$7.68
- Ohio Township \$71.85
- Richland Township \$15.17

#### **Ratio of Parks and Recreation to the Township Budget.**

Richland Township's 2010 operating budget of \$5,094,715 includes \$174,100 for parks and recreation equating to 3.3 percent of the operating budget. The list below shows comparisons with other municipalities in the region regarding parks and recreation as a percentage of the municipal operating budget as follows:

- Franklin Park Borough 7.4%
- Marshall Township 6.7%
- Ross Township 1.9%
- Ohio Township 4.8%
- Richland Township 3.3%

#### **Per Capita Investment (Pennsylvania Comparison Based upon population of 10,000 to 14,435)**

The **Pennsylvania Budget and Salary Survey** provides information about municipal parks and recreation agencies based upon population size similar to Richland Township as shown in Table 13.

**Table 13: Park and Recreation Comparisons**  
**(population of 10,000-14,435 in PA)**

Factor	Municipal Park & Recreation Agencies Avg*	Richland Township
Population	12,065	11,474
Municipal Size	26.95 sq. mi.	14.6 sq. mi.
Range of Municipal Size	1.2 – 330.7 sq. mi.	-
Number of Parks	6.6	1
Range: Number of Parks	1 - 12	-
Number of Acres	173	108
Range: Number of Park Acres	9 – 600 Acres	-
Average Per Capita Parks & Recreation Operating Budget	\$22.88	\$15.17
Per Capita Operating Budget Range	\$2.53 - \$84.65	-

\*Source: 2002 Pennsylvania Budget and Salary Survey adjusted for 2010 dollar value.

# Assessment of Existing Conditions

## Financing

### KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

#### Strengths

- Richland Township has a strong commitment to sound fiscal management, accountability and living within the means of municipal resources.
- While the Township operates with a part time Recreation Program Coordinator, the Township is still able to generate about 22 percent of the parks and recreation operating budget through non-tax sources. In addition to these fees and charges, the Township also has significant support from community volunteers especially in the area of sports. These organizations provide both labor and financial resources.
- The Township is trying to meet the recreational needs of future residents by establishing a policy to generate fees dedicated to recreation improvements through land development.
- Managing information about costs and financing will help to identify ways to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Consider the purchase of recreation and facility maintenance software to help to generate data that can be used for information management. Park maintenance software (such as TRIMS) should be the highest priority for software.
- Since the Township cannot provide all facilities and programs on its own, partnerships are crucial. Tailoring these partnerships to where the cost effective use of staff is dedicated will help to reap the benefits of community support. Partnerships with other providers of service need to be carefully monitored in terms of payback with respect to staff time invested and the community service level produced.

- Establishing a Mandatory Dedication of Land Ordinance will help to generate the amount of land or fees-in-lieu of dedication at an appropriate value. This is especially important in a community such as Richland Township with the level of population increase anticipated.

#### Challenges

- The major challenge facing just about every public and private sector enterprise is the current economic downfall and stagnant growth.
- The per-capita operating investment in Richland Township in 2010 is \$15.17. According to the most recent Budget and Salary Survey developed by PADCNR adjusted for 2010-dollar values, the range for per capita spending by municipal departments with populations of 10,000 to 14,435 is \$2.53 – \$84.65 with an average of \$22.88. Locally the four communities surveyed and reported on in Table 13 show a range of \$7.68 to \$71.85. These comparisons place Richland Township's per capita investment below average among similarly sized or located communities.
- The proportion of the Township's operating budget allocated for parks and recreation is 3.3 percent. Working towards five percent or higher could be set as a goal to be phased in over time.
- The Township spends about \$1,026 per acre on park maintenance. Present conditions on sports fields indicate that increased maintenance and a stepped-up sports turf management program is essential to support athletic fields effectively. As more parkland or new facilities are added, a commensurate

increase in the maintenance budget is warranted.

- Revenue generated from non-township taxes is smaller than similar departments elsewhere as expected with a part-time recreation staff. More recreation staff time would enable the expansion of program planning, implementation, and evaluation. This would include programs and opportunities fostered through partnerships as well as in the direct provision of programs by the Township. While the development of a program management plan is essential, part of the development of such a plan could include striving for generating 30 to 50 percent cost recovery over a defined time schedule as a goal.
- The Parks and Recreation Department operates without a fees and charges policy or a revenue policy to guide pricing and revenue generation.
- The Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments operate without a workload cost tracking system as well as the systematic evaluation of land facilities, services and programs. Developing a workload cost tracking system will help management staff, elected and appointed officials to make more informed decisions regarding the allocation of human and financial resources, policy formulation, fees and charges establishment, and in informing the public about the level of municipal investment in parks and recreation.
- Two factors limit generating private support for parks and recreation: a part time staff and Richland Township's limited number of businesses to tap for partnerships and sponsorships with which to partner. Even though volunteers are considered as "free", they require recruitment, training, supervision,

managing and recognizing, although there are exceptions. For that reason, securing volunteers should be directed towards groups of people, organizations or businesses rather than individuals.

## CORE RECOMMENDATION:

**Match administrative capabilities with needs to enhance the functionality of programs, facilities, maintenance operations, finance and project management.**

## OVERVIEW:

Parks and recreation management requires interdisciplinary skills which focus on the care and maintenance of facilities and programs. It is the role of the managers to coordinate and oversee the safe, secure and environmentally-sound operation of the Township's recreation assets in a cost effective manner aimed at their long-term preservation and enhancement. Their duty is to make sure the day-to-day delivery of parks and recreation services and facilities are satisfactory to the end users and provide an optimal environment for recreation functions. Recreation management incorporates all activities related to keeping a park system running.

## BENEFITS:

- Control/oversight/reporting/accountability/reliability/increased effectiveness
- Promotes strategic thinking and sound decision making
- Matches organizational capabilities with pragmatic processes, which in cooperation with diverse constituencies, achieve Department goals and objectives
- Creates a parks environment which integrates people, places, programs, processes and projects in a sustainable system.

## PRIORITIES:

- ✓ Organize administration roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes
- ✓ Utilize strategic management systems to plan and implement policies, procedures and projects

## PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

**Organize administrative roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes.**

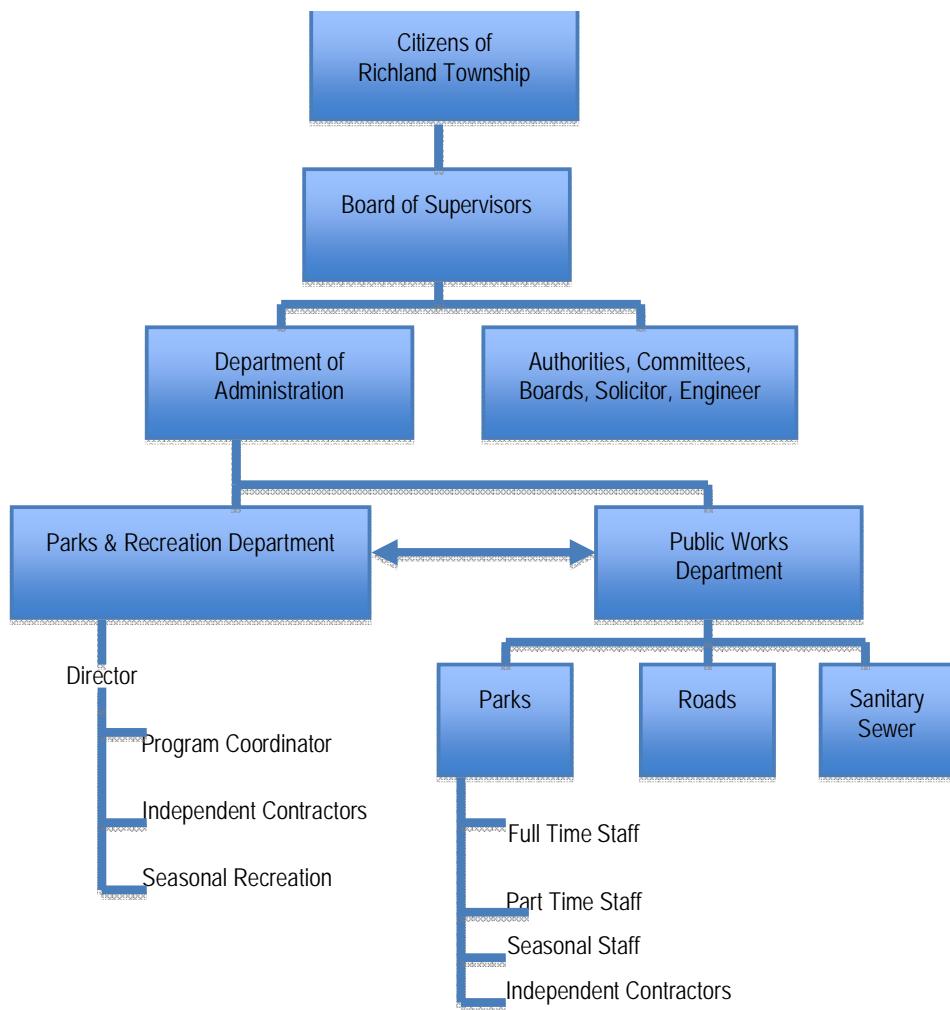
- Park administration should remain a function of the Township Manager until the following conditions indicate that a full-time Recreation Director be hired:
  - 1) The population reaches 15,000;
  - 2) Responsibilities warrant; and
  - 3) Resources are in place to support a full-time department.

A significant portion of the Township Manager's current responsibilities which focus on planning, directing, controlling and evaluating municipal parks and recreation would become the responsibility of the full time Director.

- The Township should develop a job description for the current Recreation Program Coordinator position. About 60% of this position's time should be spent on planning and outreach to build support for partnerships and park awareness, 20% on programs and 20% on facility usage and administrative functions.

- Maintain the current organizational structure with the Recreation Program Coordinator focusing on programs and facility use and the Public Works Department focusing on park maintenance and projects.
- Build on partnerships and explore options including funding through DCNR for combining resources and sharing responsibilities for recreation services with neighboring municipalities where feasible.
- Continue to outsource services for which the Township lacks in-house resources and expertise.
- Transition the Public Works Department into three specialized divisions: Parks, Sanitary Sewers, and Roads. Select workers for specialized training in park maintenance areas such as turf management, playground safety, natural resource protection, etc.
- For the long term, the Township should adopt the organizational structure shown in Figure 40.

**Figure 40: Organizational Structure**



# Recommendations

## Management

**Utilize a strategic management system to effectively carry out policies, procedures and plans**

- The strategic management system outlined in Table 14 represents a philosophy which decision makers can use to comprehensively assess the costs and benefits of major capital improvement projects and programs from their initiation through their useful life.

**Table 14: Conventional Management vs. Strategic Management**

Management Scenarios for Parks and Recreation	
Conventional Management	Strategic Management
1. Maintaining the status quo	1. Change-oriented, dynamic
2. Rooted in tradition	2. Mission-oriented
3. Adheres to a rigid decision-making formula	3. Dynamic procedure of give-and-take which guides future actions
4. Reactive	4. Proactive
5. "Wait and See" in ambiguous situation	5. Action-oriented, even in face of ambiguity
6. Focused on internal operations	6. Focused on customer service
7. Relies on the tried and true	7. Operates with creativity and innovation
8. Lock-step processes	8. Emphasis is on options and high quality
9. Focus on efficiency	9. Focus on effectiveness

## **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES:**

### **Operate within a three-year planning framework.**

- Annual goals and objectives tied to specific actions should be identified within the context of a three-year timeframe and used to produce an annual work program. Seasonal and annual reports documenting the performance on the work program should be made available to Township Supervisors as well as the general public. In addition, the 10-year Action Summary Plan contained herein should be periodically reviewed in conjunction with the annual work program.

### **Upgrade and expand policies, procedures and plans to guide parks and recreation decision making.**

- Appoint a focus group with representatives of the Board of Supervisors, Parks & Recreation Board, Township staff and community organizations to identify priority areas where policies need to be added or improved. Policy evaluation and development is an ongoing effort which needs to be prioritized over time.

### **Establish a five-year employee development program.**

- Budget 1% to 2% of the operating budget for training. Prioritize training in areas such as:
  - 1) Sports turf management;
  - 2) Natural resource management;
  - 3) Program planning;
  - 4) Playground safety; and
  - 5) Technology for workload cost tracking and information development.

- Memberships in KAFMO (Keystone Athletic Field Maintenance Organization), PRPS (Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society), NRPA (National Recreation & Park Association), and LERN (National Lifelong Learning and Recreation Programming Organization) would be beneficial for staff development and opportunities for shared knowledge. To the greatest extent possible, the Township staff and/or volunteers should participate in training programs sponsored by PRPS and PADCNR. To adequately address on-going maintenance and legal aspects of parks and recreation, the Township would benefit in authorizing the training and certification in Playground Safety for two Township Public Works employees.

# Recommendations

*Programs*

## CORE RECOMMENDATION:

Encourage customer-focused programming

### OVERVIEW:

Programming is a complex component of parks and recreation management. Activities range from special community and family events to team sports to leisure time pursuits for individuals. To effectively involve residents in program offerings, the Township needs to identify what various target audiences want and then determine the proper balance between programs it sponsors and those provided by other organizations. Cooperation with private and non-profit recreation providers is a key to programming success.

### BENEFITS:

- Promotes health and wellness
- Provides educational/cultural/arts/nature experiences
- Engages residents in the social life of the community
- Reaches all segments of the community
- Improves awareness of public and private-sector programs
- Streamlines program administration efforts



### PRIORITIES:

- ✓ Create a program management plan that utilizes regular public involvement, program evaluation and outreach
- ✓ Focus Township sponsored programs on three areas: nature, fitness and special events.
- ✓ Strengthen cooperative efforts with youth sports organizations, private and non-profit recreation providers, Pine-Richland School District and neighboring communities.

### PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

#### Create a program management plan

- Future recreation programming should have a customer-based focus rather than a program-based focus. Determining the needs of various groups and then planning services to meet these needs is preferred to the historic pattern of shot-gun style program offerings. Program success requires on-going needs assessment, the collection of demographic information and solid program evaluations.
- The Township and Parks and Recreation Department should adopt a program philosophy that provides a basic level of programs and services to help target groups develop interest in lifelong recreational pursuits, especially those that will lead to active healthy lifestyles. The plan should focus on a mix of self-directed opportunities and scheduled programs.
- The program management plan should include a client-driven approach focusing on

special events, fitness and wellness, nature and self-directed opportunities. In terms of the Township-sponsored programs, the emphasis should be on facilitation and promotion rather than on directly providing a large variety of programs. Success depends upon being strategic about what programs to provide directly.

- These appear to be special events that help to build a sense of community by bringing large groups of citizens together, such as the annual Community Day celebration, the Halloween party in the barn, and the Easter Egg Hunt.
- Consideration should be given to sponsoring a winter, indoor activity possibly in the municipal building, a Winter Family Fun Day at the Park or even a speaker or performing arts series using the Movies in the Park program as a base.
- In 2009, Richland sponsored 38 programs. In the future, the annual program schedule should consist of 50% repeat programs, 30% seasonal programs and 20% new programs. Recognize that even failed programs are beneficial if something is learned. Experimenting keeps programming fresh and interesting. People will begin to look for what's new next time. Cancelation rates of 15% are generally acceptable.
- Use program participation and cost data to make informed programming decisions. Create a database of participants and their interests. Identify the "best customers" in terms of who signs up the most for Township programs. Track this information over time to develop trend information.
- Every program should be evaluated by participants and the leaders. Use this information to improve the program as well as to guide the planning and development of new recreation opportunities. Programs that extend over a long course of time tend to cost more and require higher levels of service. They should be evaluated during

their operation and not just at their conclusion. For example, a six-week summer program should have a simple participant/parent evaluation. This way if problems exist, steps can be taken immediately to improve the program or resolve any issues.

Obtain testimonials to use in brochures and advertising. Ask permission to use the person's comment as a quote. Take lots of photos to use in advertising and on the Township Web site.

## ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES:

### **Identify recreation focus areas.**

- Regardless of size, no recreation department can provide programs to satisfy everyone. Build on successful programs, besides sports, which are offered to families and young adults. Also, since youth sports is the single largest group using the Park, this group merits special attention. It is easier to build upon successful programs rather than staring with new programs aimed at new target groups.
- Connecting people to the outdoors through self-directed nature and fitness activities is vital, especially in a community primarily with outdoor facilities. Explore opportunities to provide more programming in areas which reach those with special needs, as well as adult-focus and senior interests.

### **Focus township wide participation on use of the parks.**

- Research shows generally only about 22% of the population is likely to participate in organized scheduled programs while about 77% of the population use parks, especially places to walk, play, socialize, work out and enjoy nature.

# Recommendations

## Programs

- Providing information to motivate citizens to get out and enjoy the parks and future trails would be a huge benefit to Richland Township residents.
- Using a section of the newsletter to inform people of what they can do on their own would be beneficial. Keep it simple: "Here's what you can do. Here's where you can do it."

### Add another programming season to create a Summer season, a Fall season and a Winter/Spring season.

- There is nationwide trend towards publishing more frequent recreation schedules as a way to increase participation. Adopting a 3 season schedule would match the School District schedule which people are accustomed to.

### Strengthen partnerships with public and private sector recreation providers and local businesses where beneficial.

- There are 83 recreation-related businesses within 5 miles of Richland Township. (See Appendix). By making residents aware of what is available from these providers, the Township can direct residents to a wide range of opportunities with little expense or effort. Consider working with health care providers to develop self-directed programs in the park. Continue and strengthen cooperative efforts with the Library, Pine Township and the School District.

### Consider generating additional revenues through programs and activities.

Revenue should go toward supporting additional recreation opportunities. Use the

following formula in setting program fees:

- Production costs: 45%
- Promotion costs: 15%
- Administrative costs: 35%
- Net: 5%

- Set prices for programs competitively. Consider what the citizens are used to paying. If an increase is warranted, increase the program price by up to 14% without changing the program; test out a price increase of 15-24%; add new features to a program with a price increase of 25 – 49%; and create a whole new program if an increase of 50% is needed.

### Develop a three-year marketing plan to increase public awareness about parks and recreation opportunities.

- Build a strong case for the importance of recreation services in the community. Develop and use a departmental logo. Place it on every surface used by the department from paper to garbage/recycling cans.

### Make registration more convenient.

- Registration should be made available through as many means as possible: mail in, drop-in, walk-in and, most importantly, on-line. A credit/debit card system increases participation.

## **Consider newsletter changes.**

- Add an index on the first page. Add a letter or “story” of the big picture of what is going on in community parks and recreation. Organize the newsletter according to target group (families, youth, adults etc.) or by type of activity (special events, arts, nature etc). Use blue, black or brown for text color and bright colors for accents or headers.

Consider an aging population when choosing font sizes. Add a graphic for community parks and recreation facilities to show people where they are located. Add a section on services/opportunities offered by other recreation providers; for example, the schedule of the School District’s aquatics programs. Include contact information for sports organizations. Use photos throughout the brochure. Incorporate testimonials. Publicize opportunities for volunteerism.

- Obtain a college intern when Chatham University moves into the Township to assist in moving towards communicating via social media and direct contacts through e-mail to targeted audiences.

## **Create an umbrella sports organization.**

- An umbrella sports organization is a coalition of sports groups coming together to discuss and promote cooperation on matters of common interests. Often this arrangement enables the participants to accomplish more together than any one of them could accomplish individually. Meetings could take place as infrequently as once or twice a year.

### CORE RECOMMENDATION:

**Determine the adequacy of existing facilities. Recommend enhancements, expansions and upgrades. Identify the type, size and number of new facilities appropriate to meet the recreational needs of the Township.**

### OVERVIEW:

Facilities are the building blocks of a parks and recreation system. They are the places where people can go to enjoy themselves. Richland's overall recreation system strives to provide facilities which residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy for active sports, socializing and quiet reflection. Facilities require ongoing evaluation to ensure safety, optimal function and sustainability.

### BENEFITS:

- Provides a local, integrated and connected network of open spaces and parks
- Enables residents to conveniently access various types of athletic and passive recreation activities which encourage health, fitness, enjoyment and relaxation
- Coordinates Township owned facilities with those provided by others to promote sharing and avoid duplication.
- Insures compliance with applicable laws
- Improves property values and quality of life throughout the Township

### PRIORITIES:

- ✓ Establish strategies for acquiring additional parklands and selling underutilized Township-owned open spaces
- ✓ Initiate Master Site Plans, Trail Plans and Resource Management Plans where appropriate
- ✓ Plan and implement physical, aesthetic and safety improvements based upon available staff, volunteers and funding

### PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

**Acquire additional park lands and sell unused Township-owned vacant properties.**

- Add another community-scale park of eighty (80) acres or larger, in the western portion of the Township.
- Acquire additional property adjacent to Richland Park. Negotiate "Rights of First Refusal" with owners of lots which the Township is interested in obtaining. Under these types of contracts, the land owner agrees to offer the Township the first opportunity to purchase the land when he/she is ready to sell it.
- Sell Township-owned vacant lots which do not lend themselves for recreational or other public use purposes. Use the proceeds to fund recreation improvements identified in this plan.

