

Susquehanna Township

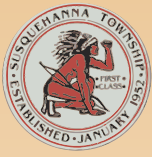
Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Plan

2017 Update



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Executive Summary

This Comprehensive Recreation Plan Update was commissioned to build on the 2004-2005 Susquehanna Township Recreation Plan Update. It fulfills the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code, and provides a guiding document for the next ten years of parks and recreation planning in Susquehanna Township.

Herbert, Rowland, and Grubic, Inc. (HRG) developed this plan in conjunction with the township. The consultant reviewed the 2004-2005 Recreation Plan Update, the natural and cultural features of the township, and an assessment of demographics based on the 2010 Census. The consultant examined current recreation facilities and programs, and how they are administered.

The plan begins by noting change and progress in Susquehanna Township over the past decade, and highlights progress that the Parks and Recreation Department has made since the 2004-2005 Recreation Plan. In the final chapter, the needs and opportunities identified throughout the plan are distilled into updated goals and priorities for the next decade.

Several in-depth evaluations were conducted in support of this plan. To obtain public input, planners administered a written survey that was completed by 54 respondents; interviews of twelve key people in township recreation; and interviews with leaders of seven local sports associations. Public input strongly indicated that residents value existing recreation opportunities provided by the township, but survey and interview results generally agreed on some additional opportunities or improvements. Results can be found in Chapter 1 of this plan.

Detailed facility inventories were conducted for 13 township-owned park and recreation sites. The consultant noted that the overall quality of maintenance was well above average for comparable parks and recreation departments. Some areas were identified where improvements could be made, and these are noted in the inventories in Appendix A. Some priority improvements can be found in the recommendations at the end of this plan.

An inventory of existing programs and those offered over the past six years was conducted. This inventory was used, along with the public input gathered, to make programming recommendations, especially for certain key age groups that are identified in Chapter 3.

A comprehensive examination of administration, personnel and financial policy, data, and records showed that Susquehanna Township has done a very good job of providing quality recreation opportunities to its residents with a smaller-than-average per capita budget. Existing staff is doing an exemplary job, but adding or filling a few key positions within the parks and recreation department would allow them to expand opportunities.

Several key recommendations emerged from this plan. Following are some highlights, based on the desires and needs of Susquehanna Township residents.

Hire a program director to expand the township's programming, as most residents thought more programming was needed for most age groups. Adding to the department's staff would free the parks and recreation director to pursue supplemental funding, and act upon the other recommendations within this plan.

In addition to hiring staff, **increase the parks & recreation department's available funds** to help meet some of the other goals highlighted in this plan. Several strategies and funding sources are offered in the recommendations and appendices at the end of this plan; some simple strategies that staff could pursue in the short term include:

- o *Adopt & enforce a fees-in-lieu-of public land dedication ordinance for commercial and industrial business development*
- o *Revise the fee structure of rental facilities and programs*

The plan makes recommendations to **ensure adequate park coverage across the township**. Susquehanna Township has made progress acquiring new land, including Logan Farm, Waverly Woods, Margaret's Grove, Apple Creek, and five additional acres in Shutt Mill Park, in accordance with the 2004-2005 plan. Several recommendations are made to ensure that the quality and quantity of parks is kept to a high standard, and support the evolving recreation needs of residents, including:

- o *Acquire and develop a park in the southern part of the township, potentially the former Harrisburg State Hospital property*
- o *Create a comprehensive trail plan*
- o *Develop Apple Creek Park with a pavilion and playground*
- o *Update playgrounds at Donald B. Stabler Memorial Park, Christian McNaughton Memorial Park, and Edgemont Park*
- o *Overlay tennis courts with pickleball courts*

The plan also identifies significant opportunities to **capitalize on existing partnerships** with, for example, sports associations, the school district, and the Jewish Federation, to expand programming variety and increase facilities available, without extraordinary expense to the township.

Finally, the plan recommends that Susquehanna Township better **publicize facilities and programs**. Expand an online presence, from marketing and promotion to online program registrations and facility rentals is a priority for the township in the next 10 years.

Overall, this plan shows that Susquehanna Township's parks and recreation department has been providing high quality recreation opportunities to township residents for many years. By implementing the recommended strategies, the township can look forward to another decade of excellence.





Chapter
0

Community Background

Introduction

The Susquehanna Township 2017 Comprehensive Recreation Plan Update builds on a history of successful park and recreation operations and planning in the township and makes recommendations for achieving further progress. This plan satisfies the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code to update a Comprehensive Recreation Plan every ten years. More importantly, it is a critical step forward for Susquehanna Township to continue to expand and improve, in a holistic fashion, upon the recreation services they provide to the community.

This plan builds on the 2004-2005 Susquehanna Township Recreation Plan Update. This plan is not intended to recreate the 2004-2005 plan, but to update it based on changes occurring in the community. It recognizes the township's achievements and improvements over the past decade, sets still higher goals, and updates priorities.

This updated plan (1) summarizes the current Recreation Profile and key recreation issues, emphasizing the new characteristics of recreation facilities and the current and anticipated needs of the community; (2) establishes goals for the future; and (3) provides action strategies for implementation.

Agency Mission Statement and Goals

The mission statement is one of the most important statements an organization can develop to help them become successful. An organization can develop a mission statement by answering the following questions:

- *Who are we?*
- *Whom do we serve?*
- *How do we serve?*
- *What do we offer?*

The Susquehanna Township Recreation Advisory Committee has developed the following mission statement:

"The mission of the Susquehanna Township Parks and Recreation Department is to organize recreational and social activities for the benefit of Township residents; to maintain safe, accessible, and aesthetically pleasing recreational areas and facilities; and to advise Township officials on the acquisition of open space, development of new facilities, and improvements to existing facilities."

The mission statement is a reflection of the township's direction, purpose, and goals for parks, recreation, and open space over the next ten years. This statement should be re-evaluated periodically to determine if it is reflective of the current initiatives being undertaken by Susquehanna Township.

The Importance of Parks and Recreation

Susquehanna Township recognizes that parks and recreation are an integral part of building a sense of community. The township is dedicated to fully supporting its Parks and Recreation Department, and takes pride in providing excellent recreation facilities and programs to its population. The following statements describe why parks and recreation services exist and the benefits provided by parks and recreation.

Strengthen Community Image and Sense of Place. Parks, recreation facilities, programs and community events are key factors in strengthening community image and creating a sense of place.

Support Economic Development. Parks, recreation programs, and facilities attract and retain businesses and residents, as well as attract tourists, and increase property values. Parks and recreation provides jobs and generates income for the community and for local businesses.

Strengthen Safety and Security. Park and recreation professionals provide safe environments for recreation, and design facilities, programs and services specifically to reduce criminal activity.

Promote Health and Wellness. Participation at parks and in recreation improves physical, psychological and emotional health.

Foster Human Development. Parks and recreation services foster social, intellectual, learning, physical and emotional development.

Increase Cultural Unity. Parks and recreation increases cultural unity through experiences that promote cultural understanding and celebrate diversity.



Protect Natural and Cultural Resources. By acquiring, protecting and managing valuable resources as open space, such as rivers, streams, greenways, view sheds, forests and other habitat areas, and culturally important assets, these resources are protected and the habitat required for the survival of diverse species is preserved.

Facilitate Community Problem Solving. Park and recreation professionals have skills in facilitation and leadership that can be applied to resolve community problems and issues.

Provide Recreational Experiences. Through programmed and self-facilitated recreation, a variety of benefits to individuals and society are achieved. Recreational experiences also are important as an end in themselves for personal enjoyment.

Source: Barry Weiss's presentation on "Repositioning: Making Parks & Recreation Essential," which was modeled after the VIP Strategic Action Plan developed by the California Park & Recreation Society and the academic work of Texas A&M University Distinguished Professor John L. Crompton.

Community Profile

Formerly a bedroom community to the City of Harrisburg, Susquehanna Township is today a self-sustaining community, diverse in character and with a strong economic and residential base supporting a population of 24,482 residents.

The land use patterns in the township are distinctive. The southern section of the township reflects the more urban influences of the City of Harrisburg, with many of the streets developed in a gridiron pattern, lined with shade trees, sidewalks, and a mix of uses. In contrast, the north section is primarily suburban and semi-rural with residential subdivisions identifiable by wide curvilinear streets and limited pedestrian circulation.

Geographically, a few major physical barriers bisect the township. Interstate 81 runs east-west through the township; the S.R. 322 corridor with railroad tracks extends north-south and separate a portion of the township fronting on the Susquehanna River. More than creating barriers within the community, these transportation features contribute to the desirability of Susquehanna Township as a place to live and work. Therefore, much of the developable land in the township is already occupied by residential or commercial uses. This presents a challenge for preservation of open space and expansion of recreation facilities to serve the township's substantial and growing population.

The major physiographic feature of the township is the Kittatinny Ridge, locally known as the Blue Mountain area, with its steep slopes and dense woodland. The maximum elevation within township borders is approximately 1,280 feet. In contrast, the elevation of the township drops to about 300 feet along the banks of the Susquehanna River. The township is drained almost entirely by the Paxton Creek watershed, which begins in Lower Paxton Township, flows into Wildwood Lake, and ultimately discharges into the Susquehanna River at the western boundary of the township.



Demographic Analysis

Below is a brief review and analysis of demographic statistics and changes that are relevant to recreation planning. Unless otherwise noted, data was obtained from the 2010 U.S. Census using American Factfinder (<http://factfinder.census.gov>).

The population of Susquehanna Township has increased steadily, with a total increase of 8.51%, since the last Recreation Plan update in 2004-2005. The township's population in 2015 and population density per square mile are shown in table 0-1.

Table 0-1 | Population Density

<i>Population</i>	24,482
<i>Municipal Area in Square Miles</i>	17.3
<i>Density per Square Mile</i>	1,415

From a recreation standpoint, the age (Table 0-2) and ethnic make-up (Table 0-3) of a community are very important factors to consider when planning recreational programs and facilities. In order to meet the needs of your residents, you need to know who your residents are. By understanding the needs of specific age groups and/or ethnic groups, recreational opportunities can be better tailored to meet specific community needs. It is also very important to keep in mind that, as time goes on, the general character of the population will change and it will become important to respond to the evolving recreational needs of the community.

Figure 0-2 | Population by Age

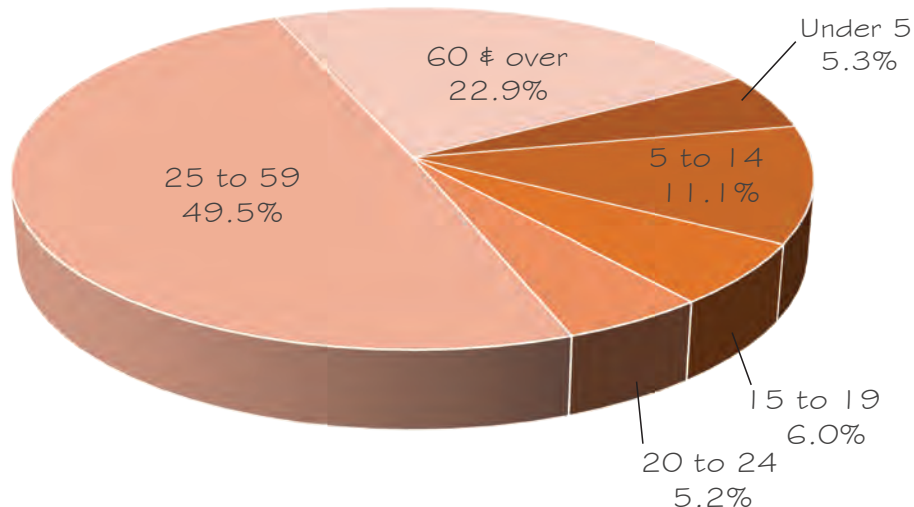
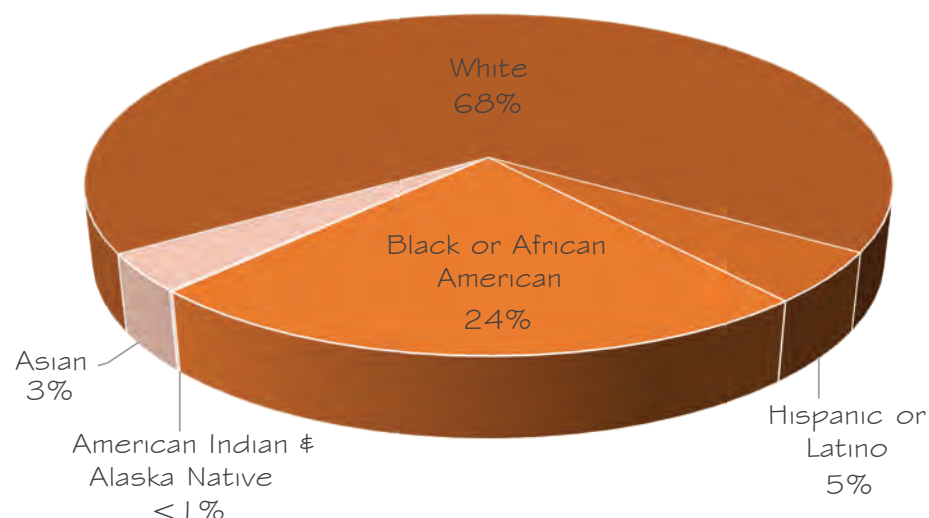


Figure 0-3 | Population by Ethnicity



Two age groups that are especially important to recreation planning are youth and seniors. Over 50% of the households in the township contain people from these two key age groups (Table 0-4). The demographics of the study support the need for programs and facilities for these two age groups.

Table 0-4 | Households with Key Age Groups

Age Range	Population	% of Total
Under 18	2,853	26.4%
65 & over	3,075	28.4%

The township's overall population increase was reflected in an increase in all age groups except youth age 5 through 14, which experienced an 8% decrease in population (Table 0-5). This is important to note because it is typical for a municipality to focus on recreational programming for youth, such as sports programs. Population trends in Susquehanna Township point to the importance of ensuring adequate programming for other age groups as well.

Table 0-5 | Population Trends by Age Group, 2000 to 2010

Age Range	Under 5	5 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 59	60 & over
% Change	▲ 7%	▼ 8%	▲ 20%	▲ 42%	▲ 4.6%	▲ 24%
	increase	decrease	increase	increase	increase	increase

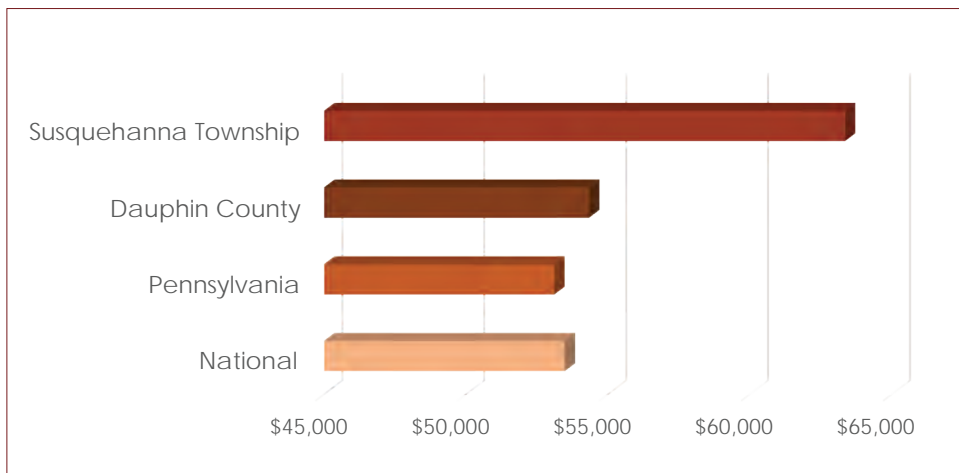


Understanding the income level of a community is important to recreation planning, especially when planning fee-based recreational programs. Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, the average median income level of households in the township is 16.6% higher than that of the Dauphin County, and is similarly greater than state and national levels (Table 0-7). Table 0-6 shows a more detailed breakdown of household income levels and the number of households per income bracket.

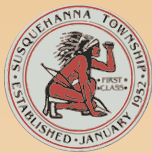
Table 0-6 | Median Income

Household Income	% of Total Households
Less than \$10,000	2.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	3.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	9.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.0%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	22.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	16.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	4.9%
\$200,000 or more	3.4%

Table 0-6 | Median Income



The notable statistic that can be identified from these two tables is that nearly 40% of households in the township earn less than the average national median household income. This statistic is an important one to understand in order to ensure access to quality recreation for all residents, as the township continues to develop recreational opportunities, programs and associated fee structures.