**Initiate, update and develop implementation strategies for Master Site Plans, Trail Plans, and Resource Management Plans.**

- Update the 1997 Richland Community Park Master Plan to include facilities added since its preparation. The plan should also address the following:
  - Maintaining good relationships with neighbors
  - Acquiring additional properties when they become available
  - Vehicular access and parking
  - Pedestrian and ADA issues
  - Improved signage
  - Rehabilitation or replacement of shelters, playgrounds and courts
  - Extension of utilities
  - Trail enhancements
  - Waste collection and disposal
  - Use of drought-resistant plantings and wetland-oriented plantings in landscaping
  - New facilities
  - Unified and “green” design standards
- Expand the 2010 Master Site Plan for the Municipal Property adjacent to Dickey Road to promote the entire Municipal Center Property as a hub for the Township’s recreation system and trail network. The plan should also address the following:
  - Implementing the 2010 Master Site Plan in phases
  - Using the site to establish a sense of community and point of identification for the Township
  - Providing passive recreation facilities which support social and cultural events, and serve a variety of interests. The uses must be compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood,
  - Richland EMS and the Northern Tier Library.
  - Using and expanding the existing trails adjacent to the municipal building and public works area
- Update the 2010 Master Site Plan for the property the Township owns in Orchard Park, adjacent to Deer Creek. Use the Plan as the basis to promote environmental and conservation practices to protect the area, and to the extent practical, allow public access from the Orchard Park neighborhood. The plan should also address the following:
  - Increasing awareness of this unique area
  - Establishing a gradual, step-by-step implementation strategy
  - Preserving wetlands, flood plains and other aspects of the riparian environment to protect water quality, promote proper stormwater management, and provide animal habitats
  - Presenting environmental education and leisure activities such as bird watching and fishing
  - Establishing criteria and guidelines for building a trail along Deer Creek which would not have a detrimental effect on native plant species
  - Communicating with neighbors and the Orchard Park Neighborhood Association to assure that uses are compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood, and that concerns of the residents regarding safety, security and all other potential nuisances are mitigated
  - Coordinating with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regarding specific activities, environmentally sound techniques and permitting
  - Developing a relationship with the Deer Creek Water Shed Association

# Recommendations

## Facilities

- Develop a Trail Plan with on- and off-road segments to connect Township-owned properties with neighborhoods. (See Figure 41 on page 4-13). Priorities for trail segments should include:
  - The Municipal Center site to the Grandview Crossings Conservation parcel
  - Share-the-Road designation from Grandview Crossings to Orchard Park to the Community Park
  - Within rail and utility right-of-ways, throughout the Township, when available to the public
- Create a unified and comprehensive wayfinding system within Richland Park.
- Prepare a Forest Stewardship Plan for each Township-owned woodland and open space. The expertise of PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry professionals should be consulted as part of these efforts ([www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry)). Each individual Plan should:
  - Inventory the site's particular natural resources
  - Define conservation goals and objectives
  - Identify and explain specific management practices and implementation strategies
- Grades of sidewalks, trails and pathways
- Access to facilities such as bleachers, fixed spectator seating, dugouts, picnic shelters, amphitheaters, etc.
- Continue to work with volunteers and youth sports organizations to enhance facilities within the parks and recreation system to match their areas of interest.
- Supports design and rehabilitation efforts which promote expanded park and recreation space for senior citizens and special needs programming and activities.
- Preserve open space, greenways and natural settings throughout the Township.
- Continue to cooperate with Pine Township and Pine Richland School District in scheduling facilities in order to accommodate as many usage applications as possible.
- Create and adopt sustainability standards for all park sites, stormwater management practices and other supporting public recreation facility improvements.
- Resolve traffic/congestion issues including integration of needed walkways

### Implement physical, aesthetic and safety improvements according to the availability of staff, volunteers and financial resources.

- Continue a preliminary ADA analysis performed as part of this Plan by completing a comprehensive ADA (Self Evaluation) Assessment for the Community Park. Address ADA related needs including but not limited to:
  - Parking
  - Signage



## **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES:**

**Provide a web-based weather station to communicate field conditions.**

**Explore the cost, market demand and funding possibility for new facilities such as an oval bike track, deck hockey, and off-leash dog park and horseback riding trails.**

**Provide additional low-impact (e.g. non-traditional paving) areas for overflow parking.**

**Designate field usages and priorities in order to facilitate appropriate field enhancements and improvements (seeding, cutting, aeration, etc.).**