Chapter

1

Public Input

The residents of Susquehanna Township have had the opportunity to get involved with recreation and park efforts in the community. The following public input methods were used to gather information for this plan:

- *A recreation survey was used to gather information from residents.*
- *Key person and stakeholder interviews were conducted to determine the recreational needs for both facilities and programs.*
- *The Recreation Advisory Committee has monthly meetings that the public can attend.*
- *The Recreation Advisory Committee was given the opportunity to provide their perceived goals and objectives for the plan.*
- *The sports organizations were interviewed to determine their needs and gather additional input.*
- *Program evaluation forms are utilized to provide direction for future programming.*

The information gathered through these methods provided valuable data in determining the future recreational needs in Susquehanna Township. Residents can also attend the communities' regular public meeting and view information on the website.

Key Person Interviews

Interviews were conducted with twelve individuals holding key positions within the recreation community of Susquehanna Township. These included representatives from sports associations serving various age groups; one cultural group; the county Parks and Recreation Department; the school district; the township recreation advisory committee; and the Capital Area Greenbelt Association. A summary of interview responses is found in table 1-1 (page 9). For more on these interviews, see Appendix C.

Most interviewees agreed that the youth was the age group best served by existing facilities and programs; preschool, high school, adults and seniors were all identified as needing more services to meet their recreation needs.

Nearly all of those interviewed felt that, although the parks were safe and generally well-kept, more funding was needed. In fact, most stated that funding, reflected in a need for more money, land, or staff, was the primary factor hampering recreation. Most indicated that the existing level of recreation facilities and programs should be at least sustained, if not expanded.

The key person interviews indicated heavy use of the fields for sports programs and that upgrades to existing fields and additional fields, including practice fields, would allow more time for these activities. However, because several representatives of sports organizations were interviewed as key persons, this response may not reflect the needs of the community at large. Many interviewees also noted a need for trails for recreation and to improve connectivity, and a need to update and/or expand existing playgrounds.

Community Survey

A survey of residents was conducted by the township. Fifty-four responses were collected; forty-three of these were complete. A summary and some general highlights of survey results are included here. For full results, see Appendix C.

Responses to the survey were generally very positive. According to the respondents, the facilities located in the township parks are utilized regularly by 76% of the residents, with Veterans Memorial Park being the most widely used facility. The top three reasons respondents listed for not using the parks are: (1) not familiar with the facilities offered, (2) don't know the locations, and (3) don't like the facilities offered. Based on this information, further improving marketing and constructing some new facilities that meet the needs of underserved residents will draw additional visits to the parks.

Many respondents thought that parks needed enhancements: 41% indicated the existing parks need to be improved while 35% responded that the facilities need to be expanded. Of the amenities listed, seven out of the twelve provided sufficient availability for respondents, including softball and baseball fields, playgrounds, basketball courts, and open space. The insufficient facilities included trails, picnic areas, playground and football fields. Many of those responding to the survey indicated that they didn't know if certain facilities were sufficient.

Most respondents indicated that park and recreation funding should be increased: 74% responded that parks and recreation expenditures should be increased, while 67% of those responding would be willing to donate additional funds.

The survey provided additional information concerning the types of programs respondents would like to see offered. More than half of respondents thought more adult programs were needed; this was by far the most requested type of program. The next most requested program types were cultural and outdoor adventure programs (40%); family oriented programs (35%); and educational, summer recreation, and cardio programs (33%). A variety of other programs were requested by survey respondents, but at lower percentages.





Table 1-1 | Key Person Interviews

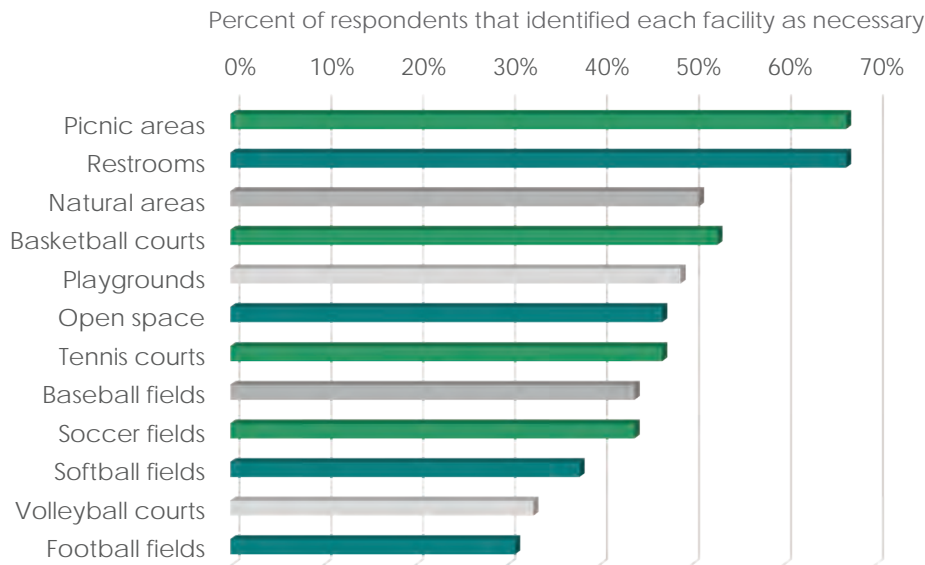
Representative of Organization	Age Best Served	Age Least Served	Program Opportunities	Facility Opportunities
Dauphin County Parks and Recreation	High School	Seniors	-	Trails, cricket field, arboretum, baseball fields, acquire section of former hospital area
ST Basketball Association	Youth – junior high	Pre-school, 9 -12 th grades, adult	Every program in HS should be available at community level, feeder programs	Outdoor basketball with roof covering, recreation center with pool
Senior Softball League 55+	Youth	Middle aged	Not sure	More fields for practice
Senior Softball League 62+	All ages	-	Kids programs first priority	Parks and ball fields
Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg	K - 5	Seniors	Not sure	Update basketball, update baseball field, larger playgrounds
ST Baseball Association	Youth	-	Roller deck hockey, ice hockey, astronomy, adult leagues	Deck hockey, more fields – complex, upgrade playgrounds
ST School District	Youth to seniors	Pre-school	Not sure	More athletic fields, green space, 3 – 7 wards under represented
Capital Area Greenbelt Association	School age	Young adults – 20's	Softball, kickball, multi-age activities, cycling activity	More trails, extend existing trails, playground space
Susquehanna Soccer Club	6 – 14 year olds	Teen, young adult, seniors	Lacrosse, field hockey, swimming program & aquatics	More courts, soccer park, centralized large park
ST Midget Football Association	Pre-school	Adults 3 – 8 th grades need more areas	More senior programs - pickleball	Basketball courts, ball fields, tennis courts recreation football & soccer, open space, pavilions, restrooms, water fountains
ST Girls Softball Association	Seniors	High school	More overall programs	Bike connector trails, expanding access to private facilities
ST Recreation Advisory Committee	Youth Preteen to Teen	Seniors	Good job with programs	Place for midget football, more nature trails

Table 1-1 | Key Person Interviews (cont.)

More Funding	Parks Safe	Parks Well Kept	Hampering Recreation	Partnership Opportunity	Future of Recreation	Comments
Yes	Yes	Nice job	Connectivity	Yes, discuss opportunities	More pedestrian & bike friendly trails	Nice job
Yes	Yes	Yes	Develop certain areas	Yes	Same as is	-
Yes	Yes	Yes	Lack of land	Yes - fields	Growing area, greater number of people wanting to use facilities	Need to find more land, youth program growing larger then there are facilities for
Yes	Yes	Do a good job	Money	Yes	If funds available expand	-
No	Yes	Yes	Staff, money	Yes, any way possible, key to survival	Joint programs, exercise program	Some outdoor programs
Yes	Yes	Yes	Lack of land	Yes, anything to make it better	Doing upgrades, more activities promoted	Veterans Park – National Night Out Program
Yes	Yes	Yes good job	Land, money	Yes	At least status quo, add more land to increase offerings	-
Yes	Yes	Well kept	Community refuses tax increase	Yes with trail opportunities	Where they are at now	Make areas more walkable, connected. Review mandatory dedication. Add public pool or skating rink
Yes	Yes	Yes	Land development prioritized over parks	Yes - soccer	Not a whole lot of growth	More satellite parks
Yes	Not all the time, but most of the time	Yes	Money, space	Yes	Hope better then now with money & space, as good or better	-
Yes	Yes – day time	Good job	People over scheduled, parents work	Yes	Same	-
Yes	Yes	Yes	Lack of green space	Yes	Premier area in recreation	-

The most requested new facility was trails, with 62% of respondents indicating an unmet need. The preferred trail types were walking trails (84%), bike trails (80%), and nature trails (71%). Many additional facilities and amenities were requested by respondents: picnic areas (58%), playgrounds (51%), water fountains (46%), and open space (30%). The survey also asked which existing facilities were most necessary to meet respondents' recreational needs, and highest rated existing facilities are listed in figure 1-2. Many of the facility needs shown on the recreation survey correlate directly with information gathered in the key person interviews.

Figure 1-2 | Existing Facilities that Respondents Identified as Most Necessary



In most municipalities there is a perceived need or desire for more fields. However, according to the results from the recreation survey, only a small percentage of respondents indicated a need for additional sports fields. A larger percentage indicated they didn't know if there was a need for additional fields to provide for the various sports programs. The key person interviews indicated heavy use of the fields for sports programs and that more fields, including practice fields, would allow more time for these activities. However, because several representatives of sports organizations were interviewed as key persons, comparing survey and interview results is not necessarily instructive.

Sports Association Interviews

Another set of targeted interviews was conducted with representatives of seven of the township's sports organizations. A summary of results can be found in table 1-3; for complete results, see Appendix D.



Table 1-3 | Sports Association Interviews Summary

Association	ST Baseball	ST Youth Basketball	ST Midget Football	ST Girls Softball Association	ST Senior Softball League	ST Senior Softball League	ST Soccer Club
Age of Participants	5 – 18	6 – 15	5 – 15	5 – 14	55 +	62+	4 – 18
Gender	Both	Both	Both	Girls	Both	Both	Both
# of Players	250 to 300	250	225 Tackle Football 70 Flag Football	70	120	130	275 Spring 341 Fall
# of Coaches	100	50	46	26	25	25	50
Season	Mar-July & Aug-Oct	Girls: Feb-Apr Boys: Oct-Jan	Tackle: July-Nov Flag: Apr-Jun	Apr - Jun Aug - Oct	May-Aug	May-Oct	Spring & Fall
Facilities Used	Veterans, McNaughton, Stabler, Kaufman, Holtzman	Elementary, Middle, and High Schools	Veterans, School	Veterans, Stabler, Edgemont, S. Lindermuth	Veterans, Stabler	Verterans, Edgemont	Veterans, McNaughton, Apple Creek
Existing Maintenance & Safety Issues	Upgrade pavilion & bathroom at Veterans, Drainage at Veterans	Bleachers	Lighting & parking at Stabler & McNaughton	Access to sheds, rekeying snack bar		Drainage at Stabler in left center field	Yes, need to expand
Field or Amenities Needed	Need a ballfield complex, pavilions, picnic tables, park benches, walking paths, more trees	Outdoor facilities: playgrounds, swimming pool, recreation center	More space, football fields, restrooms, bleachers, water fountains, picnic tables, pavilions	Pretty well met		More fields, water fountains	Issue with sulfur in water; bring in more water; expand facilities; Indoor facility
Partnership Opportunity	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, partner with sponsors	Yes	Yes





2 Recreation Facilities

The main goal of Susquehanna Township is to enhance and develop park facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents. In order to achieve this, the township must continue to adequately maintain the existing facilities, and develop new facilities while preserving the integrity of open space. These facilities and open space areas must be designed to meet the needs of all park users regardless of age, sex, or ability. Several things must be taken into consideration to accomplish this goal; (1) financial feasibility; (2) potential partnerships; (3) best location; (4) sustainability; (5) preservation; (6) maintenance requirements; and (7) stewardship.

The Susquehanna Township area is home to a vast variety of recreational facilities providing a wide range of activities for residents and visitors. Conducting a thorough inventory of existing facilities and programs provides a baseline from which the township can plan for future enhancements. Table 2-1 lists recreation facilities provided by the township.

Included in this plan is a comprehensive inventory of amenities available in each park owned by the township. A record of this information can be found in Appendix A. This inventory also records potential liability issues, maintenance issues, ADA compliance, condition of the facility/amenity, and appropriate ages served by the facility.

Veterans Memorial Park is the township's premier park. The soccer fields and ball fields provide an excellent venue for these sporting activities with plenty of parking and easy access. The other facilities, such as the pavilion, playground, tennis courts, basketball court, and walking path provide residents the opportunity for both active and passive recreation. Future renovations to the playground will enhance the recreational opportunities.

The existing facilities in all of the parks in Susquehanna Township are generally in good condition with only minor maintenance issues and improvements that need to be addressed. These issues are listed on the park inventory matrix for each park. Some of the issues may have been addressed since the inventories were completed. The township recognizes the importance of monitoring and addressing maintenance issues, and prioritizing those that could develop into hazardous conditions.



Table 2-1 | Recreation Facilities in Susquehanna Township

	Susquehanna Township Facility										
		2.73 acres	2.8 acres	7.5 acres	4.25 acres	52 acres	6.25 acres	7.85 acres	11 acres	.6 acres	1.5 acres
		Apple Creek Park	Beaufort Hunt Playground	Christian McNaughton Memorial Park	Crown Point Park	Logan Farm Park	Margaret's Grove	Donald B. Stabler Memorial Park	Edgemont Community Park	Plum Alley Park	Olympus Heights Park
											Shutt Mill Park
											Susquehanna Twp Municipal Building
											Veterans Park
											Waverly Woods
Indoor facilities	Meeting/active room										1
	Senior room										1
Passive recreation	Walking path			1	1						
	Natural area					1	1				
	Pond, 3 acres										
Sports fields											1
	Multi-use field	1	1	1	1				1		
	Baseball field			1				1			
	Softball field							1	1		
	Soccer field			1							
Courts	Concession stand			1				1			
	Batting cage			1				1			
	Tennis court										2
	Sand volleyball court										1
	Shuffleboard court										1
	Horseshoes										2
Playgrounds	Basketball court							1	2		1
	Playground		1	1	1			1	1	1	
	Tot lot			1	1						
Support facilities	Pavilion		1	1	1			1	2	1	1
	Restroom			1	1			1	1		



Table 2-2 | Nearby Recreation Facilities Available to Residents of Susquehanna Township

Facility	Size in Acres	Owner	Amenities
Greenbelt Trail		Greenbelt Trail Association	Trail
Fort Hunter Park	50	Dauphin County	Two pavilion, two playground, ten historic buildings, Susquehanna river access, restrooms, multi-use field, walking path
Fort Hunter Conservancy	150	Dauphin County	Hiking trails
Wildwood Park	229	Dauphin County	Nature Center, trails, 90 acre lake
Wiconisco Creek Park	35	Dauphin County via lease with Water Company of Millersburg	Target archery trail, pavilion, soccer field, softball fields, tot lot play equipment, sand volleyball court and walking trails.
Lykens Glen Park	51	Dauphin County via lease with Borough of Lykens	Two pavilions, sand volleyball court, tot lot, walking path
Community Gardens	8	Leased from the state	318 garden plots
Sassafras Island		Dauphin County	Two primitive campsites
Susquehanna Township High School	38.1	Susquehanna Township School District	Five tennis courts, football, field hockey, track, restrooms, concession
Susquehanna Township Middle School	23.4	Susquehanna Township School District	Two baseball, soccer, football, field hockey, two restrooms, three concessions
Thomas Holtzman Elementary School	11.1	Susquehanna Township School District	Baseball, two basketball, playground, multi-use field
Sara Lindemuth Elementary School	1.9	Susquehanna Township School District	Softball, basketball, playground
Anna Carter Elementary School	3.9	Susquehanna Township School District	Small baseball practice field, tot lot
Harrisburg Parks	183.1	Harrisburg	24 parks mostly small sites with playgrounds, some with ball fields & basketball courts, two with swimming pools
Brightbill Park	41	Lower Paxton Township	Playgrounds, tennis, soccer basketball, pavilion, baseball, softball, parking, in-line hockey, community center
Kohl Park	19	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, pavilion, softball, restrooms, racquetball, soccer, tennis, game room
Lingle Park	22	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, pavilion, softball, soccer, volleyball, baseball
Hodges Heights Park	4	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, tennis, softball, basketball
Koons Memorial Park	33	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, tennis, basketball, volleyball, baseball, football, pavilion, concessions, bathroom, softball, horseshoes, bocce, parking
Forest Hill Park	8	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, basketball, soccer, tennis



Table 2-2 | Nearby Recreation Facilities Available to Residents of Susquehanna Township (cont.)

Facility	Size in Acres	Owner	Amenities
Centennial Park	4	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, basketball, tennis, pavilion,
Hocker Park	12	Lower Paxton Township	Nature trail, picnic area
Kings Crossing Park	5	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, pavilion, volleyball, baseball, soccer
Lamplighter Park	5	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, basketball, soccer, pavilion
Ranger Fields	10	Lower Paxton Township	Soccer Fields
Meadowbrook Park	4	Lower Paxton Township	Playground, basketball court
Wolfensberger Tract	93	Lower Paxton Township	Soccer fields, pavilions, natural area
Thomas B. George Jr. Park	37	Lower Paxton Township	2 baseball fields, pavilion, 13 acre nature area, 5 soccer fields, 6 baseball fields
Buchanan Tract	41	Lower Paxton Township	Passive nature oriented park
Friendship Community Center		Lower Paxton Township	Fitness Center, pools, gymnasium, social hall, classrooms, senior center
Paxtang & Simpson Street Park	2.5	Paxtang Borough	Playground, baseball, basketball, field house, picnic area
Enders Memorial Park	11	Pennbrook Borough	Twilight baseball, 2 pavilions, basketball, playground, Little League baseball/softball
Little Valley Park	1.6	Pennbrook Borough	Baseball, basketball, playground
Elm Street Station	.1	Pennbrook Borough	Bocce court, gazebo, playground
Fishing Creek Park	2	Middle Paxton Township	Playground, tennis court, pavilion, basketball, community building
Hagy Park	27.7	Middle Paxton Township	Picnic area, basketball, tennis, playground, ball fields
Chambers Hill Park	10.4	Swatara Township	Basketball, baseball, tennis, pavilion, tot lot, restrooms
Swatara Crest Park	5.5	Swatara Township	Baseball, concessions, basketball
Earl R. Long Memorial Park	4.2	Swatara Township	Baseball, basketball, pavilion, soccer, tot lot, restroom
Howard "Bumps" Randolph Memorial Park	3	Swatara Township	Tot lot, tennis, basketball, pavilion, baseball
Gerald H. Vanatta Memorial Park	8.3	Swatara Township	Tot lot, baseball, tennis, soccer/football, basketball, pavilion, walkway, restrooms, pony baseball

Table 2-2 | Nearby Recreation Facilities Available to Residents of Susquehanna Township (cont.)

Facility	Size in Acres	Owner	Amenities
Donald M. Taylor Memorial Park	4.7	Swatara Township	Tot lot, basketball, tennis, midget baseball, volleyball, shelter, concessions, restrooms, pony baseball
Lenker Manor II Park	.7	Swatara Township	Tot lot, shuffleboard, volleyball, horseshoes
Richard E. Plesic Memorial Park	.5	Swatara Township	Tot lot, basketball, volleyball, shuffleboard, game room, recreation building, restrooms
Enhaut Park	6.3	Swatara Township	Tot lot, midget baseball, tennis, volleyball, basketball, concessions, restrooms
Robert W. Horner Memorial Park	1.6	Swatara Township	Tot lot, midget baseball, basketball, volleyball, restrooms
Frank J. Kocevar Memorial Park	2	Swatara Township	Passive Recreation
Sportsmen's Golf		Public Course	18 holes, driving range, pro shop, 19 th hole grill
Blue Ridge Country Club		Private membership	18 holes, tennis, fitness center, restaurants
Bumble Bee Hollow Golf		Public	Miniature golf, driving range, pro shop, fitness studio, simulator, pitching & putting areas
Country Club of Harrisburg		Private membership	18 holes, golf shop, driving range, putting greens, sand pitch area, swimming pool, tennis courts, hiking trails, picnic areas, restaurants
Colonial Golf & Tennis		Private membership	18 holes, swimming pool, pickleball, restaurants
Water Golf on City Island		Public	18 hole miniature golf, overlook, picnic area, snack shop
Challenge Family Fun Center		Public	22 hole miniature golf, batting cage, mini bowling, arcade, refreshments
Ned Smith Center for Nature & Art		Ned Smith Center Organization	Wildlife art
Enola Sportsman's Club		Membership	Dining area, pavilion, bar, horseshoe pits, playground, pistol & rifle range, indoor pistol range, skeet/trap area, archery range, fishing pond
Power Train		Membership	Sports & fitness facilities
Devon Manor Swim Club		Membership	Swimming pool, pavilion, diving pool, snack area
Latshmere Swim Club		Membership	Swimming pool, basketball court, playground
Penn Colonial Swim Club		Membership	Swimming pool, park area, playground
Wedgewood Hills Swim Club		Membership	Swimming Pool
State Game Lands #246	423.7	PA Game Commission	Hunting, natural area



Comparison with National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards and Guidelines

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has actively supported the improvement of parks and recreation throughout its existence. One of the ways NRPA supports parks and recreation is by providing tools for agencies to analyze and compare their performance and facilities to other agencies across the country. NRPA originally published the “Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines” to assist agencies in the planning and development of park and recreation facilities. While these guidelines are still widely used, NRPA no longer considers this “one size fits all” approach a best practice for addressing the needs of widely varying communities. However, these standards are often still used in order to establish a baseline.

Instead, NRPA advocates the use of comparative benchmarking. The Parks and Recreation Operating Ratio and GIS (PRORAGIS) system, our tool to collect and analyze data about parks and recreation agencies across the country, allows users to compare themselves to departments that they identify as similar to themselves – whether in terms of geography, climate, size, or number of total employees. PRORAGIS also allows agencies to upload existing GIS information about their facilities, or build a GIS dataset for their agency. Using this information, agencies can perform various analyses of their parks and programming. For instance, agencies can examine the location of their facilities in relation to current demographic and socioeconomic data, allowing proactive planning of facility and program development to better serve their communities.

The following NRPA park categories are applicable to the parks in Susquehanna Township:

A **mini-park (tot-lot)** is generally 2,500 square feet to one acre in size. It serves a small neighborhood, is within walking distance to residential areas, and has a service radius of less than ¼ mile.

A **neighborhood park/playground/mini-park** is an area for intense recreation activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, play equipment, and picnicking. These parks should be suitable for intense development, easily accessible, and be geographically centered with safe access. They typically have a service area of ¼ to ½ mile and a size of 1 to 15 acres. NRPA recommends 1 to 2 acres of these parks per 1,000 residents.

A **community park** is an area of diverse environmental quality. Community parks also include intense recreation facilities such as athletic complexes, courts games, picnic pavilions, and swimming pools. Community parks may be in an area of natural quality for passive recreation or may contain a combination of both types of recreation. Often, these parks have natural features such as a body of water. Community parks generally have a service area of 1 to 2 miles and are 25 acres in size or larger. NRPA recommends 5 to 8 acres of these parks per 1000 residents.



The following tables compare the parkland standards for the Susquehanna Township using the old method (Table 2-3) versus the PRORAGIS method (Table 2-4). The acreage for Margaret's Grove is included with Waverly Woods as a community park since they are adjacent properties. The PRORAGIS Community Standards compare communities with populations between 20,000 to 49,999 to Susquehanna Township's population of 24,482.

Table 2-3 | Park Land Comparison to National Standards (Old Method)

Type of Park	Mini-Park	Neighborhood Park/Playground	Community Park
Typ. Acres/ 1000 Residents	< 1	1 - 2	5 - 8
Acres Needed *	< 25	25 to 50	125 to 200
Existing Acres	0.6	47.63	104.25
Surplus/ Deficiency	(< 24) deficiency	23 to (2) surplus	(21 - 96) deficiency

* calculated using population = 24,482

Table 2-4 | Park Land Comparison using NRPA PRORAGIS Standards & Park Score

Park Land	Susquehanna Township		Lower Quartile	NRPA Medium Quartile	Park Score Medium Rating
	Land	Rating			
Park Acres as % of Township Land	152.48	1.57%	2.0%	9.1%	8.9%
Park Acres/ 1000 Residents	152.48	0.62	5.2	9.7	-
Residents/ Park	14 parks	1,749	1,192	3,064	-

* calculated using population = 24,482

Both the old standards and the PRORAGIS method indicate a deficiency in all types of parks as well as amount of park land. However, under the old method the neighborhood parks do show a surplus to a minimal deficiency. Using the PRORAGIS method, Susquehanna Township is below standard when comparing the acreage of park land to the overall acreage of the township (9,728 acres). The township is only .43% below the lower quartile but significantly below the medium NRPA standards and Park Score standards. When comparing the number of park acres per 1,000 residents, Susquehanna Township is well below the lower quartile average and significantly below the medium standard.



The following charts compare the existing recreation facilities owned by the township, school district, and county to the national standards (Figure 2-5) and using the PRORAGIS method (Figure 2-6).

Figure 2-5 | Recreation Facility Comparison to National Standards (Old Method)

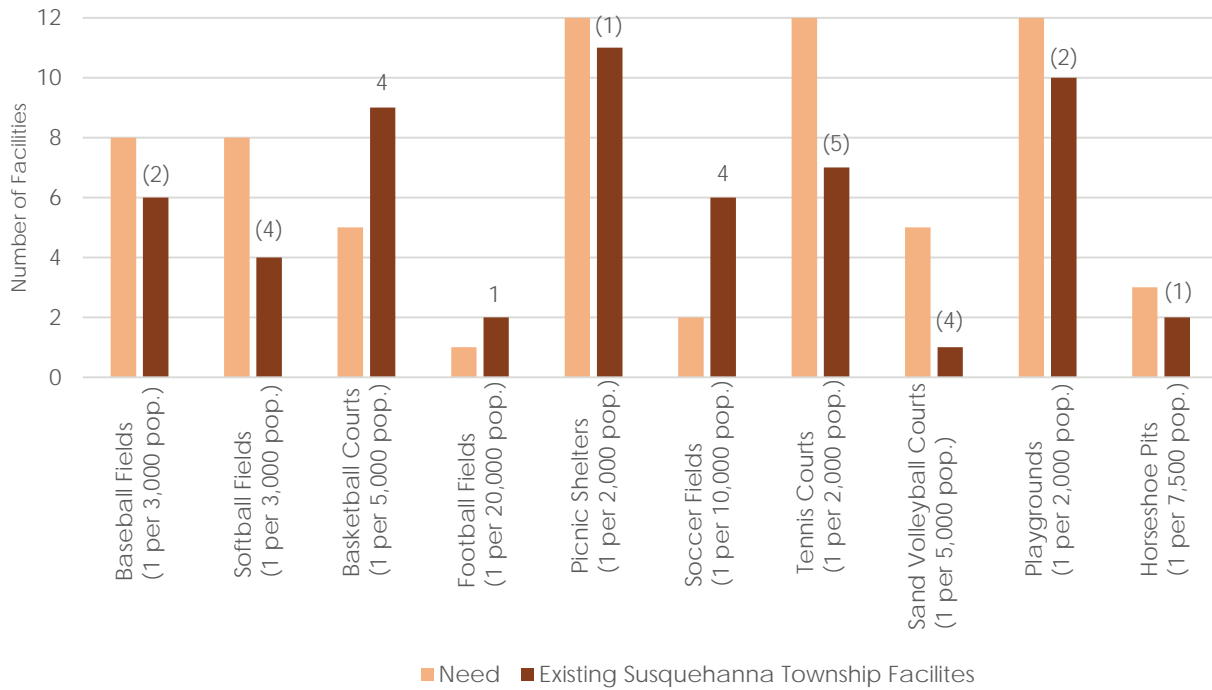
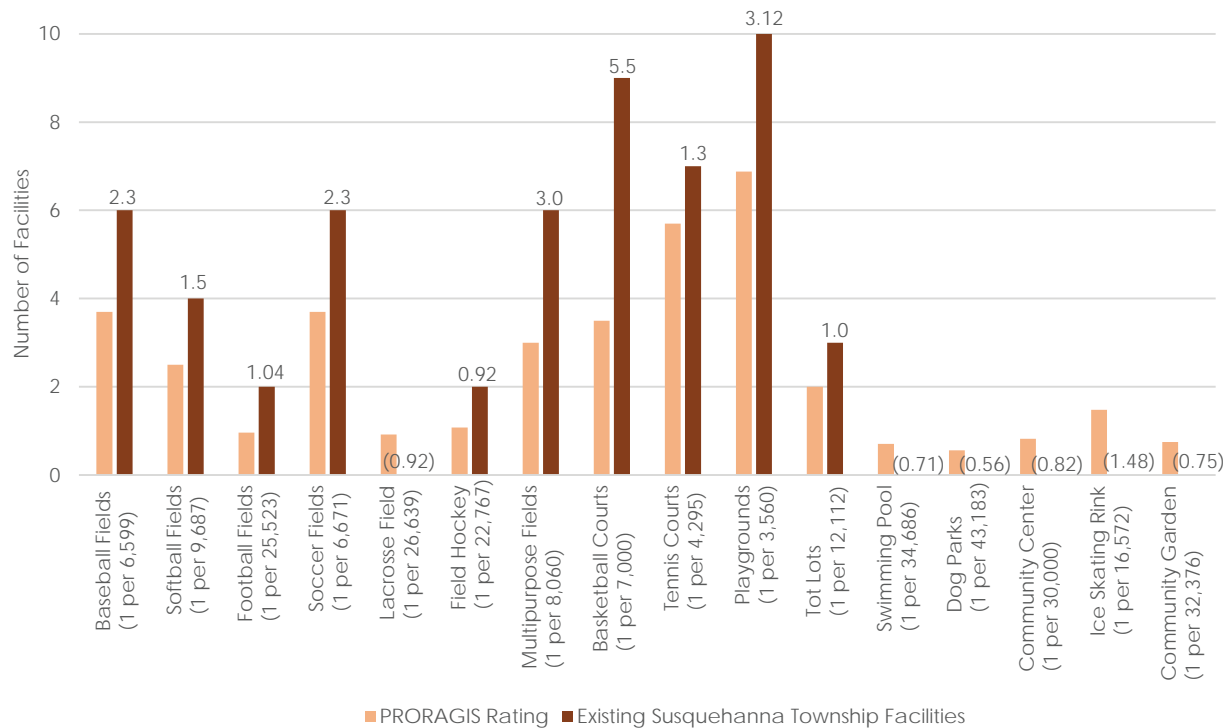


Figure 2-6 | Recreation Facility Comparison using PRORAGIS method



Each method shows certain facilities that were not included in the other method, so both are included to provide additional information. In comparing the results from the two methods there are some similarities and differences in the surplus and deficiencies. This could be attributed to changes in facility demand, such as indicated in the tennis court comparison. The old method indicated a deficiency of five courts versus a surplus of 1.3 courts in the new standards. Over the past 30 years there has been a decline in the demand for tennis facilities which is indicated in this difference. This may be true in other differences shown above.

The NRPA National Standards are based on the “average” community’s needs. The comparisons above should not be considered absolutes in determining how Susquehanna Township compares to the “average” community. Recreation desires and demands vary across the country; therefore, the only accurate method available to gauge whether or not park and recreation facilities are adequate is through public participation. Kevin Ashner, a planner who has been recognized for his contribution to parks research, argues that the true measure of a good standard is “the level of customer satisfaction.” He suggests the following criteria for good standards:

Relevance - Standards should reflect the needs and lifestyles of today’s residents.

People Orientation - They should reflect the unique needs and preferences of the people in the area being served.

Performance Standards – They should provide a basis for measuring achievement of the community objectives. They should measure the quality of recreation service rather than simply the quantity.

Feasibility – They should be attainable within a reasonable time frame and with available funding sources.

Practicality – They should be simple to understand and apply. They should be based on sound planning principles, information, and a credible development process. They should also be flexible enough to handle unanticipated situations and rapidly changing needs.



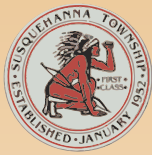
Veterans Park Pavilion



Facilities at Donald B. Stabler Memorial Park



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3 Recreation Programs

Susquehanna Township has a variety of public, private and quasi-public entities that provide various forms of recreational activities for residents of the area and beyond (Table 3-1). For some of these entities, a representative was contacted to provide information on this plan. These representatives indicated a very strong interest in continuing to partner with Susquehanna Township, enhance existing partnerships, or develop a new partnership to provide additional programs and/or coordinate use of facilities. The cooperative use of these facilities provides opportunities to develop a variety of programs throughout the area without the township bearing the expense of constructing new facilities. Partnerships extend the resources of both participating organizations, improve services to the public, and increase the level of use of existing facilities and programs.