**Institute formal phasing and funding strategies.**

**Provide periodic updates to the Township's Comprehensive Park, recreation and Open Space Plan.**

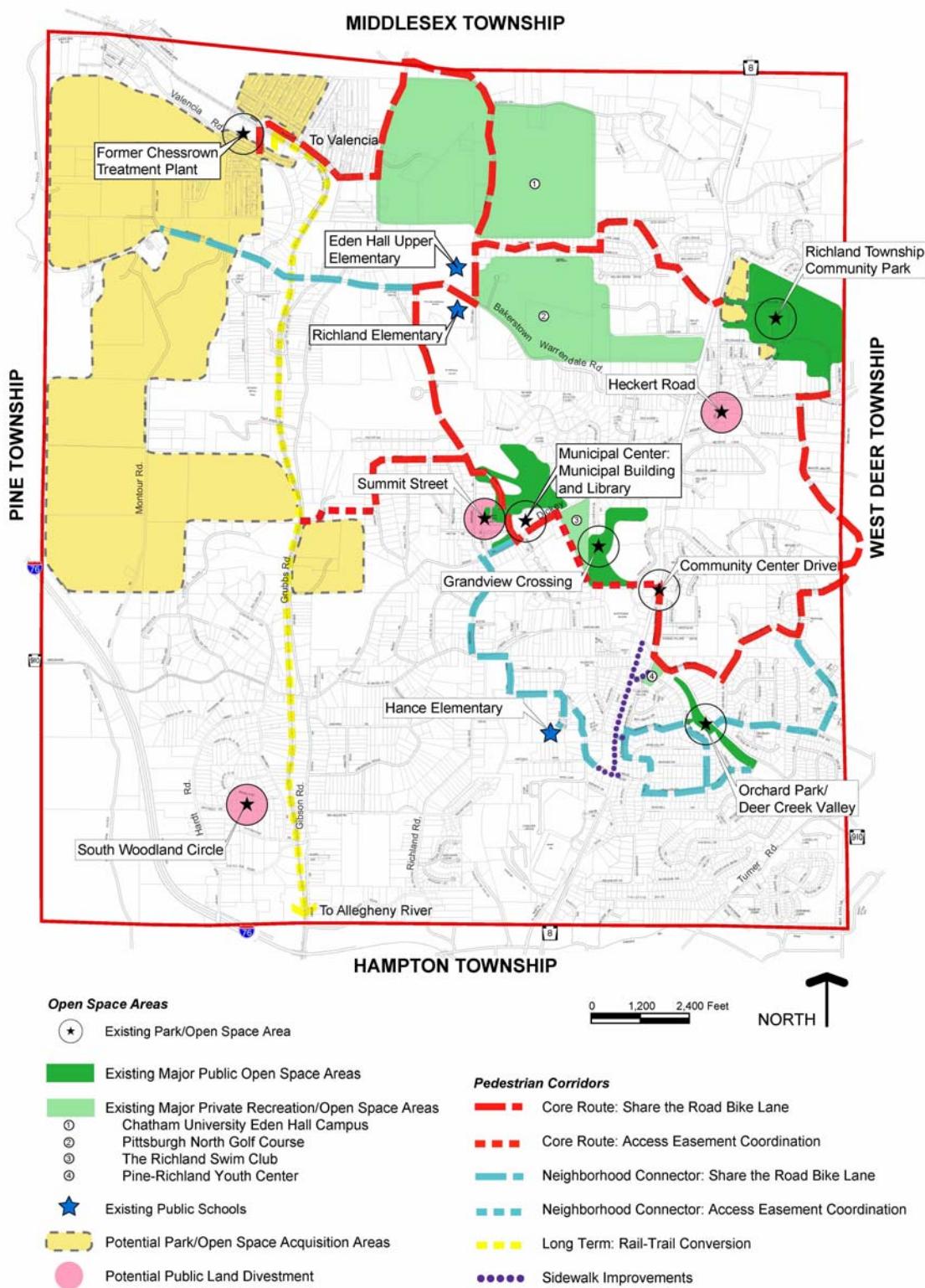
**Create a unified design standard for pavilion overhang and slab relationships.**

**Designate the range of field quality standards and their appropriate locations.**

# Recommendations

## Facilities

Figure 41: Overall Strategic Recreation Plan



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## CORE RECOMMENDATION:

## Formalize Maintenance Management

## OVERVIEW:

The goal of park maintenance is to provide safe, clean, functional, and attractive Township parks through implementation of an efficient and effective management program. A formal policy sets standards for how maintenance will be performed now and in the future.

Guidelines and standards formalizing how work is performed by employees, volunteers and contractors are essential to fulfilling this goal. Key elements include staffing, training and cost-benefit analysis.

## BENEFITS:

- Improves and preserves the quality of existing facilities and extends their usefulness
- Minimizes waste and effort
- Promotes safety and limits liability
- Promotes employee professionalism and improves the performance of volunteers and contractors.
- Enhances the experience and enjoyment for the end-user

## PRIORITIES:

- ✓ Establish responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department
- ✓ Provide specialized training for park maintenance through a 5-year employee development program
- ✓ Develop a formal management system for maintaining parks and recreation infrastructure

## PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

## Establish responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department

- Staff should be specially trained in park maintenance management functions such as sports turf management, repair cycling, trail maintenance and infrastructure needs.

**Provide specialized training for park maintenance through a 5-year employee development program**

- Dedicate one to two percent of the park-operating budget to the employee development program. Join PRPS (Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society) and KAFMO (Keystone Athletic Field Maintenance Organization) in order to enrich training opportunities and the Township staff's available knowledge base. Explore the training programs and seminars offered by these organizations as part of the employee development program. Consider sending the Public Works Director and/or

the lead Park Maintenance Supervisor to the NRPA (National Park and Recreation Association) Maintenance Management School. Ideally more than one staff member should participate in this program. This is a two-year certificate program that includes one week-long school two years in a row. Additional post-graduate years are available to explore additional areas of park maintenance topics and issues.

### **Develop a formal management system for maintaining parks and recreation infrastructure**

- Consider applying for a Peer grant from PA DCNR for this purpose. Under this program, PA DCNR awards a grant of \$10,000 to the municipality to be matched with \$1,000 and provides a park professional with experience and expertise in developing maintenance systems. Peer projects generally take about a year, and the end result is a recipe for this type of system. Consideration should be given during the development of the maintenance management plan, to purchasing computer software for maintenance management. TRIMS is commonly used by parks departments in Pennsylvania. Some visits to departments using this software would be helpful to Township staff to learn about how such software could benefit the Township.

### **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES:**

#### **Establish an alliance with the Allegheny County Parks Department and the Pine Richland School District Facilities Division to share knowledge and ideas on park maintenance**

- Consider soliciting help from the County Conservation District and the Penn State University Extension Service on addressing natural resource management in the parks.

### **Adopt the use of the Management Impact Statement**

- This Statement guides how decisions can be made regarding improvements, projects or programs which may impact staffing, maintenance requirements, programming and department functions overall.

### **Use an annual cost of \$1,026 per maintained acre for projecting future costs**

- This per acre figure should be used for planning purposes until the Township's cost tracking system is operational.
- Since major facilities, such as athletic fields, require a higher level of care, achieving a per acre maintenance cost of \$2,050 should be a goal.
- For areas that are undeveloped and are to remain natural, consider using a cost figure of \$300 – \$400 per acre/year to maintain this type of land.

### **Assign the task of developing park quality standards to the Parks and Recreation Board.**

- The Public Works Director should work with the Parks Board. The Recreation Program Coordinator needs to participate actively in this process. The public and key stakeholders should be involved. The Parks and Recreation Board should make annual recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on the quality standards. The Board of Supervisors would review, revise as appropriate and adopt the standards. Having these in place before undertaking a Peer Maintenance Management Study would facilitate the study. Revisions could be made during the Peer Study.

### **Provide a safe and secured storage area for specialized park maintenance equipment at each park facility where appropriate.**

## CORE RECOMMENDATION:

### Enhance Financial Management Practices

#### OVERVIEW:

The purpose of financial management in parks and recreation is the judicious use of capital resources and the careful selection of capital projects to enable Township spending to advance parks and recreation goals.

#### BENEFITS:

- Prudent use of resources
- Maximize return on investment
- Assure achievement of objectives
- Improves cost control and revenue generation
- Provides measures of performance and accountability
- Provides data which can be used to modify goals and objectives

#### PRIORITIES:

- ✓ Continue to support parks and recreation through a mix of Township and non-tax resources.
- ✓ Optimize efficiency and increase revenues through cost tracking.
- ✓ Formally Adopt a Mandatory Dedication of Land Ordinance as permitted by the Municipalities Planning Code.
- ✓ Establish a Friends of the Park Organization.

#### PRIORITY STRATEGIES:

Continue to support parks and recreation through a mix of Township and non-tax resources.