Table 3-1 | Community Recreation Program Resources

Name of Facility	Programs	Age & Gender Served
Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg	Summer Camps, preschool & after school programs, adult fitness, senior programs	Youth - Adult
Friendship Community Center	The center provides inter-generational programs and activities for preschool, youth, adults, families, and seniors.	Pre-school - Seniors (Members)
Jose Johnsons Chinese Martial Arts	Kung Fu, Tai Chi, Qigong, Special Topics of study	Youth - Adult
Harrisburg Kung Fu Center	Modern Arnis, Kung Fu, Tai Chi, Yoga	Youth - Adult
Harrisburg Martial Arts Academy	Jing Sim Do, Self Defense	Youth - Adult
Harrisburg Academy of Dance	Ballet, tap, jazz	Preschool - Adult
PA Regional Ballet	Summer programs, musical theater, classical ballet training	Preschool - Adult
Kinderdance	Kinderdance, kindergym, kindertots, kindercombo, kindermotion, kinder "Dance with Me"	15 months – age 12
Richie School of Dance	Ballet, tap, jazz, modern dance	Preschool - Adult
Tap & Arts	Tap, ballet, jazz, pointe, hip-hop, musical theater, contemporary, creative movement, triple threat, Zumba fitness, acting	Preschool - Adult
Yellow Breeches Sports Center	Inline & ball hockey, indoor soccer, flag football, lacrosse, baseball tunnels, kickball, field hockey, dog shows, Zumba, camps,	Preschool - Adult
Central Penn Health & Fitness	Zumba, pilates, indoor cycling, yoga, cardio & strength training, swimming lessons	Youth - Adult
Fitness U	Fitness training, indoor cycling, tanning beds, saunas	Adult
Fitness Fusion	Fitness training	Adult
Curves	Women's fitness classes	Adult

Susquehanna Township has several sports associations that serve the area very well while utilizing the facilities in the township parks:

- *Susquehanna Township Youth Basketball Association*
- *Susquehanna Township Baseball Association*
- *Susquehanna Township Midget Football Association*
- *Susquehanna Township Girls' Softball Association*
- *Susquehanna Township Soccer Club*
- *Senior Softball League 55+*
- *Senior Softball League 62+*

These associations provide an invaluable service to the community through their provision of a variety of youth and senior activities through volunteer efforts. Without the service of many volunteers it wouldn't be feasible to have these programs available in the township.

Programs and Participation Trends

Susquehanna Township has offered a variety of programs since 1977. Programs offered over the past six years are shown in table 3-2; many of these programs have been run successfully for several years prior to the period covered by this data. According to the recreation survey only 26.67% of the respondents have participated in the recreation programs. However, 100% of the respondents indicated that recreation is important, with 60.42% indicating very important, 25% important, and 14.58% somewhat important. This suggests that the residents want recreational opportunities for themselves and their families; however, 73.33% of those responding have not participated in the programs offered. Possible reasons are discussed later in this document.

Since 2010 there have been 77 different programs offered in Susquehanna Township. In 2015 twenty-nine of these programs were offered. Program participation in Susquehanna Township has been relatively steady for the past six years. Several successful programs have remained popular. These include, for youth, the Day Camp, Summer Field Trips, and the Playground Program; for adults, the volleyball program; for seniors, the Arthritis Foundation Exercise program, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Driver Certification Course, and Senior Tennis; and for multiple age groups, the Music & Movie Series program and the Book Exchange. Participation in the day camp for school-age children increased 47% from 2014 to 2015.

Three township programs were cancelled due to low participation. Other reasons for cancellation included: lack of interest, instructor/volunteer availability, partnerships with other organizations to host the program, or financial challenges. Lack of adequate staffing, diminished use of school facilities and very limited use of available other indoor facilities has greatly restricted the number and types of programs that can be offered in comparison to the 40 to 50 programs that were once offered yearly with a 75% to 80% success ratio. Sports Camp participation has waned, probably due to professional sport figures and groups like i9 offering similar private programs. Fitness program participation has also dropped due to many competing fitness facilities in the area.



Table 3-2 | Programs and Participation Rate

	TARGET									Active	Competitive	Experience
	PROGRAM/EVENT	PARTICIPANTS	COST							Passive	Non-Comp.	
				2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015			
	AARP Driver Certification Course	Seniors	FEE	16	18	21	29	45	76	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	AARP Tax Assistance	Adult/Seniors	FREE	98	112	X	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Adult Basketball	Adults 18+	FEE	48	55	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Aerobics	16 +	FEE	NP	234	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	After Day Camp Program	5-13 Year Olds	FEE	68	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Social
	Alzheimers and Dementia Class	Adult/Seniors	FREE	5	X	X	X	3	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Arthritis Foundation Exercise	Seniors	Donation	505	234	447	517	210	391	Active	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Ballet Dance Class	6-12 year olds	FEE	X	X	25	64	29	30	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Ballet - Creative Movement, Pre-ballet	3-5 year olds	FEE	X	X	18	24	31	8	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Baseball Camp	10-13 year olds	FEE	7	12	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Basketball Camp Girls	8-14 year olds	FEE	21	25	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Basketball Clinic / Boys	5-13 year olds	FEE	X	X	X	X	X	13	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Blue Cross Bingo	Seniors	FREE	15	16	14	16	18	X	Passive	Competitive	Social
	Boating Safety Suddenly in Command	All	FEE	16	X	X	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Body Core Classes	Adult	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Body Pump Session	Adult	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Book Exchange	All	FREE	19	24	20	36	27	25	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Bus Trips	All	FEE	419	131	X	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	
	Chair Yoga	Seniors	FEE	68	28	45	37	26	19	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	City Islander Soccer	5-15 year olds	FEE	1	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Computer Instruction Class	Seniors	FEE	85	10	4	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Cooking Classes	3-7 grade	FEE	X	X	X	18	NP	10	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Creative Me Art Class	3-8 Grade	FEE	X	NP	7	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Cross Stitch Introduction	Adult	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Daily use of Computer Lab	All	FREE	12	10	5	4	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Day Camp	5-13 Year olds	FEE	420	299	439	435	381	560	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Drama Camps	12- 17 year olds	FEE	10	12	6	X	9	22	Active	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Early Riser outdoor boot camp	Adult	FEE	X	X	NP	10	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	First Monday Cards	Adult/Seniors	FREE	8	8	X	X	X	X	Passive	Competitive	Social
	Flag Football	3-5 Grade	FEE	134	175	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Golf Clinic Adult	Adults	FEE	NP	X	6	9	9	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Golf for Kids (Basics)	8-15 year olds	FEE	NP	X	X	X	3	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Golf Parent & Child Clinic		FEE	NP	X	X	NP	3	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Introduction to Judo	All	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	Journey Into Space Camp	6-9 Grade	FEE	X	X	X	X	X	NP	Active	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Kick Boxing	All	FEE	2	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
	No Prep Weight Loss Program	All	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
	Open Gym	8-13 year olds	FREE	NP	X	X	X	X	75	Active	Competitive	Physical
	Personal Fitness	All	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical

LEGEND
 X No program offered
 NP No participants/Not enough participants; cancelled
 ? Offered but number of Participants not known



Table 3-2 | Programs and Participation Rate (cont.)

PROGRAM/EVENT	TARGET PARTICIPANTS	COST	PARTICIPANTS						Active Passive	Competitive Non-Comp.	Experience
			2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015			
Photography Class	15+ Year Old	FEE	X	X	X	X	X	6	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
Playground Program	8-14 Year Olds	FREE	144	145	179	109	127	120	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Polymer Clay Class	Adult/Seniors	FEE	38	11	NP	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
PSAT/SAT Math Strategies	TEEN	FEE	36	46	34	37	33	6	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
PSAT/SAT Verbal Strategies	TEEN	FEE	16	26	30	28	23	6	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
Pull back Car Frenzy	3-6 Grade	FEE	X	X	X	X	X	8	Active	Competitive	Social
Senior Softball	Seniors	FREE	250	250	250	250	250	250	Active	Competitive	Physical
Soccer Camps	4-13 Year Olds	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
Steep Education Academy Hiking	6-9 Grade	FEE	14	12	17	13	10	10	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
STEMS Mini Engineering Camp	4-7 Grade	FEE	X	X	X	X	2	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
STEMS Lego Camp	2-6 Grade	FEE	NP	X	X	20	NP	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Educational
Story Time	Pre-School	FREE	6	X	X	X	X	X	Passive	Non-Comp.	Social
Stretch and Strength for Seniors	Seniors	FEE	NP	NP	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Stretching Program	All	FEE	NP	NP	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Summer Field Trips	8-14 Year Olds	FEE	477	325	498	603	540	660	Active	Non-Comp.	Social
Sunset Music and Movie Series	All	FREE	X	X	52	49	55	54	Passive	Non-Comp.	Entertaining
Susquehanna Starter Soccer Clinic	5-10 year olds	FEE	12	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tae Kwan Do	5 -12 year olds	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Tennis Adult	Adult	FEE	NP	X	107	52	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Advanced	Teens	FEE	X	X	X	X	NP	NP	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Beginner	Youth	FEE	11	X	X	9	7	4	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Camp	17 and under	FEE	X	X	11	X	X	NP	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Intermediate	Teens	FEE	5	X	X	36	3	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Junior	Children 8 - 18	FEE	X	27	11	NP	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Middle School	12-14 year olds	FEE	2	X	X	NP	X	X	Active	Competitive	Physical
Tennis Pee-Wee	5-7 year olds	FEE	2	2	NP	9	5	5	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Tennis Senior	Seniors	FREE	20	22	24	24	22	24	Active	Competitive	Physical
Thursday is for playing cards	Adult/Seniors	FREE	4	4	8	8	10	8	Passive	Competitive	Social
True Yoga	All	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Ultimate Frisbee	14-18 year olds	FEE	X	X	X	26	13	24	Active	Competitive	Physical
Volleyball	Adult 18+	FEE	66	77	?	X	62	65	Active	Competitive	Physical
Wednesday Senior Board Game Day	Seniors	FREE	10	10	12	12	10	8	Passive	Competitive	Social
Weight Loss Boot Camp	Adult	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Woman's "Strength Training 101"	Adult	FEE	2	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Women's Self Defense	Adult	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Women's Fitness	Adult	FEE	2	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Youth Exercise	Youth	FEE	NP	X	X	X	X	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical
Zumba	16+	FEE	X	239	343	272	336	X	Active	Non-Comp.	Physical

Programs are available for a full range of age groups. The majority of the programs offered in 2015 were for youth, which is typical of any recreation department. However, according to the recreation survey the residents feel that youth programming should be expanded. The number of programs for teens and seniors ranked second in the total number programs for teens and seniors ranked second in the total number of programs offered. These age groups are typically underserved by recreation programming. Survey respondents indicated that teen programming is the least sufficient, while senior programming is fair. This was supported by key person interviews. Results from both the survey and the key person interviews agree that preschool, young adult, and adult age groups have insufficient program opportunities.

From 2000 to 2010, the township saw an increase in population in all age groups, except the youth. Population trends support the above findings and indicate the need for increased programming, especially for teens, young adults, and seniors.

The programs offered by the township have been a mix of fee vs free programs depending on the type of program offered. Some of the programs are expected to be self-supporting while others are not self-supporting. Senior and youth programs are a combination and adult programs are expected to be self-supporting.



Day camp participants visit the State Museum



Tennis Camp

The Parks and Recreation Department's future plans include offering more after school programs, better health programs, physical fitness programs, flag football, soccer, and a variety of other games. These activities will meet some of the needs indicated above. Additional types of programs should be considered to meet the needs of those age groups with insufficient programs. In order to accommodate the addition of new programs, consideration should be given to hiring a program coordinator and instructors to properly staff the programs.

In general, all recreation departments find that some programs are successful while others are not. This is not uncommon, as it does take time to develop a successful program schedule. Susquehanna Township has done a good job in developing a successful program schedule. However, it is important to continue offering a variety of programs building on those that are successful and continually offering new programs. Following is a list of reasons why some programs are successful, while others are unsuccessful.



Participation trends in the programs can be affected by any one of these or a combination of these considerations. A successful and sustainable program will depend on each of these areas and potentially other aspects being considered from the inception of the program through its final evaluation.

Timing. A program that is not successful in one season may be very successful in another season or even at another time of the day or week. You should continue to offer programs until you find the right combination of timing factors, or determine that the program isn't right for the community.

Trends vs. Fads. Trends are things that are gaining in popularity, and may become a significant part of community recreation in the near future. Fads are things that may have already reached peak interest or will only last for a brief period. The following trends or fads should be watched to potentially include as part of the area's programming and facility development:

- o Progressive Pump Tracks
- o Soccer (Foot) Golf
- o Sand Soccer
- o Bubble soccer
- o Gaga Ball
- o Triangle Ball
- o Mob Races
- o Technical Programs – can attract populations not interested in sports
- o Spike Ball
- o Pokemon Go – probably a fad versus a long-term trend
- o Kickball – old activity gaining in popularity again
- o Dodgeball - old activity gaining in popularity again
- o Ultimate Frisbee
- o Pickleball – very popular
- o Wallyball - old activity gaining in popularity again
- o Geocaching – very popular
- o Disc Golf – very popular
- o Dog Parks – very popular
- o Splash Parks – very popular with a pool or in place of a pool
- o POP Tennis (Formally Paddle Tennis) – hasn't reached this area yet
- o Volkssports - a family-oriented sports and recreation program that promotes physical fitness and good health

Instructors. Your instructor's expertise, enthusiasm, attitude, and style may make or break your program. So seek out quality instructors for your programs and promote them and their qualifications.

Publicity and promotion. Many excellent programs have poor attendance because no one knew about them because they were not properly publicized or the residents didn't read the information provided. Use every method available to get the word out.

Program fees. Know your community and what they can afford to pay for the programs. You must determine if you want to cover just the direct costs, both the direct and the indirect costs, or make a profit. Charging too much can deter people, while not charging enough can make them feel that it isn't a quality program.

Location. Is there easy access to the program site? Is the facility or area well maintained? Is it a safe location? Is it well lighted, if the program is an evening program?

Weather. Outdoor programs are always affected by weather conditions which determine if the program can be conducted. These are generally affected the day of the program. However, indoor programs may also be affected, as temperature and precipitation can make travel to a facility difficult or uncomfortable for potential participants.



Analysis and Recommendations

Susquehanna Township offers a considerable number of programs for grade school age. Most communities have the heaviest programming for this age group. Consideration should be given to offering more programs to those ages 12 to 15. It is more difficult to identify and provide activities that interest this age group, but they are more likely than older teens to participate. Potentially attractive programs for this age group include: running programs; adventure programs; or other specialized programs designed for their age group.

Programs for those 16 through 19 are needed, but they are a difficult to age group to reach. The most successful programs for this age group are generally programs that they help to develop and promote. Another area that both of these age groups will often participate in is volunteer opportunities, such as helping with programs for younger children, for special events, or special needs programs.

The 20 to 55 age group is going through many changes in their lives with college classes, finding jobs and starting families. Programming for these ages is possible as can be seen through some of the existing programs that are successful in Susquehanna Township. It is recommended to continue to expand programming in this area through additional fitness programs; learning programs, such as composting, gardening, and landscaping classes; and dog obedience programs.

The seniors in the township have a variety of programs to choose from for their entertainment. However, as the number of active baby boomers reaches this age group a greater assortment of programs should be included in the program schedule.

The programs currently offered in the township are inclusive for special needs. However, consideration should be given to providing programs designed specifically for the special needs community. The Susquehanna School District currently provides programs for special needs individuals. Partnering with the school district to provide more recreational opportunities and new programs will enhance this population's ability to be an active part of the community. Partnering with neighboring communities to offer special programming should also be considered.

Nature programs such as bird watching, ecology, hiking, or interpretative identification programs should be included in a comprehensive program schedule. Although only 22% of the survey respondents indicated an interest in outdoor education, such programs reach a segment of the population that does not have an interest in other types of programs. Partnering with the county to offer programs at Wildwood Park and at Logan Farm in the future should be considered. It is often possible to find community residents that have a specific interest in outdoor education and are willing to lead a program.



PSAT/SAT class (above) and a cooking class (below)



Outdoor winter programs are another area to consider. Programs such as a daytime winter fest with a variety winter activities, or an evening bonfire, could be offered. It is difficult to predict our winter weather, so schedule changing for these programs may be necessary, or alternative activities planned based on weather conditions.

Passive recreation programs, such as arts & crafts, reading, board games, etc. must be incorporated into the overall inclusive program. According to the recreation survey, 31% of respondents are interested in arts and craft programs. Susquehanna Township currently offers several passive recreation programs, but there is room for expansion.

Family oriented programs should be offered in the township, as indicated in over one third of survey responses. Currently, various organizations offer certain types of family programs, but none are hosted by the township. Events to consider include a community day, breakfast or lunch with Santa and the Easter bunny, a Halloween costume party, and National Night Out.

Another area that cannot be overlooked is technology programs. Many youth are into technology and not interested in sports or other activities. Therefore, it is important to provide programs to meet their needs with technology programs such as game design, 3D design and print, and map making. This can be done through Hi-Tech Learning Camps and Programs for Kids. This privately owned company will bring in all of the equipment needed and instruct the sessions, which are generally geared toward ages 7 to 14.

As the township continues to grow and see a more diverse population, programs that address various cultural needs may have to be considered as part of the overall programming efforts. More detailed information should be gathered on level of community interest and what type of programs might fulfill these needs.

The township partners with the school district for use of their facilities and with some organizations for certain programs. Additional partnership opportunities should be considered to enhance programming and alleviate some costs. According to the recreation survey 83.72% of the respondents feel that the township should partner with neighboring communities in the development of parks and recreation programs/facilities, and all key person interviews indicated that partnerships are important to very important.

Some programming opportunities are restricted due to the lack of indoor space. The township has two small rooms located in the township building that are used for programs. The one room provides space for various activities while the other room is primarily used for small senior activities. The need for additional indoor space for programs could be improved through partnerships or on a much larger scale through the construction of a community center. The recreation survey indicated that 58.14% of those filling out the survey would like to have a community center in the township. Although expensive, a community center provides a great opportunity to vastly enhance programming.

Recreational programs are important to the community and must be considered as a valuable asset that cannot be dismissed, reduced or eliminated. It is recommended to continue to develop more programs, but “go slow” and don’t offer too many programs at one time. This is a frequent mistake which can extend staff and volunteers too far, diminish the quality of the programs offered, and create problems for future programs.

A good method to follow in programming is the Program Cycle. The use of a programming cycle will provide a complete programming process through the assessment of public relations efforts, evaluation of administration, evaluation of program staff, assessment of program affordability, assist with program staff recruitment, and provide a continual survey of additional program desires.

Perhaps the most important part of the cycle is the program evaluation that should be completed by the program participants at the end of each activity. The Susquehanna Township Parks and Recreation Department does use evaluation forms to gather information for the programs. These evaluations must include questions to help staff determine what parts of the program were most and least effective or enjoyed, what should be eliminated, what publicity methods were effective, whether the time allotted for the program adequate, and potential future recommendations for programs. A similar form should be developed for the instructor and volunteers to complete so that they can provide advice from their perspective and have input into the future programming process, and feel ownership in the program's growth. This information should be properly filed and referenced before offering the program again. This will allow continued improvement in the programs and help keep up with the changing needs of the community.

Program Operation Manual

A detailed program operational manual should be developed for each program, especially those staffed by township employees and/or volunteers, such as the day camp, playground program, or any special events programs that the Parks and Recreation Department would administer. The manual would provide the necessary information for anyone to step in and effectively run each program when it is offered. Included in the manual would be the following information:

- Date, time and location of the program
- Contacts for the program
- Detailed description of the program
- Detailed list of supplies needed to operate the program
- Timeline for developing each phase of the program
- Set up and clean up procedures
- Cost elements related to the program
- Potential revenues generated from the program
- Program records as addressed above
- Sponsorship, donations, etc. for the program
- Volunteers, staff needed to successfully operate the program
- Photos, news releases, newspaper/magazine articles of the program
- Follow up – Thank you letters, volunteer recognition, etc.
- Program review details – after reviewing the program with others, all ideas suggestions, and changes should be properly noted.

The Parks and Recreation Department has maintained excellent records for their programs. Accurate records ensure that future programs are more effective and efficient, save time, and eliminate the possibility of forgetting certain aspects of the program. Maintaining an annual program plan to incorporate this information enhances the success of the programs.





Americans with Disabilities Act

Accessible Design: In order to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is required that all public entities operate each service, program or activity in a manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities. If a program or an activity is in a building that is not accessible to a person with disabilities, they must:

- Remove the barrier to access into the facility
- Shift the location to an accessible site
- Provide the service in some alternative method in an accessible facility; or
- Construct a new facility for park programs

The design and construction of new facilities in Susquehanna Township meets ADA specifications. Existing structures or facilities that do not currently comply with the ADA standards should be adapted to allow those with special needs to easily be included in meetings, events and other programs in the community. Details on which facilities and amenities are ADA compliant can be found in detailed facility inventories in Appendix A. The newest standards for recreation became mandatory in 2012. The standards include playgrounds, pavilions, or other similar facilities, as well as all amenities including water fountains, grills, port-a-johns, trash receptacles, some individual picnic tables, and trails.

Program Accessibility: Regardless of which organization is providing programming, ADA compliance is necessary. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits the discrimination against any individual because of a disability. In most cases this has primarily been taken into consideration in providing access to buildings and other facilities. However, ADA Regulation for Title II, as printed in the Federal Register (7/26/91) states: The Department of Justice's regulation implementing title II, subtitle A, of the ADA which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs, and activities provided to the public by State and local governments, except public transportation services. Access includes physical access described in the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, as well as programmatic access that might be obstructed by discriminatory policy or procedures of the entity.

Under Title II, any type of program or activity that is offered must be available to anyone with a disability. The law states that if asked, the agency responsible for programming must make "reasonable accommodations" for persons with disabilities. These which may include interpreters, aids, or other needs. The expense for the accommodations must be incurred by the agency offering the program. Losing money on the program is not considered unreasonable. Also, an agency cannot cancel the program to avoid covering the costs incurred to make reasonable accommodations.

A public entity must also ensure that its communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This obligation, however, does not require a public entity to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of its services, programs, or activities, or in undue financial and administrative burdens (The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 – ADA Regulation for Title II).

Susquehanna Township has been making every effort to comply with ADA regulations. The township should continue to plan, develop and host programs that are inclusive based on the facilities to be used and the programs offered. Printed literature advertising the programs and facilities should indicate that they are accessible. Certain facilities and programs may not be fully compliant, but efforts should be made to meet these needs whenever and wherever possible.



4

Facility and Equipment Maintenance

Existing Conditions

Susquehanna Township has done an excellent job in maintaining its parks, and is above average in comparison with the typical municipal parks and recreation department. Parks, facilities, and equipment maintenance is completed in Susquehanna Township by the Parks Department employees with assistance from the Public Works Department in certain maintenance areas. These departments working together aim to present a positive image, safe and clean facilities, and well maintained properties. Outside contractors are utilized for certain landscaping procedures, vehicle maintenance, and plumbing and electrical needs.

Maintenance of the parks is essential to providing safe, usable, and aesthetically pleasing areas and facilities for the residents of the township and for visitors from other communities. Providing an efficient and effective recreation and parks maintenance program enables the township to enhance recreation amenities, save money, reduce liability, improve life expectancy of facilities, create an attractive park atmosphere, and foster environmental stewardship.

As in all communities, there are maintenance projects that need to be addressed in the parks. These projects are noted in the park matrix inventories. Many of these projects involve providing ADA access to the facilities. Based on various forms of input from the residents, it is apparent that maintenance of the parks isn't a major issue in the township. When questioned about park maintenance in the key person interviews, all twelve interviewees stated that they feel parks are well maintained based on the financial resources and available staffing. According to the recreation survey, only 9.52% of those responding indicated that they don't utilize the parks due to the condition of existing facilities and equipment. The township strives to attain the high quality standards, and this diligence is reflected in the general satisfaction of its residents.

Facilities and Equipment Maintenance

The Parks and Recreation Director oversees all work performed by the Parks Department. The Director, with assistance from the Park Supervisor, ensures that necessary materials are available and establishes the work schedule and daily routine to ensure that work is completed in a timely manner. The Parks Department consists of a supervisor, a part time



seasonal assistant, and two to four summer employees. Work outside the capabilities of the Parks Department is directed to the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department consists of a supervisor, an assistant supervisor, and thirteen full time employees. Outside contractors are only used for major projects such as installing fencing, playground construction, and construction of new facilities such as the community center. All other park work is completed in-house.

The equipment needed for park maintenance is owned by the township. In order to keep the equipment in good working condition, the Parks Department personnel perform routine maintenance and other repairs within their capabilities. Repairs beyond their capabilities are outsourced. Should equipment need to be replaced, the Parks and Recreation Director will include the recommendation in the annual budget request.

Budgeting for park maintenance is part of the director's responsibilities. In order for the director to develop an adequate park maintenance budget, input from the park supervisor, existing equipment age, and equipment and supplies needed are taken into consideration. A projected capital parks budget isn't maintained for future budgeting purposes. Major purchases are generally determined as needed and funding is taken out of the general fund capital budget under equipment.

Record Keeping

The Parks Department maintains a very detailed record of the work completed in each park, including the number of hours spent doing the work, the cost of completing the work, and the cost of materials for each project. This is very beneficial when it comes to justifying park expenses and developing budgets. Accurate fertilization records are also maintained. Records of daily routine equipment maintenance are completed by the parks department staff. Other equipment maintenance is completed as needed. Detailed maintenance is generally completed at the end of the year, and equipment is readied for the coming year during the winter months. Detailed equipment maintenance records of all repairs for each piece of equipment are essential for determining a replacement schedule, trade-in value, and ensuring that the equipment is properly maintained in case warranty issues arise. Additionally, hours/miles should be recorded for any piece of equipment that has a meter. When major repairs are required and the equipment is sent out to have the work done, this work should also be recorded in the computer file for the specific equipment receiving the repairs. Susquehanna Township's Park and Recreation Department is overall very efficient in maintaining records.

Currently, the parks department has a complete inventory of all equipment (Table 4-1), but does not have a replacement schedule. It is recommended that each piece of major equipment be reviewed and a replacement schedule implemented. This will ensure that staff has quality equipment to work with at all times, and provide a basic guideline for replacement. It will provide greater efficiency and effectiveness, enhance safety, and make budgeting easier. Some equipment may need to be replaced sooner while other equipment that is properly maintained may last longer than the scheduled replacement date. Financial conditions will play an important part in the replacement schedule making routine maintenance of equipment a vital part in keeping equipment in good condition.

The following equipment list for the parks indicates each piece of equipment along with the purchase date, use, and condition. Adding a projected replacement date to this list would be beneficial in the budgeting process.



The following tables compare the parkland standards for the Susquehanna Township using the old method (Table 2-3) versus the PRORAGIS method (Table 2-4). The acreage for Margaret's Grove is included with Waverly Woods as a community park since they are adjacent properties. The PRORAGIS Community Standards compare communities with populations between 20,000 to 49,999 to Susquehanna Township's population of 24,482.

Table 4-1 | Equipment List

Equipment	Purchase Date	Use	Condition
John Deere 1200A Bunker & Field Vehicle	4/11/00	Field Maintenance	Good
Star 14' Equipment Trailer	4/19/00	Hauling	Good
Dodge Caravan	4/5/00	Transportation	Good
Star 10' Equipment Trailer	4/29/03	Hauling	Good
Ford F-250 Pick-up	5/19/04	Transportation	Good
Meyer Snow Plow	3/19/04	Plowing	Good
Kifko Water Reel	8/11/03	Watering	Poor
John Deere Mower w/72" Deck	4/15/05	Mowing	Good
2 Stihl Trimmers	2/24/06	Trimming	Good
JD Frontier Spin Spreader	9/22/06	Spreading	Good
John Deere Lawn Tractor	3/13/09	Mowing	Good
John Deere 60" 7-iron Shaft Driven Mowing Deck	3/13/09	Mowing	Good
John Deere 4320 Tractor	5/28/08	Mowing	Good
John Deere 400X CP Loader	5/28/08	Loading	Good
Grundy Core 6' Aerator	5/28/08	Aerating	Good
John Deere 1200A Bunker & Field Vehicle	10/1/12	Field Maintenance	Excellent
Ford F-350 Pick-up	8/21/14	Transportation	Excellent
6' Western Plow	10/27/14	Plowing	Excellent
Toro Z Master Mower Series 5000 72" Deck	9/14/15	Mowing	Excellent

In addition, replacement records should be maintained for other property, such as playground equipment and park amenities. This will aid in future budgeting and ensure safe quality facilities in the parks.



Playground inspection records are an important part of record keeping. This is a vital document to have in case of a lawsuit due to injury. The Parks and Recreation Director is a Certified Playground Safety Inspector who understands the importance of conducting playground inspections. Visual inspections of the playgrounds are conducted daily year-round by park staff. At least once a month a detailed inspection is completed by the director to ensure the safety of the playgrounds. To ensure that staff is up to date on proper maintenance of playground equipment, the director conducts playground maintenance training as a park protector playground guardian. Additionally, every Monday there is a visual inspection of all park equipment. A detailed list of playground, field, and park facility inspection points is followed, as well as a park ranger checklist to record work completed and other findings.

Maintenance Program Analysis

The Parks Department does not have a formal written park maintenance plan. Instead, inspections are done on a routine basis using a checklist and inspection points. This provides maintenance staff with the basic information needed to prioritize tasks and complete them efficiently and effectively. Although these forms are not considered a formal park maintenance plan, along with other documentation they provide much of the information that would be part of a formal plan.

When feasible, a formal written plan should be developed. The inspection points, checklists, and records that are currently used will be included. A formal plan helps reduce liability and assists in the coordination of project planning. A formal maintenance plan provides the guidelines and procedures necessary to correct problems and to perform the work promptly. A maintenance plan should be developed for all existing park areas and facilities, and in the early development of new facilities, in order to effectively and efficiently maintain each area. The management plan should cover maintenance procedures and inventories for all recreation areas and facilities. Each area and facility maintained should be thoroughly inspected and compared to the standards of acceptable conditions. The information obtained should then be incorporated into the maintenance plan. The maintenance plan must be distributed to employees, and provide them with information on the proper maintenance procedures and frequency for parks, facilities, and equipment. The employee's responsibility is to contact the parks director for instruction on circumstances not covered in the maintenance plan. It is also the employee's responsibility to take notice of safety conditions at each park or facility, and take immediate action to secure against accident or injury until a recognized hazard can be eliminated. Most of these points are already included in the current procedures, and it will be relatively easy for the department to adopt a formal maintenance plan.

There are two components to developing the park maintenance plan: a preventative (proactive) plan and a responsive plan. The Parks Department has an excellent preventative maintenance plan in place. A proactive approach is designed to eliminate major issues before they arise by taking into consideration both the short and long range maintenance details. This will not eliminate all responsive issues, but will allow the issues to be handled more efficiently when they arise. Another value to the proactive approach is the cost savings. There is a significantly lower cost to providing general maintenance rather than doing major repairs. The proactive approach eliminates poor maintenance practices that can result in substandard facility appearance and safety. The proactive approach provides a quality ongoing maintenance plan that will ensure safe, usable facilities and encourage patrons to continue coming back.



Township personnel address repair issues as needed. However, as part of the overall maintenance plan, a responsive maintenance plan is needed to accommodate unforeseen issues that will arise. This aspect of the plan provides direction for the immediate repair or closing of a facility until repairs can be made. A reactionary plan requires specific and timely attention to the pending issue and will vary with each situation.

To prepare a successful maintenance plan that includes a preventative and responsive component, the township should complete the following tasks as recommended by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR):

- Involve all employees in order to get their complete understanding and support.
- Inventory the resources.
- Develop a standard for each resource. The standard is a short description of what the resource should look like when the maintenance has been completed. The standards should include specifics such as trash pickup details and frequency.
- List tasks to perform so that the resources are maintained up to standards. The tasks should be described in enough detail so that anyone would know how to perform them.
- Determine the amount of time it takes to do each task.
- Decide how often each task needs to be done. The frequency will determine the quality and cost of maintenance.
- Schedule tasks into an operational plan and divide up the tasks to develop a schedule for each staff person or crew. This could be established with the existing staff, or added in the future, if staffing is increased.
- Implement and monitor the work schedules so adjustments can be made as needed. Have staff track how long it takes to complete each task and then monitor the quality of maintenance.

Source: Community Recreation and Parks – An Essential Government Service in Pennsylvania, by Susan Landis

A turf management plan is another important aspect in maintaining an aesthetically pleasing appearance for the parks. The current turf management primarily consists of mowing the grass, core aerating, fertilizing, and slice seeding. A written turf management plan should be developed and include all aspects of turf management including: a regular mowing schedule; maintenance of worn areas; drainage issue repairs; landscaping procedures, including specifics on types of grass seed; proper irrigation procedures for any areas that may be irrigated; turf disease procedures, including insecticide, fungicide, and herbicide treatment; a fertilization schedule; procedures for signing areas that have been treated; and the methods for properly recording any treatments. Many of these things are currently done by the parks department in conjunction with a contracted landscaper, but establishing a turf maintenance plan will ensure that the turf is maintained to the standards desired by the township. As other aspects are incorporated to improve the turf, these items should be added into the turf management plan. The plan should address different management practices required for different areas of turf. Alternative natural and organic methods for fertilization, insect control, fungus control, etc. should be detailed in the turf maintenance plan.



Risk Management Analysis

Risk management is defined by DCNR as “the process of making park areas and recreation facilities safer by conducting and documenting routine safety inspections, having procedures in place to correct problems, and performing the necessary work promptly.”* A risk management plan should cover all recreation areas, facilities, programs, and services offered. Each component of the park or recreation area needs to be thoroughly inspected, compared to the standards of acceptable conditions, and classified as either a safety risk or in good condition.

The Parks Department doesn’t have a written risk management plan in place; however, general inspections are completed regularly to ensure the safety of park users. The inspections currently being done encompass most of the requirements of a risk management plan. Proactive risk management can eliminate potential incidents before they occur. Completing regular playground inspections and maintaining records is one of the top risk management priorities to ensure the safety of the playgrounds. Continued inspections of other facilities and amenities are also important.