- In 2009, Statewide recreation expenditures in Pennsylvania amounted to \$22.88 per capita. Richland Township's per capita expenditure was \$15.17. The recognized standard for the ratio of non-tax revenues within a recreation operating budget is typically 30% - 50%. In 2009, the Township's non-tax recreation revenues was 16.5%. Annual general fund budget allocations and recreation user fees should incrementally increase towards meeting the state-wide figures.
- As part of overall cost and revenue considerations, the Township should determine its philosophy on cost recovery for facilities and programs it sponsors. The fee structure should be based on the following:
  - **Free or minimal cost:** These types of programs and services which benefit the community at large include major community events, park visitation, programming brochures or fliers. An example in Richland is the Community Day celebration.
  - **Fee programs partly offset by Township taxes which benefit groups or individuals:** These types of programs and services are traditionally expected of parks and recreation departments. They include beginner level classes and summer playground or teen programs. An example in Richland is the Summer Recreation Program.
  - **Fee programs mostly paid for by individuals with some township support:** These types of programs provide more benefits to individuals than they do to the overall community. Typically, they focus on intermediate level or specialized programs, sports

camps and holiday programs. An example in Richland is the line dancing class.

- ***Full cost recovery programs with direct and indirect expenditures:*** These types of programs benefit individuals and include specialty classes, special facility use or higher level programs. An example in Richland Township is youth sports clinics.
- ***Full cost recovery programs including direct and indirect costs and a designated percentage for profit:*** These types of programs focus highly on individualized benefits. Facility rentals, elite types of classes or programs, tournaments, graduation parties, private sector rentals, company outings and travel programs fit into this category. An example in Richland Township is rental of the Barn.

### **Optimize efficiency and increase revenues through cost tracking**

- By regularly documenting how much time and materials are spent on tasks, Richland Township will be able to make effective decisions regarding fees, budgets, manpower, partnerships and capital improvements. Consider seeking a RecTAP grant from PRPS in the amount of \$1,500 (no match required) for professional consultation with a park manager who has experience with workload cost tracking. The grant would give the Township a head start in establishing its own system.

### **Formally Adopt a Mandatory Dedication of Land Ordinance as permitted by the Municipalities Planning Code.**

- Since new development consumes open space, stresses existing park facilities and creates demand for new and expanded recreation services, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code provides a public dedication tool for growing communities to use in requiring developers to dedicate or contribute towards providing recreation facilities.
- Under Section 503(11), municipalities may provide the option for developers to choose from several alternatives to public dedication. These options are:
  - Pay a fee to the municipality to be used for providing “parks and recreation facilities” accessible to the new development. This is known as “fee-in-lieu” of land dedication;
  - Construct recreational facilities; and/or
  - Privately reserve land within the subdivision for park and recreation purposes.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (“DCNR”) has compiled a sample list of adopted public dedication ordinances entitled “Mandatory Dedication Ordinances across the Commonwealth” that can be accessed at the Public (Mandatory) Dedication section of the ConservationTools.org library.

# Recommendations

## Finance

### **Establish a Friends of the Park Organization to assist in long-term planning initiatives and funding strategies.**

- Motivated members of the Study Committee who were responsible for preparing the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan should be recruited to spearhead the formation of a Friends of the Park organization. Other interested members of the community should be solicited to participate. The group should be organized as a 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to:
  - Undertake fundraising for special projects
  - Advocate for continued park enhancements
  - Generate volunteer support.

Friends of the Park should function as an independent organization which collaborates with municipal staff and the Parks and Recreation Board on a regular basis to make recommendations on matters of budget and policy to the Board of Supervisors. In this respect, members should remain as apolitical as possible and term limits are advisable.

### **ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES:**

#### **Establish a capital improvement program of five to seven years.**

- Adopt a policy stating that capital improvements are physical acquisitions costing \$10,000 or more and lasting more than five years. Consider improvements under this value as operating expenses.

### **Develop a donation policy for monetary and physical contributions to the Township.**

- Establish appropriate procedures for recognizing donors. Consider the long-term cost of supporting donations along with establishing an endowment to offset the cost of sustaining the donation over its lifetime. Also, establish terms or understandings regarding the ownership and control of the donated item over time.
- To assist with fundraising purposes, projects should be listed according to price in a display ("gift") catalog so that potential sponsors/donors can match their contributions to the Township's designated needs.

### **Consider long-term financing options and grant assistance for major capital acquisitions.**

- When acquiring property or making capital improvements with a life expectancy of more than five years, it may be appropriate to spread the costs over the useful life of the acquisition. Undertake a financial study to explore how such financing could be undertaken. Also, try to capture grants to match local funds as a way of implementing capital improvements. Grants may also be used as part of a funding match from private foundations and other sources.

### **Establish a 50% minimum group contribution to go towards specialized improvements that are specially requested by such local recreation-based groups.**

### **Consider adopting an annual capital improvement budget for parks and recreation.**

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# Action Plan

## Summary

While data collection, inquiry and analyses are important steps in the process of preparing a plan its heart lies in the vision for the future and the strategies for achieving that vision. The following Plan provides a “blueprint” with which to organize and pursue the future of Richland Township’s park, recreation and open space system.

There are many considerations for the Township to evaluate and act upon as it moves forward in strengthening its parks and recreation system. As part of the comprehensive parks, recreation and open space planning process, the following three primary themes emerged. In focusing on these themes in the future, the community can ensure its continued success in offering quality park and recreation system service. As both Township population and recreation needs grow, the community needs to shift some its strategies. If, in the years to come, some practices and procedures were to remain as they are today, the system could be challenged to remain sustainable - physically, economically and politically.

This Action Plan is the foundation for the recommendations of Richland Township recreation. It unifies all of the pieces of the plan, and provides a clear direction for moving forward. It is based upon public input, analysis of the existing parks and recreation system and research into current recreation trends and issues. The ten-year plan is intended to be realized over time. Several items, indicated with a • have been identified by the project Steering Committee as strategically important for future parks and recreation planning.

The thrust of this Plan is founded on:

- **Continue to Practice Fiscal Accountability** Undertake projects and programs that are within the financial resources of the Township or are affordable through a mix of public and private support. In addition to the initial capital and start-up costs consideration should also be given to the cost of sustaining the project or program over its expected lifetime.
- **Health and Safety first** - The top priority for park and recreation facility improvements is providing for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens. Taking steps to address safety and access issues at existing recreation facilities should be implemented within the first five (5) years of the plan.
- **Secure Parkland** - Additional parkland is needed to support park and recreation needs in the future.
- **Maintain What We Have** - Annual Township allocations from the General Fund Budget, which are intended for operating purposes, should be prioritized for maintaining the Township’s currently owned properties. In addition the Township should begin to escrow funds in reserve accounts to pay for recreation improvements which are planned to occur on the Municipal Center property, and the former Orchard Park Sewerage Treatment Plant property.
- **Connect the Community** - An opportunity exists to develop a trail plan which would enable the Township-owned properties to be interconnected.
- **Invest in Parks and Recreation through a mix of public and private funding sources in order to fulfill the Township’s capacity to accomplish its parks and recreation goals.** Establish a ten year Capital Improvement Program identifying time tables and costs for implementing recreation improvements.

**Table 15: Action Plan Summary**

*Legend*

- Indicates strategically important items identified by the project Steering Committee

TM Township Manager  
 PR Parks and Recreation Staff  
 PW Public Works  
 BoS Board of Supervisors

*Relative Associated Costs based on 2010 estimates. Assumes facility improvements are completed through contract.*

Description of Recommendation	Key Stakeholders	Timeframe	Relative Associated Costs	Priority	Page Reference
<b>I. Organization and Management</b>					
1 Continue to develop an annual work program with goals and objectives as related to a three-year timeframe	TM, PR, PW, BoS	0 - 2 years	Staff time		5-4
2 Create integrated policies, procedures, and plans to guide decisions related to all aspects of parks and recreation	TM, PR, BoS	0 - 2 years	Staff time		5-4
3 Develop a job description for the current Recreation Program Coordinator position	TM, PR, BoS	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-1
4 Make seasonal and annual reports documenting the performance on the work program available to Township Supervisors and the general public	TM, PR, BoS	0 - 2 years	Staff time		5-4
5 Use the strategic management approach as the model for the Richland Township Department of Parks and Recreation	TM, PR, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-3
6 Adopt the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan	BOS	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-2
7 Transition the Public Works Department into three specialized divisions: Parks, Sanitary Sewers and Roads.	TM, PW	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-2
8 Establish a five-year employee development program	TM, PR, BoS	2 - 5 years	Staff time		5-4
9 Explore options for combining resources and sharing responsibilities for recreation services with neighboring municipalities	TM, PR, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	Staff time	●	3-2
10 Identify the roles and responsibilities applicable to a Parks and Recreation Director, outline job criteria and establish short-term and long-term policies in place accordingly	TM, PR, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board	5-10 years	Staff time	●	5-1
11 Move into full-time department and create the position of Parks and Recreation Director when the population reaches a minimum of 15,000, responsibilities warrant and resources are in place to support a full-time department	TM, PR, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board	10+ years	\$50,000 - \$60,000	●	5-1
12 Operate within a three-year planning framework	TM, PR, PW, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board	On-going	Staff time		5-4
13 Present an annual report of recommendations to the Board of Supervisors	Parks and Recreation Board	On-going	Staff time		
<b>II. Programs</b>					
1 Create a program management plan that utilizes regular public involvement, program evaluation and outreach	TM, PR	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-5
2 Focus Township-resident participation on use of the parks by providing information to the community to motivate citizens to enjoy the parks and future trails	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	0 - 2 years	\$2,000 media costs + Staff /Board time		5-6
3 Identify recreation focus areas such as nature, fitness and special events in order to further connect residents to the outdoors	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board, BoS	0 - 2 years	Staff/Board time		5-6
4 Identify specific target groups based on age and build from existing successful program areas	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	Staff/Board time	●	5-6

# Action Plan

## Summary

**Table 15: Action Plan Summary Continued**

**Legend**

- Indicates strategically important items identified by the project Steering Committee

TM Township Manager  
 PR Parks and Recreation Staff  
 PW Public Works  
 BoS Board of Supervisors

Relative Associated Costs based on 2010 estimates. Assumes facility improvements are completed through contract.

Description of Recommendation	Key Stakeholders	Timeframe	Relative Associated Costs	Priority	Page Reference
5 Consider adding another programming season to create a summer season, a fall season, and a winter/spring season similar to the school district sports seasons	TM, PR	2 - 5 years	\$4,000 - Should generate revenue		5-7
6 Strengthen partnerships with public and private sector recreation providers and local businesses where beneficial.	TM, PR, BoS, General Public	0 - 2 years	Short-term staff time; long-term should generate revenue		5-7
7 Adopt a formula of 50% repeat programs, 30% seasonal programs and 20% new programs	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	No Cost	●	5-6
8 Develop a three-year marketing plan to increase public awareness about parks and recreation	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	Staff time		5-7
9 Collect and analyze data to make informed decisions regarding participation, programs, fees, etc.	Parks and Recreation Board	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-6
10 Establish an evaluation system using input from participants and leaders to improve programs and guide the planning and development of new recreation opportunities	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	0 - 2 years	Staff/volunteer time	●	5-6
11 Make registration more convenient by offering online sign-up	TM, PR	2 - 5 years	For on-line set up of payments		5-7
12 Consider newsletter changes	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	0 - 2 years	Staff time		5-7
13 Create an umbrella sports organization to encourage communication between each other and the Township	Parks and Recreation Board, Sports Organizations	2 - 5 years	Staff/organization time		5-8
14 Maintain Community Day as the signature event for the community annually	TM, PR, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board, General Public	Ongoing	Continue present level of investment \$27,000. Strive to develop more of a partnership program.	●	5-6
<b>III. Facilities</b>					
1 Create and adopt sustainability standards for all park sites, stormwater management practices and other supporting public recreation facility improvements	BoS, Parks and Recreation Board, PW	0 - 2 years	\$5,000	●	5-11
2 Complete an ADA self-evaluation of the Community Park and prepare a Transition Plan	TM, PR	0 - 2 years	\$5,000	●	5-11
3 Update the Richland Township Community Park Master Plan to reflect family recreation area, improved soccer fields and ADA improvements	Parks and Recreation Board	0 - 2 years	\$10,000	●	5-10
4 Promote the Municipal Center as a hub for the Township's recreation system and trail network	BoS, TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	0-2 years	Staff Time	●	5-10
5 Resolve traffic/congestion issues including integration of needed walkways	Volunteers, PW	0 - 2 years	Materials and equipment time and construction costs to be determined based on Transition Plan	●	5-11
6 Construct trail improvements for hiking, biking and equestrian designations within Richland Community Park in order to minimize future erosion damage and remedy accessibility issues	Volunteers, PW	2 - 5 years	\$50,000 include assessment time, materials and equipment time; construction costs to be determined	●	5-11

**Table 15: Action Plan Summary Continued**

*Legend*

- Indicates strategically important items identified by the project Steering Committee

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*Relative Associated Costs based on 2010 estimates. Assumes facility improvements are completed through contract.*