The township conducts background checks on employees in accordance with Act 153, State of Pennsylvania Background Checks Act of 2014. Susquehanna Township and the partner sports organizations conduct background checks on their employees and volunteers. These checks need to be renewed regularly as required by Act 153.

Another part of risk management is having staff trained in CPR/AED. Some of the employees have CPR/AED training along with first aid training. These employees must attend CPR/AED training every two years to maintain their certification.

The safety of workers is another important consideration. The township provides the following personal protective equipment: safety glasses, ear protection, gloves, face shields, chaps, and helmets. Workers are also required to wear steel-toed shoes. As an additional safety precaution, the department requires that two employees be present when certain tasks are conducted. Any time a person is working alone there is a risk of something happening, and having another employee on site could prevent serious consequences. For example: something as simple as collecting trash can become a safety issue if a person who is allergic to bees gets stung and goes into shock.

Although the township doesn’t have any mandatory certification requirements, some staff has their Commercial Driver’s License (CDL). Consideration should be given to other certifications, such as a pesticide applicators license. Although pesticide application is conducted by a contracted landscaping company, having a knowledgeable employee could increase safety and address any questions that may arise.

“The Right to Know” in the context of the United States workplace is the legal principle that the individual has the right to know the chemicals to which they may be exposed in the workplace (OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, 29 CFR 1910.1200). The township must provide a copy of all MSDS information where employees have quick access in case of emergency. Currently the Township Manager retains this information so that it is readily available to all employees. Additionally, the local fire department, EMT, and paramedics should have information on what chemicals are being used and where they

**Source: Community Recreation and Parks – An Essential Government Service in Pennsylvania, by Susan Landis)*



are stored. If larger amounts are stored, such as 1,000 gallons or more of diesel fuel, it is considered as a tier 1 chemical and the county should also be supplied the information. Quantity amounts for each chemical stored to be classified as a tier 1 quantity should be researched as these amounts will differ based on the product.

Risk management must be taken seriously in order to ensure the safety of park patrons, as well as those performing the work in the parks. Although the Parks Department follows the majority of the components contained within a risk management plan, it is highly recommended that a written plan be developed and regularly reviewed and revised.

A successful Risk Management Plan should:

- Develop a plan of action by prioritizing identified hazards and determine the cost to correct them.
- Require playground safety audits.
- Address problems through the correction of hazards.
- Be pro-active to preventing accidents.
- Implement mandatory safety training for staff
- Immediately act on complaints
- Repair and maintain equipment with parts from the equipment manufacturer.
- Document all inspections and corrective steps.
- Require adequate insurance liability coverage

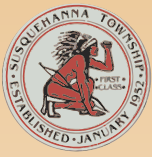
The staff should be trained to perform, at a minimum, the following duties:

- Continual monitoring of the physical condition of all facilities and open areas.
- Conducting immediate minor repairs to unsafe facilities and areas.
- Proper posting of unsafe conditions that cannot be immediately repaired.
- Prevention of the use of unsafe equipment and facilities.
- Reporting of safety hazards in writing.
- Submission of accident reports.
- Completion of major repairs as soon as possible

Continual education opportunities should be provided regarding the safety standards published by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and other such organizations. Staff members should also be familiar with contact procedures concerning legal requirements and inspections for conformity to sanitary regulations, criteria for licensing, fire laws, building and zoning codes, pesticide applications, and safety procedures. Fire extinguishers should be located in easily accessible places in the buildings and should be in a highly visible location in vehicles and on other equipment. The extinguishers must have a current inspection tag attached to them.



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5

Administration

Legal Structure

The Susquehanna Township Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan consists of an in-depth study of all forms of recreation in the township and the surrounding area. This plan was commissioned by Susquehanna Township which is governed under the First Class Township Code. Under the First Class Township Code, the municipality is governed by an elected body of nine commissioners. The commissioners are granted executive and legislative authority and are responsible for the appointment of various advisory and authority boards. An appointed Township Manager is responsible for hiring township employees and providing the day to day administration of the municipality and its various departments.

The township has a Recreation Advisory Committee consisting of ten members. The committee is responsible for advising the Recreation Department and township on issues concerning recreation in the community, including advice on development, funding, staffing, and partnerships.

Cooperative Efforts

Developing cooperative partnerships is one of the most beneficial ways to provide a variety of programs and facilities for the community. Partnerships have always been a part of the parks and recreation field; in recent times, these collaborative efforts are becoming a vital part of the provision and management of recreation.

Benefits may be realized by all participants in a partnership: the municipalities involved, the residents of the communities, and the organizations or businesses that join together to form the partnership. As the township continues to improve and further develop their park system, they should seek out interested parties that are willing to cooperate/coordinate to improve the quality of life for the residents of the region and to help bolster the economy. Cooperative efforts should be discussed with recreation providers in the area, businesses, and schools. Partnerships could combine efforts for advertising, financial help, use of facilities, or expansion of programs. Establishing partnerships with other government agencies, for-profit enterprises, and non-profit associations enhances opportunities for all parties.

Individuals, communities, and businesses are beginning to recognize the valuable benefits of recreation and active living. Partnerships help the municipality to offer a valuable service to their residents and provide them with a greater quality of life. The value for individuals includes health benefits, stress reduction through relaxation, a sense of belonging,

life-long learning, self-discovery through achievement, and cultural growth. The recreational opportunities provided can help develop a sense of community and build community spirit. Community recreation keeps people connected, and reduces alienation and loneliness. Providing quality recreation in a community can create alternatives to self-destructive behavior, help to prevent crime, and keep youth involved in positive activities. Parks and recreation provide environmental benefits including the preservation of plants and wildlife, the protection of natural resources, enhancement of air, water and soil quality, and the provision of buffers, greenways, and trails. Another advantage to developing a partnership to increase recreational opportunities in the region is the economic benefit. A quality recreation and park system attracts business relocation and expansion. These businesses provide jobs, while also attracting or retaining highly educated professionals to the area. These people often decide where to live based on the leisure services provided in the community. Providing quality leisure services can further enhance the economy by attracting tourists and retirees and enhancing real estate values.

The development of partnerships in the Township should include the following elements:

- *They are voluntary.*
- *The parties involved contribute a wide variety of resources.*
- *The partnership is based on common goals.*
- *There should be an ongoing and close relationship between the partners.*
- *There remains openness for working together.*

Area businesses can play an active, if indirect, role in a recreation partnership. Business donations can be used to enhance the recreational programs, which provide additional funding to add more activities and entertainment at events. In return the municipality recognizes these businesses at the events for their donations and sponsorships, providing them additional advertising. Susquehanna Township hasn't established many partnerships with area businesses. However, the township is working on a sponsorship opportunity with a health business for T-shirts for Day Camp. Additionally, there have been some partnerships with business on some park projects. Developers have partnered with the township by providing manpower and funds to improve the baseball field. This has benefited the township, the school district, and the sports organizations that use the field.

Scouting groups have been in existence for over one hundred years and are very open to working with communities. Many scouts grow up to be community leaders; partnering with these organizations provides the area with benefits now and into the future. Working with both the Boy Scouts and the Girls Scouts can provide volunteer resources for park projects and programs. This relationship can help build quality individuals while enhancing recreational facilities and activities in the community. Susquehanna Township has partnered with these organizations in the past. Enhancing these relationships into the future will continue to benefit the community and the individuals involved.

Susquehanna Township provides a variety of quality sport fields for use by the sports associations in the community. In turn, these associations provide a valuable service to the community through the sports programs they offer for both the youth and adults of the area. The township has had a strong working relationship with the baseball association, girls' softball association, and the soccer club in the development, maintenance and use of the township fields. Continuing to build on these relationships will enhance the future of the township's facilities. However, it is difficult providing enough practice and playing time



for all of the associations. The Midget Football Association utilizes the township facilities to a limited degree. They have a good relationship with the township and would like to use the township facilities more if they were available or additional facilities were constructed. The Senior Softball Association is an excellent program serving 250 seniors, with numerous members playing in the Senior Olympics. Cooperative partnerships with these associations could be used to develop more ball fields to increase access for all residents, if land becomes available in the future.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg is interested in developing a stronger relationship with the township. The federation currently offers a variety of programs at their facility and they have an indoor pool available. This partnership could expand recreational opportunities for township resident by filling some gaps in programming while increasing participation for the Jewish Federation.

The township has had a good working relationship with the Capital Greenbelt Association in the development of connective walking and biking trails throughout the community. Further enhancing this relationship in the continued development of trails will continue to improve recreational opportunities for the residents. The township and county have been very supportive of each other, but have a limited relationship in working together. Improving coordination with the Dauphin County Parks and Recreation Department could enhance programming, especially in the area of nature and environmental education. The county is open to building on their relationship with the township.

Community Relationships and Regional Initiatives

Susquehanna Township has cooperated with the Capital Area Greenbelt Association for many years to develop the Greenbelt Trail loop through the township, with a more recent connection to Veterans Park added along with a spur into a Susquehanna Township neighborhood. The township continues their close partnership with work on intersection improvements and the extension of the Greenbelt Trail to Fort Hunter, expanding opportunities for residents to walk and bike in the township and connect to the greater regional network. The township also supports Dauphin County Parks and Programs. The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay has in the past coordinated efforts with the township to create a planting area at Paxton Creek Watershed and Education Association's Streamside Station in Shutt Mill Park.

Municipal-School Cooperation

The township does not have any cooperative agreements with the school district, but uses school facilities for their day camp program and the gym for various programs. In return the school district uses township facilities for its cross-county, baseball, and soccer programs. Expanded cooperation could open up opportunities for the township to offer a greater variety of programs in school facilities, including the gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium, library, computer rooms, home economic rooms, art rooms, music rooms, shop areas and possibly classrooms. In return, sharing outdoor facilities with the school could expand programming opportunities and reduce construction and maintenance costs.





Public Relations & Marketing

Effective communication is imperative to inform residents of a community about recreational facilities and programs. As in many communities, knowledge of the recreation facilities available and program opportunities is an issue in Susquehanna Township. It is vital for the residents to be aware of the facilities and programs that are offered. Therefore, spending resources on public relations and marketing is money well spent. Public relations, marketing, customer service, and community relations are four complementary functions that have the same goal: making the recreation and park services more successful.

In order for any marketing strategy to be successful, strategists have to know the needs of the community and offer programs and facilities that will meet those needs. The programs and facilities must be high quality and affordable. Also, using catchy titles for programs is another way that often encourages participants. There are seven principal types of marketing communications used by recreation and park agencies: (1) personal selling; (2) advertising; (3) incentives and special promotions; (4) point of participation communications; (5) publicity; (6) word of mouth; and (7) post-participation communication. Each of these should be explored and incorporated into future marketing efforts as programs and facilities are developed. (See the handbook “Municipal Recreation Programming” by Susan Landis. See chapter four for more details on marketing)

Since public relations and proper marketing are two of the ways to successfully provide a vibrant parks and recreation programming initiative, it is vitally important for the township to continue to utilize their current methods and develop new methods to inform the residents about recreation in the township. As the township develops new facilities and programming, it is important to remember that two of the most effective methods for promoting the facilities and programs are by word-of-mouth and positive-participation-results in past events. This is true in almost any area where quality programs and events are offered.

Recreation survey respondents indicated that the following methods are the most efficient way to receive information concerning recreation in the township: website - 90.70%, newsletter - 74.42%, and email - 65.12%. Currently, the township uses the following marketing methods to provide residents with information: their website, two newsletters, a summer recreation flyer, a Facebook page, and an excellent printed brochure of the park facilities. The township does use Facebook, but it has not been used extensively yet. The two newsletters have been especially effective at reaching residents, so that future plans are to expand to four newsletters.

Online marketing tools are increasing in importance. Social media has proven a very effective way to disseminate information, especially to younger age groups. Other social media options such as Twitter should be considered for future use, based on emerging trends. The township should consider the types of information that are best suited to social media. For example, Facebook events allow interested residents to join a group to get updates on specific upcoming events and programs they may be interested in. It also allows recreation planners to gauge interest in advance of an event.

Over 90% of survey respondents indicated that the website was one of the most efficient ways to receive information. The township uses its website to provide general and events information. The online calendar is a great way to provide an “at a glance” view of township and recreation meetings. An additional calendar of upcoming programs and events is also

included on the recreation page. It is imperative that the township continue to maintain and update the website regularly so that everything is current. The website could also provide links to other program opportunities in the area, and feature a bi-weekly/monthly e-newsletter to provide additional or updated information on activities, meetings, or other township happenings. A clear map of township facilities should be added to the website to help bring in new residents, or those who have not participated in the past. Additionally, consideration should be given to developing virtual reality (VR), augmented reality and 360-degree tours of the townships parks. NRPA predicts that this will be the new standard replacing printed programs that describe park and recreational programs and facilities.

Email is declining in popularity as a way to receive information, and was preferred by only 65% of survey respondents. Other forms of social media that are becoming more popular are Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Snapshot, U-Tube, Groupon, and LinkedIn. These may be considered for future use as methods of communication to the residents, especially the younger generation. Swift Reach, offered through Reverse 911, is another online tool that has benefitted some municipalities. For an annual fee, this company will send out the community's information through emails, Facebook, and Twitter. This method reduces staff time required to maintain the database of contact information.

Flyers are another effective method for providing information to the residents. Circulating flyers through the schools can reach many of those with school age children. If the programs being marketed are for the school-age group, it is important to include those children who attend parochial schools and those who are home-schooled. Flyers can also be used to inform residents through businesses and as inserts or articles in church bulletins.

The use of the local newspaper and/or magazines can be used to provide information to the residents in the area; however, newspaper and magazine readership is decreasing.

Signs are another very effective way for providing information about programs, in accordance with what is permitted by the community. The use of street signs in advertising programs can serve as a reminder to residents of any upcoming programs when placed at strategic locations throughout the area. The use of banners, kiosks, bulletin boards, etc. can provide other viable opportunities for marketing.

These are all effective ways to reach the residents with the desired information concerning events in the township. As additional recreational activities are developed, and new technology becomes available, the township will need to expand their marketing efforts. In order to guide the township in the area of public relations and marketing, policies should be established to ensure proper methods are used.



Policies and Procedures

Susquehanna Township has some established policies and procedures that govern the general operation of the township's recreation and park functions. The township has the following policies and procedures in place:

- o *A pavilion rental request and permit.*
- o *A field/court rental and permit.*
- o *Program registration form.*
- o *Record of program participation.*
- o *Non-resident participation policy for day camp only.*
- o *Park rules and regulations*

The park rules and regulations that detail the park user's responsibilities while utilizing the park facilities need to be provided to those renting park facilities and should be posted at various locations throughout the parks.

In order to administer a quality recreation organization, it is imperative to be well organized. Establishing a well-defined administrative manual helps to keep important information easily accessible. A park administrative manual consists of several different manuals including: a general operation manual, a park operation manual, a program operation manual, a facility ability to work together as a team, each knowing their respective roles and responsibilities. rental manual, and a risk management manual. Each of these manuals is broken down into subsections containing pertinent information pertaining to the main topic. These manuals should be updated on a regular basis. These documents will provide staff with valuable information that is easy to locate, and will allow the staff to function in an organized and effective manner in all areas of administering recreation and park demands. The following is a listing of elements that should be included in this manual:

- o *Park and Recreation Mission Statement/Goals/Objectives*
- o *Facility use/rental policy*
- o *Programming policy to include non-discrimination policy, fees and charges policy, and non-resident use policy*
- o *Organizational chart, job descriptions (full and part-time personnel), personnel benefit description, job evaluation instrument, hiring procedure for full/part-time personnel, disciplinary procedures and in-service training staff procedures*
- o *Procedures for financial expenditures and collection of fees*
- o *Public relations/marketing procedures*
- o *Copy of municipal liability insurance policies for facilities and programs*
- o *Risk management plans*

The development and maintenance of these types of documents will afford all municipal staff the ability to work together as a team, each knowing their respective roles and responsibilities.



Record-Keeping Procedures

Accurate record keeping is vital to the success of any recreation and park effort. It ensures the effectiveness and efficiency of the program, and will eliminate the possibility of forgetting important information that can be used in the future to advance and/or protect the township. The importance of keeping good records cannot be over-emphasized. Written records are especially important when you are writing grants, preparing the budget, submitting for awards, and in the case of liability issues. Susquehanna Township has done an excellent job in maintaining records in certain areas.

Following is a list of records that should be maintained, updated continually, and filed properly for quick reference.

Program attendance records are effective in determining if the program is growing, maintaining or losing participants. Although attendance will vary with the seasons, over a period of time it will help determine when specific programs should be offered.

Program evaluation records provide direction in offering programs that meet the needs of the residents and ways to improve the programs offered.

Inventory records help the staff know what equipment and facilities are available, when they were purchased and constructed, where they were purchased, who was the manufacturer, their condition and any other pertinent information concerning the product or facility. These are especially important if the product or facility has a warranty.