Description of Recommendation	Key Stakeholders	Timeframe	Relative Associated Costs	Priority	Page Reference
7 Conduct a Trail Feasibility Study for undeveloped Township open spaces and identify specific links to the overall Trail network	TM, PR, BOS, Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	Staff time	●	5-11
8 Complete turf management improvements to fields to address root-zone and invasive issues, especially clover	PW, Contracted Entities	2 - 5 years	\$300,000		5-12
9 Repair unevenness on field play surfacing as time and costs permit	PW, Contracted Entities	2 - 5 years	\$180,000		5-12
10 Designate the range of field quality standards and their appropriate locations	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board	2-5 years	Staff time		5-12
11 Create a unified design standard for pavilion overhang and slab relationships	TM, PR, PW	2-5 years	Staff time		5-12
12 Develop a unified and comprehensive signage system for use in traveling to/arriving at existing and future park designated sites	Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	\$10,000	●	5-11
13 Prepare a Forest Stewardship Plan and Sensitive Resource Assessment for each Township-owned woodlands and/or open space	TM, PR, BoS, PW	2 - 5 years	\$1,000 each	●	5-11
14 Explore the cost, market demand, funding and phasing feasibility to construct an oval bike track with a deck hockey/skate central area at future acquired recreation lands	Friends of the Park	2 - 5 years	Study @ \$15,000		5-11
15 Evaluate and modify seeding, cutting and aeration strategies based on turf management evaluation findings	TM, PW	2 - 5 years	Staff time	●	5-11
16 Divest identified Township-owned open spaces where greater benefit could result from their sale	BoS	2 - 5 years		●	5-9
17 Identify and evaluate the costs, policies and lands appropriate for an off-leash recreation area	TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board, Friends of the Park	2 - 5 years	\$5,000 assessment + staff time		5-11
18 Secure additional lands for future passive and active recreation needs in the western half of the Township and/or property adjacent to Community Park	BoS, Friends of the Park	5 - 10 years	\$20-40,000/acre	●	5-9
19 Construct The Commons at the Municipal Center	BoS, TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board, Friends of the Park	5-10 years	\$1,500,000+	●	5-10
20 Provide periodic updates to the Township's Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan	TM, BoS, Parks and Recreation Board	10 years	\$15,000		5-12
21 Construct additional local and regional-scale recreation amenities at future acquired recreation lands as determined based on detailed feasibility evaluations	Friends of the Park	10 years	Design/Construction of outdoor oval \$250,000+; Dek Hockey and Skate Park \$500,000; Baseball field \$120,000; Flat field \$85,000-\$100,000		5-12
22 Incorporate native xeriscape (drought resistant) landscape treatments in the passive open space areas of all parks	PR, PW	Ongoing	Varies		5-12
23 Begin designating and constructing the Township's trail network including specific linkages outlined as part of the Overall Parks, Open Space and Trail Plan	BoS, TM, PR, Parks and Recreation Board, Friends of the Park	Ongoing	\$750,000+		5-11
24 Utilize the Park, Open Space and Trails Plan to assess on-site feasibility of trails and sidewalk construction projects	Parks and Recreation Board, Friends of the Park	Ongoing	Staff time		5-11
4 25 Monitor the availability of railroad rights-of-way and utility corridors as related to the Township-wide Parks and Trails Strategy	TM, BoS, PW	Ongoing	Staff time		5-11

# Action Plan

## Summary

**Table 15: Action Plan Summary Continued**

**Legend**

- Indicates strategically important items identified by the project Steering Committee
- TM Township Manager
- PR Parks and Recreation Staff
- PW Public Works
- BoS Board of Supervisors

*Relative Associated Costs based on 2010 estimates. Assumes facility improvements are completed through contract.*

Description of Recommendation	Key Stakeholders	Timeframe	Relative Associated Costs	Priority	Page Reference
<b>IV. Maintenance</b>					
1 Establish a formalized maintenance management system using written/computerized workload cost tracking	TM, PW	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-16
2 Consider sending the Public Works Director and/or the lead Park Maintenance Supervisor to the NRPA (National Park and Recreation Association) Maintenance Management School	TM, PW	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-15
3 Select specific Public Works staff members to become specially trained in park maintenance management functions such as sports turf management, natural resource management and customer service	TM, PW	0 - 2 years	Staff time	●	5-15
4 Adopt the use of the Management Impact Statement for improvements, projects or programs that could have a major impact on staffing, maintenance requirements, programming and department functions overall	TM, PW	0 - 2 years	Staff time		5-16
5 Dedicate one to two percent of the park operating budget to the employee development	BoS	2 - 5 years			5-15
6 Join PRPS (Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society) and KAFMO (Keystone Athletic Field Maintenance Organization), and explore the training programs and seminars offered by these organizations as part of the employee development program	TM, PW	0 - 2 years	\$2,000	●	5-15
7 Establish a five-year employee development program for the park maintenance management team	TM, PW	2- 5 years	Staff time	●	5-15
8 Explore the feasibility of an alliance with the Allegheny County Parks Department, the Pine Richland School District Facilities Division, the County Conservation District and the Extension Service to share knowledge and network on ideas, issues and solutions	TM, PW	2- 5 years	Staff time		5-16
9 Assign the task of developing park quality standards	Parks and Recreation Board	2 - 5 years	Volunteer and Staff time		5-16
10 Use the \$1,026 per acre cost as the minimum for projecting future costs until the Township develops real time workload cost tracking information on which to base actual per acre, per facility and cost center prices	TM, PW	Ongoing			5-16
11 Increase frequency of police monitoring at Community Park	Northern Tier Regional Police, BoS	Ongoing			

**Table 15: Action Plan Summary Continued**

*Legend*

- Indicates strategically important items identified by the project Steering Committee

TM Township Manager  
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*Relative Associated Costs based on 2010 estimates. Assumes facility improvements are completed through contract.*

Description of Recommendation	Key Stakeholders	Timeframe	Relative Associated Costs	Priority	Page Reference
<b>V. Financing</b>					
1 Develop a computerized workload cost tracking system with software for grounds maintenance as a priority and for recreation management modules as the department grows	TM, PR	0 - 2 years	Staff time + \$10,000 – 25,000 for computer hardware, software & training	●	5-18
2 Establish Friends of the Park Organization	Interested Comp. Park Plan Committee members	0 - 2 years	Volunteer time; donated legal time for 501c3 start-up	●	5-18
3 Pursue a phasing and funding strategy for creating The Commons at the Municipal Center	Friends of the Park	2 - 5 years	Staff time	●	5-18
4 Strive to increase the non-tax revenues in the range of 30 to 50 percent of the parks and recreation operating budget	BoS, TM	2 - 5 years	Increased non-tax revenues	●	5-17
5 Determine the Township's philosophy on cost recovery for facilities and programs it sponsors.	BoS, TM, PR	2 - 5 years	Staff time	●	5-17
6 Create a capital improvement program that addresses a five to seven year period; the program should include all improvements greater than \$10,000 and consider developing a gifts catalog ranging from a few dollars to an unlimited amount	BoS, TM, PR	2 - 5 years	Staff and volunteer time		5-17
7 Consider financing for land acquisition that would accommodate enough funding for land purchase and initial major defined capital improvements	BoS	2 - 5 years	Bond + debt service		5-19
8 Adopt a Mandatory Dedication of Land Ordinance	BoS	2 - 5 years	\$8,000	●	5-18
9 Identify funding targets such as working towards the average statewide per capita expenditure of \$22.88, adjusted over time as PA DCNR/PRPS updates the Budget and Salary Survey or other similar studies are produced	BoS, TM, PR	5 - 10 years		●	5-17
10 Establish a donation policy that considers the long-term cost of supporting the donation along with requiring an endowment to offset the cost of sustaining the donation over its lifetime	BoS, Friends of the Park	5 - 10 years	Staff and volunteer time		5-19