Replacement records provide guidance for budgeting and for determining the quality of the product or facility; and indicate if the department received full value from their initial purchase.

Equipment maintenance records ensure that all of the equipment is properly maintained, preventative maintenance is used, and warranties are protected.

Inspection records are especially important in risk management. They will record all pertinent information needed to ensure the safety of the users by reporting damages. The Township can then make repairs in a timely manner and avoid potential liability issues. Playground inspection records are of vital importance.

Pesticide application records must be maintained to avoid potential liability issues and to establish proper maintenance of areas where these applications are applied.

Daily work logs will provide the essential information for scheduling, determining what the staff is accomplishing, showing the time taken to complete a project and indicates additional staff needs.

Volunteer records include a list of volunteers, the projects or programs they are involved with, and the number of hours they work. This information is important for retaining volunteers, determining future volunteer needs, and providing volunteers with information they may need in obtaining jobs, scholarships, etc.





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6

Personnel

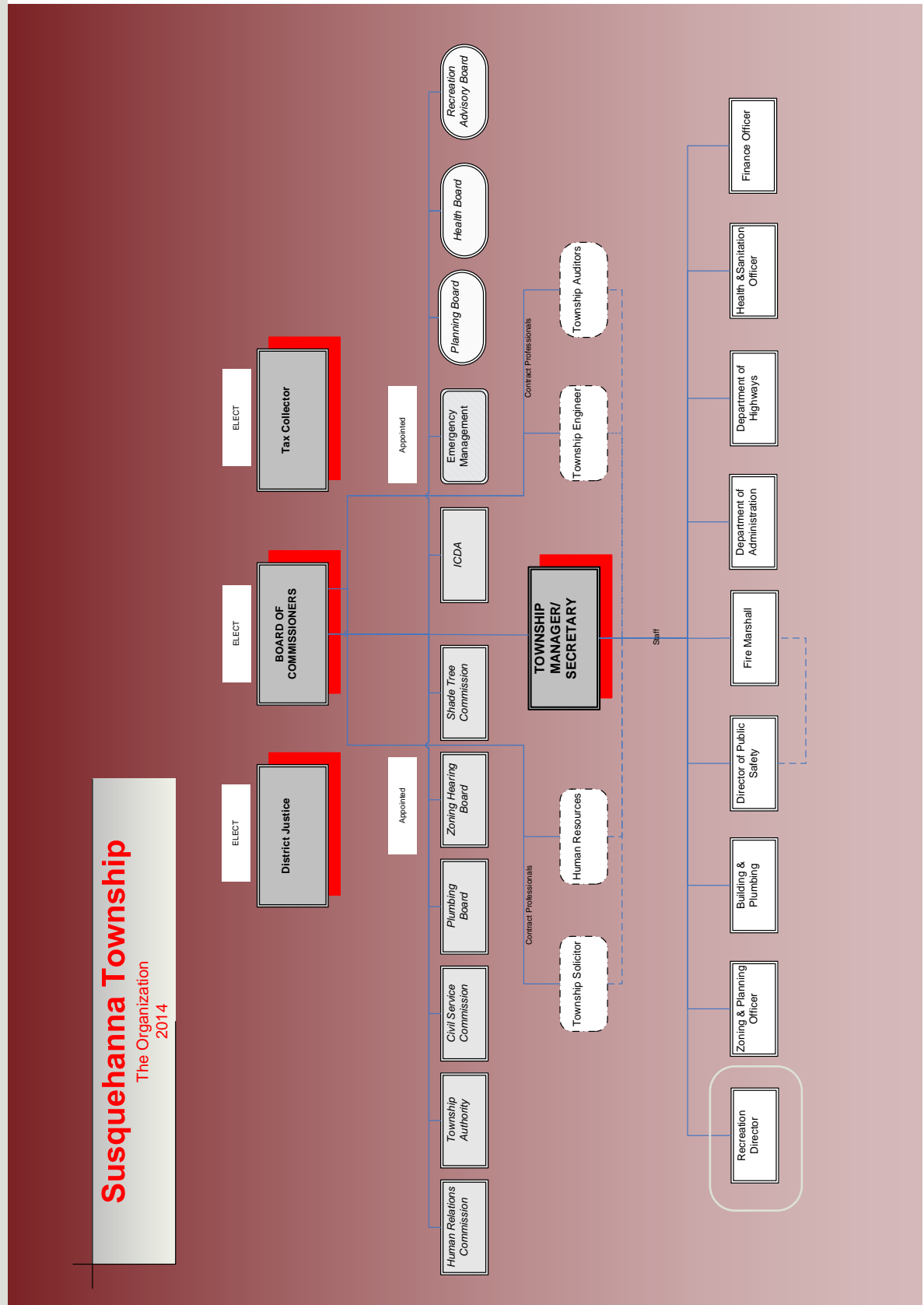
Organization

An organizational chart shows how the people in an organization are to work together, who is responsible for what, who reports to whom, and how each person is expected to relate to everyone else. It also shows how one department is to work with all of the other departments in the government. Normally in municipal government, a functional organization chart is used. Functional organizations are made up of specialized departments, i.e. police, public works, building/zoning, parks and recreation, finance, etc., each of which is headed by a specialist. In this form of organization the experts are not only advisors, but, they are in the chain of command and deal directly with the problems. It is critical that department heads, supervisors, and employees recognize their roles in the larger system and that they are aware of their effects on other departments' actions. Therefore, continual communication between departments is necessary to operate effectively.

A functional organization chart is a good tool to have in place to indicate the chain of command for all aspects of parks and recreation. The organizational chart provides structure for both employees and volunteers that are, or will be, associated with providing and maintaining recreation programs and facilities. Susquehanna Township has a defined organizational flow chart, updated in 2014, indicating the township's relationship to each department head (Figure 6-1). The chart should be further broken down to show the chain of command within each department. It should then be updated and revised, as needed, to accommodate any future changes.

Parks, facilities, and equipment maintenance is completed in Susquehanna Township by the Parks Department employees with assistance from the Public Works Department in certain maintenance areas. These departments working together aim to present a positive image, safe and clean facilities, and well maintained properties. Outside contractors are utilized for certain landscaping procedures, vehicle maintenance, and plumbing and electrical needs.

Table 6-1 | Susquehanna Township Organizational Chart



Parks and Recreation Personnel

Susquehanna Township has the following personnel in the Parks and Recreation Department:

1. A full time **Director** who oversees the everyday business of the parks and is responsible for the administration of a comprehensive year-round recreation program.
2. A full time **Administrative Assistant** who assists with office responsibilities.
3. A full time **Park Maintenance Supervisor** who is in the field and assists the director in overseeing the daily maintenance in the parks.
4. Two part time (7 months) **Building Security and Park Rangers** who do routine maintenance projects and oversee parks rentals.
5. One seasonal (7 months) **Maintenance Assistant** who works 25 hours a week assisting with park maintenance tasks.
6. One seasonal (7 months) **Summer Program Director** who oversees the summer programs.
7. One seasonal (2 months) **Day Camp Director** who oversees the day camp program.
8. A **Playground Director** (2 months) who oversees the playground program
9. Additionally, there are 32 **seasonal employees** that assist at the day camp and playground programs with two to four assisting with park maintenance for eight weeks in the summer.

Susquehanna Township Public Works Departments assists Parks and Recreation with certain defined maintenance tasks. This includes cutting the grass in park areas other than sports fields.

The Parks and Recreation Director is preparing detailed job descriptions for department personnel. The descriptions should be reviewed regularly and discussed with employees. As things change within the parks, items may need to be added or deleted from the job descriptions to keep them up to date. All current and any new employees should have a copy of their up to date job description. It is also imperative for seasonal/summer personnel to have an understanding of the position they hold. Therefore, a job description should be written that describes the duties and responsibilities of their position and the skills required for the position. This should be given to the seasonal/summer employees before they start, not only to give them an understanding of their responsibilities, but as a form of education concerning the job and what is expected of them.

The staffing level for the Parks and Recreation Department should be periodically reviewed to determine if it is sufficient to meet existing demand as new facilities are developed and new programs are offered. According to key person interviews and survey responses, maintenance is adequate considering existing funding levels and available manpower. This implies that there is a perceived need for additional staff to achieve higher standards of maintenance in township parks.

Parks and Recreation Department staff are hired via standard township procedure. An open position is advertised on the website, in newspapers, by word of mouth, and in the local schools.



Applications are selected based on applicant qualifications; these applicants are personally interviewed. The list of applicants who meet the requirements of the job is given to the manager, who appoints the best-qualified candidate.

Background checks and clearances are imperative to help ensure the safety of park users. Act 153, The State of Pennsylvania Comprehensive Background Checks Act of 2014, details all compliance requirements. Susquehanna Township and the partner sports organizations conduct background checks on their employees/volunteers in compliance with this Act 153. These checks need to be renewed regularly as required under the above mentioned Act.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of providing adequate staff in the field of parks and recreation. Staffing is a problem faced by almost every parks and recreation department. There is never enough staff to accomplish everything that needs to be completed, therefore, it is imperative to establish a sound group of volunteers to assist with programming and other aspects of parks and recreation. Following is a list of potential volunteer resources that can be found in many communities:

Recreation and Park Board – Susquehanna Township has a Park and Recreation Advisory Committee with ten members who are appointed by the township. A representative from each of the nine wards and a member-at-large makes up the committee. They are responsible for advising the township on development funding, staffing, partnership opportunities, and facility needs. The township has a set of bylaws under which the advisory committee functions. However, they do not have a code of ethics. This should be developed to ensure that current and future members understand township ethics and act accordingly. It also provides a document to abide by if disciplinary action or dismissal is required.

Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, and similar organizations – The opportunity to work with these groups is very rewarding for both the organization and the community. They are generally required to do community service projects to earn merit badges or advance to higher levels in the organization. Requesting that these groups help with programs can provide much needed assistance in running sporting and other activities. A Boy Scout, working on his Eagle Scout project, may provide a park with a new facility, improve maintenance on an existing facility, or perform other work on various projects that may not otherwise be done. Susquehanna Township currently works with the Scouts on park trails and clean-up of flower beds. Expanding opportunities with these groups would be rewarding for the organization and the township, especially for future special events programming.

Community service organizations – These organizations can come in many forms such as: church groups, student groups, men's and women's organizations, or service organizations such as the Elks, Moose, Lions, Rotary, Garden Clubs, etc. All of these organizations will often offer their services and/or financial support to help the community provide a higher quality of life for the residents. Susquehanna Township currently works with the Meals-on-Wheels program where 12 – 15 volunteers help five days a week. The township also works with volunteers from the Capital Area Greenbelt Association on various projects.

High School/College Students – Students often look for opportunities to do volunteer service so they can include the information on their applications for scholarships or on resumes. This is an excellent resource for obtaining volunteers for programs or small projects.



Corporate volunteers – Many businesses now encourage their employees to contribute volunteer time in various capacities. Connecting with these companies and establishing viable volunteer opportunities that are interesting and rewarding for their employees can develop a long lasting source of volunteers.

Required community service individuals – These are generally individuals that are required to do service in lieu of jail time for some violation of the law. These individuals are usually given minor maintenance tasks to complete. The number of hours they are required to work is usually too few for them to complete any major projects. The individual/parent or legal guardian should be required to sign a waiver indicating that they are not covered under workmen's compensation, and indicating the final number of hours they complete.

Concerned Citizens – These individuals are citizens that are genuinely concerned about the welfare of the community and are willing to devote some of their time to benefit the community through wholesome recreation opportunities.

Friends Groups – Friends groups are usually concerned citizens that have gone a step further to support the community. They are normally set up as non-profit 501(c)3 organizations.

Adopt-A-Park – This is a group that will adopt a specific park as their project and help with maintenance and various projects in that park.

Renewal Incorporated – This organization provides prisoners the opportunity to go out and work in communities as volunteers assisting with various projects.

Senior Community Service Employment Program – This service provides older adults the opportunity to work at no cost to the municipality. www.experienceworks.org

Student Conservation Association – Provides students of all ages volunteer opportunities, including summer programs and internships serving and protecting national parks, forests and urban green spaces. www.theSCA.org

AmeriCorps – This is a national service program that allows people of all ages and backgrounds to earn money which helps pay for education in exchange for a year of service. Some funds may be required to pay these individuals. www.americorps.org

The above list of volunteer resources helps provide some areas from which to seek volunteers to supplement staffing for the parks and for programs. Even though these individuals are generally not paid for their services, there is an extensive amount of time and effort involved in locating these individuals and providing the proper guidance, training and direction to maintain quality in the parks and programs they are associated with. Often it is difficult to retain them as a continued volunteer resource. All volunteers directly or indirectly in contact with children are subject to background checks and must obtain clearances as required by Act 153 of 2015, in accordance with 24 P.S. §1-111 and the Child Protective Services Law. It is important to maintain records indicating the volunteer's name, type of volunteer work done, and the number of hours they volunteered. This information can be beneficial to the volunteers in the future, for students applying for college grants and for anyone applying for jobs.



Other Potential Staffing Opportunities

Other potential staffing opportunities that require some municipal funds include the following

Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance (PHEAA) offers a work study program for students in the field of parks and recreation, as well as other fields. Local government agencies can apply to receive a list of students in the area who are eligible for this program. PHEAA will pay 40% of the student's wages. Work-Study program students earn money to contribute to their educational costs and enhance their classroom learning with valuable work experience, while assisting the municipality by providing community service. This is an excellent opportunity to help a student get experience while keeping the wage costs down. If interested in participating in the PHEAA Work-Study program, an application should be submitted by December for the upcoming summer program. www.pheaa.org

Internships and Practicums are available at a number of colleges and universities that offer course curriculums in the area of parks and recreation. The students studying in the various fields offered within the parks and recreation departments are required to do practicums and internships before earning their degrees. These students are an excellent source of help for municipal recreation programming. A practicum student usually has to work 120 hours to complete their requirements, while an intern student has to do anywhere from 400 to 600 hours of work to complete their internship. These students like to find positions where they are paid, but it isn't a requirement that they are compensated. Since these students are in the field of parks and recreation, they usually have a genuine interest in what they are doing, know that they will be graded on their efforts and that there are potential jobs opportunities that can come from this work. As part of their work they are normally assigned a project to complete that will benefit the community. Penn State University, Slippery Rock University, California University, Butler County Community College, Lock Haven University, York College, East Stroudsburg, Temple, and other schools in Pennsylvania have curriculums in parks and recreation and can be contacted to find students.

The Peer to Peer Grant project is a consulting service coordinated with the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation to help the grantee solve an existing problem or improve services in a specific area. This service provides the grantee with management related technical services of an experienced professional who has extensive training, knowledge, and experience in the issues related to the project. When the project is completed, the grantee will be provided with a course of action and set of recommendations to help address the problem studied and will be encouraged to consider and implement the proposed recommendations. (Taken from the DCNR Peer-to-Peer Technical Assistance Projects General Information and Guidelines)

The above information supplies a variety of different methods to provide additional staffing for parks and recreation in the community. Additional research into each area may be required to determine which opportunities are a viable alternative for the Township.

Personnel Policies

Susquehanna Township has a detailed personnel policy manual. An employee handbook is provided to employees so that they are aware of the information needed to comply with employment with the township. It helps them understand their rights and requirements as an employee and avoids potential personnel issues that may arise in the future. The township also has an employee appraisal system in place. The township manager conducts the appraisals. Township employees are provided opportunities to attend educational sessions. Continued training and education is very important in keeping employees and



volunteers up to date on changing trends and issues in their respective areas. The township provides employees the opportunity to attend conferences, workshops, seminars, webinars, and Keystone Athletic Field Managers Organization events. The Parks and Recreation Director also administers in-house training, especially concerning playground maintenance. DCNR and the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society offer many learning opportunities throughout the year for maintenance and administrative employees, as well as park and recreation boards. These programs help the board have a better insight into their roles in the community and into how to improve recreation and park experiences for their residents. It is recommended to continue providing employees and volunteers the opportunity to attend available workshops, seminars, and conferences.

Staffing Needs

The dedication of the existing maintenance staff is evident in the excellent condition of their facilities. In general, they have achieved markedly above average maintenance and safety outcomes with modest resources. However, there are a number of additional maintenance and upkeep tasks, as noted on the park facility matrix for each park, which should be undertaken to further improve the facilities. It may be necessary to hire additional full time or seasonal staff. As new facilities are developed and existing facilities are improved, maintenance must be further enhanced with dedicated staff hired to properly maintain these areas and facilities to the high standards that the residents expect.

Additionally, in order to enhance programming in the township, consideration should be given to hiring a program coordinator, which would free up some of the director's time to attend to other recreation needs in the community. Quality development of parks, proper maintenance of township facilities, and offering a variety of quality programs is important because:

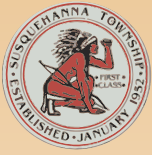
1. Quality recreation programs and parks decrease the crime rate.
2. Parks enhance the quality of life for the residents.
3. Parks improve the economy.
4. Parks encourage new residents to move into the area, increasing the tax base.
5. Parks can encourage more tourism.
6. Parks increase property values and attract business and industry.
7. Recreation programs and facilities improve the fitness and wellness of residents.

In order to achieve this, adequate staffing is required to meet the demands and needs of the residents, properly maintain the facilities, and provide quality programs.





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7

Finance

Tax Support Comparison

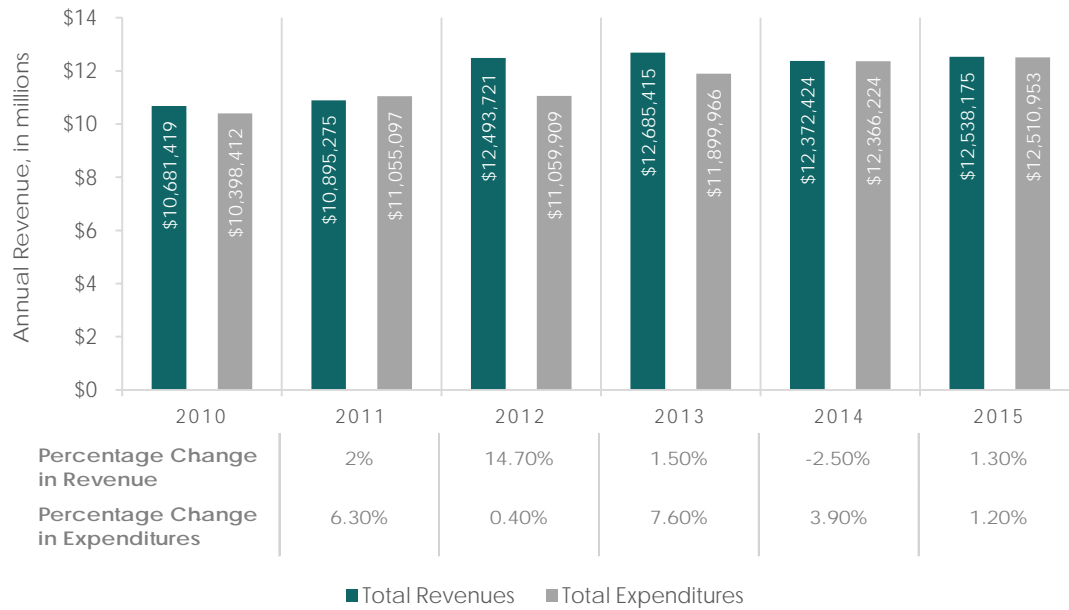
The most difficult issue facing almost every community in its quest to provide safe and aesthetically pleasing parks and a variety of quality programs is finances. Many communities face unexpected issues yearly, either within their parks or within other municipal departments, that require funding to be redirected. This can leave inadequate financing for the Parks and Recreation Department to provide and maintain facilities and programs. These funds usually depend on the community's general fund. Since all departments in the community must draw from the general fund to cover their operating and capital budgets each year, it is nearly impossible for each department to be fully funded. In the past and still in some communities today, park and recreation funding has been one of the first areas to be cut when funds are tight. However, many communities are becoming aware of the value of setting funds aside to provide quality facilities and programs. Susquehanna Township has been supportive of recreation facilities and programs for many years by providing sufficient funding to support quality recreational opportunities.

Susquehanna Township has experienced a relatively steady increase in revenues from 2010 to 2015 with the exception of a significant increase in 2012 and a small decrease in 2014. Overall the township has experienced a 17.4% increase in revenues from 2010 to 2015. Although there are a variety of resources from which revenues are obtained, real estate tax accounts for over 80% of the yearly revenues. Revenue from taxes increased by \$1.9 million between 2010 and 2015. All other sources of revenue increased by a small percentage, except for Charges for Services and Miscellaneous Revenues, which varied from year to year and were lower in 2015 than 2010.

Susquehanna Township's expenditures had varied from 2010 to 2015 with 2011 and 2013 experiencing larger expenditures than the other years. These increases occurred mainly in the operations costs for the Highway Department. Overall the expenditures for the township increased approximately 20% during this time period.

Township revenues versus expenditures from 2010 through 2015 are shown in table 7-1. The township's revenues have exceeded expenditures five of the six years. 2012 and 2013 had the greatest difference, with revenue significantly higher than expenditures. The remaining years were relatively close in revenue received versus expenditures, with only 2011 expenses being slightly higher than revenue.

Table 7-1 | Township Revenues and Expenditures, 2010-2015

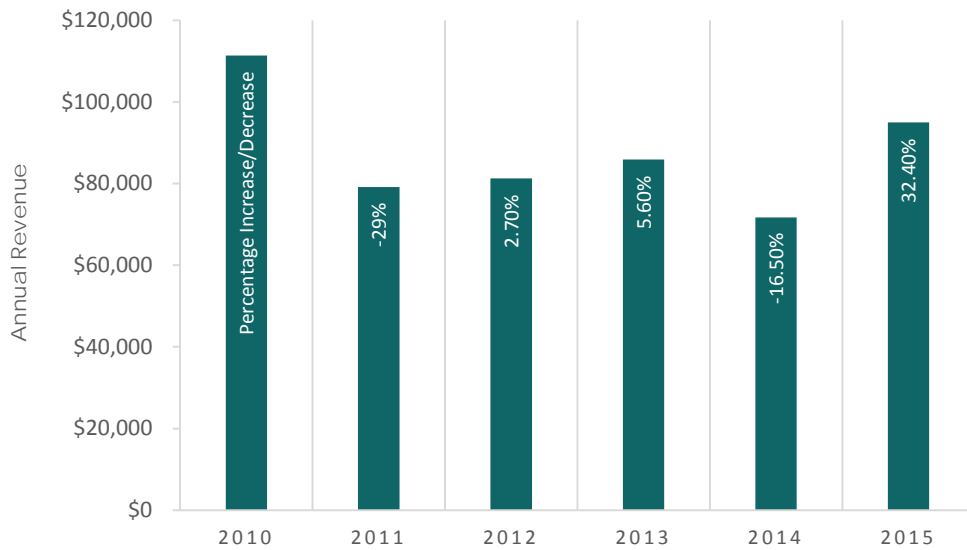


The recreation revenue for Susquehanna Township has varied significantly from 2010 through 2015, as shown in Table 7-2. Overall the Parks and Recreation Department has experienced a 14.7% decrease in revenues over these six years. This is primarily due to the elimination of bus trips. However, an increase in revenues from the day camp program has partially offset the revenue loss from the bus trips. In 2011 the township had a significant decrease in enrollment for both bus trips and day camp program, resulting in a substantial decrease in revenues. In 2014 there were decreases in almost every recreation revenue category.





Table 7-2 | Park & Recreation Revenues, Total (above) and by Program (below), 2010-2015

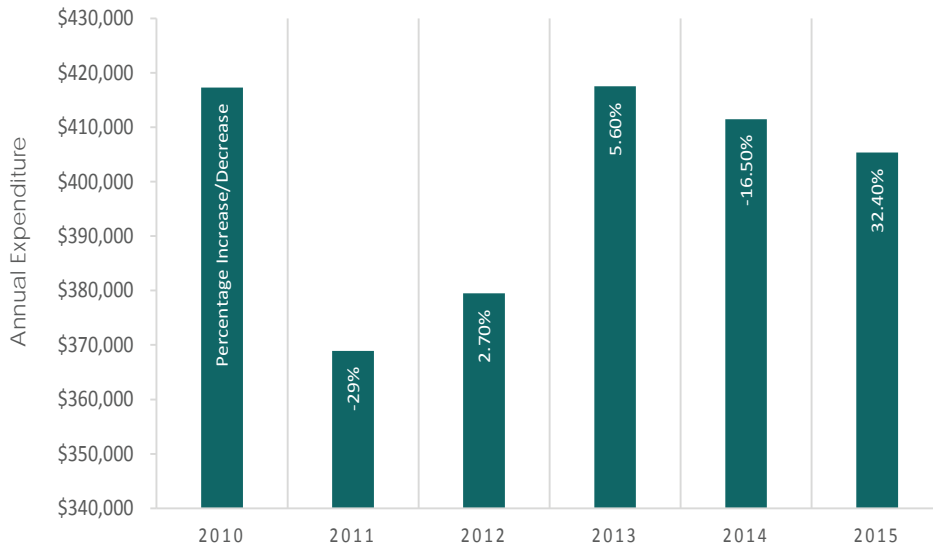


Day Camp	\$29,624	\$21,789	\$29,924	\$31,955	\$30,392	\$48,243
Newsletter	\$4,365	\$2,960	\$6,322	\$2,695	\$1,364	\$4,529
Playground Trips	\$3,566	\$2,792	\$3,876	\$4,600	\$4,771	\$7,309
Sports/Sports Camps	\$5,949	\$4,560	\$5,016	\$3,969	\$745	\$765
Bus Trips	\$42,276	\$12,463	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Classes/Activities	\$8,249	\$13,240	\$15,492	\$18,707	\$16,331	\$11,387
Park/Field Rentals	\$15,601	\$20,475	\$20,276	\$23,243	\$17,702	\$21,502
Senior Programs	\$1,758	\$883	\$380	\$702	\$445	\$1,268
Total Recreation Revenue	\$111,388	\$79,162	\$81,286	\$85,871	\$71,750	\$95,003

The revenue budget does not include revenues generated from developers paying the fee-in-lieu-of dedicating land in new developments. Even though these revenues must be deposited into a separate interest-bearing account earmarked for specific park projects, it is a yearly revenue associated with the parks and recreation department and should be shown in future revenue budgets.

Susquehanna Township's operating expenditures for parks and recreation from 2010 through 2015 have varied from year to year, as shown in table 7-3. In 2011 there was a significant drop in expenditures primarily due to a decrease in both wages and bus trip expenses. In 2013 there was an increase in expenditures in most line item categories, with the greatest increases in insurance/pensions and park utilities. Overall the Parks and Recreation Department has seen a 3.9% decrease in expenditures from 2010 to 2015. The operating expense figures don't include a line item for the public works labor cost for their work in the parks. It is recommended that all costs associated with public works labor in the parks be included as a line item in the parks and recreation section of the budget. This will provide a more realistic view of parks and recreation operating costs for the future. There have been no capital expenditures during the past six years.

Table 7-3 | Park & Recreation Operating Expenditures, Total (above) and Itemized (below)



\$189,151	\$162,304	\$171,044	\$177,850	\$184,406	\$187,460	Wages Full & Part Time
\$84,135	\$94,783	\$86,905	\$100,711	\$96,876	\$98,528	Insurance/Pensions
\$2,440	\$3,266	\$5,469	\$2,422	\$3,112	\$3,534	Supplies Administration
\$3,517	\$2,410	\$4,080	\$4,349	\$5,068	\$8,316	Supplies Programs
\$4,773	\$2,952	\$4,731	\$5,226	\$9,023	\$6,231	Equipment
\$28	\$0	\$350	\$401	\$34	\$0	Special Events
\$38,724	\$10,804	\$7,623	\$7,945	\$6,205	\$10,949	Bus /Summer Field Trips
\$15,589	\$15,796	\$16,519	\$17,589	\$17,451	\$17,819	Newsletter
\$5,101	\$2,028	\$3,308	\$5,186	\$4,071	\$2,937	Day Camp
\$3,669	\$4,223	\$2,125	\$2,160	\$2,926	\$658	Playground Program
\$1,785	\$1,444	\$0	\$2,277	\$1,312	\$1,986	Teen Camp
\$4,477	\$7,518	\$11,635	\$15,360	\$10,328	\$7,770	Classes/Activities
\$3,973	\$3,842	\$3,914	\$1,646	\$1,681	\$675	Sports/Sports Camps
\$8,081	\$0	\$1,397	\$730	\$3,625	\$3,739	Engineering Services
\$17,276	\$19,956	\$20,401	\$23,794	\$24,962	\$21,149	Maintenance & Repairs
\$14,678	\$17,237	\$20,433	\$26,811	\$18,689	\$14,603	Park Utilities
\$6,826	\$11,637	\$10,257	\$12,476	\$11,333	\$11,349	Vehicle Maintenance
\$1,106	\$120	\$277	\$120	\$973	\$254	Training & Membership
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	Capital Improvements
\$5,000	\$2,444	\$2,500	\$4,197	\$3,132	\$0	Shade Tree Commission
\$3,208	\$2,991	\$4,244	\$3,864	\$3,910	\$4,601	Senior Transportation
\$3,795	\$3,172	\$2,268	\$2,408	\$2,366	\$2,799	Senior Center Expenses
\$417,332	\$368,927	\$379,480	\$417,522	\$411,483	\$405,357	Total Recreation Expenditures



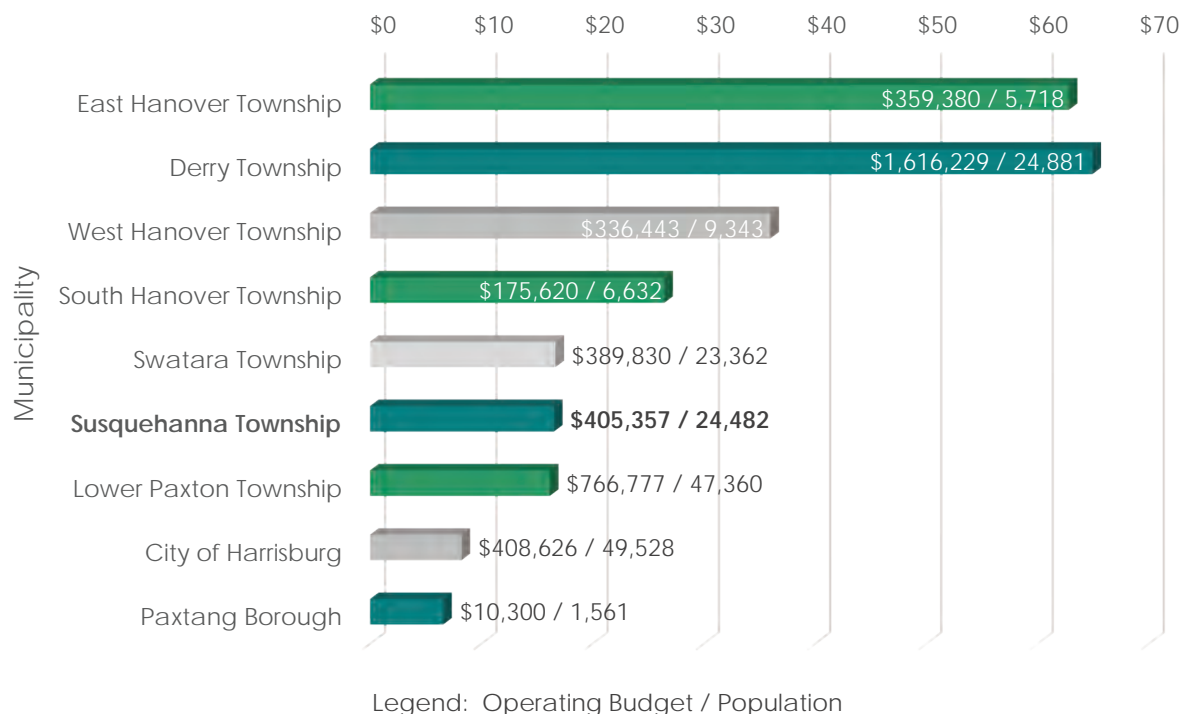
Susquehanna Township has supported recreation through taxes for many years. A comparison between allocations for each the township's major expenditures 2010 through 2015 is shown in table 7-4. Parks and recreation expenditures over the past six years have been the fifth highest expenditure category for the township. However, it is significantly lower than the four expenditure areas above and more closely related to those areas below, with an average of just 3.47% of the budget allocated to recreation. The department has experienced a decrease in expenditures over the past two years. It is recommended that the township, in order to continue receiving the many benefits of a robust parks and recreation program, continue to provide this level of funding to enhance and maintain its excellent recreation facilities and programs.

Table 7-4 | Department Expenditures Comparison

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Public Safety, Police, Fire, Ambulance	60%	59.2%	59.2%	59.2%	60%	61.8%
Highway	15.9%	16.6%	16.3%	16%	16.2%	16.3%
Debt Service	8.6%	8%	8.4%	8.4%	8%	8%
General Government	6.6%	6.7%	6.7%	6.1%	6.7%	6.2%
Recreation	4%	3.3%	3.5%	3.5%	3.3%	3.2%
Planning, Zoning, Code Enforcement	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	2%	2.3%	2%
Miscellaneous Services	-	1.8%	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	-
Health And Sanitation	1.2%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%
Emergency Management	.08%	.1%	.09%	.09%	.09%	.04%
Municipal Building	1.3%	.63%	.67%	1.3%	.76%	1.1%
Tax Collection	.19%	.2%	.2%	.17%	.21%	.19%

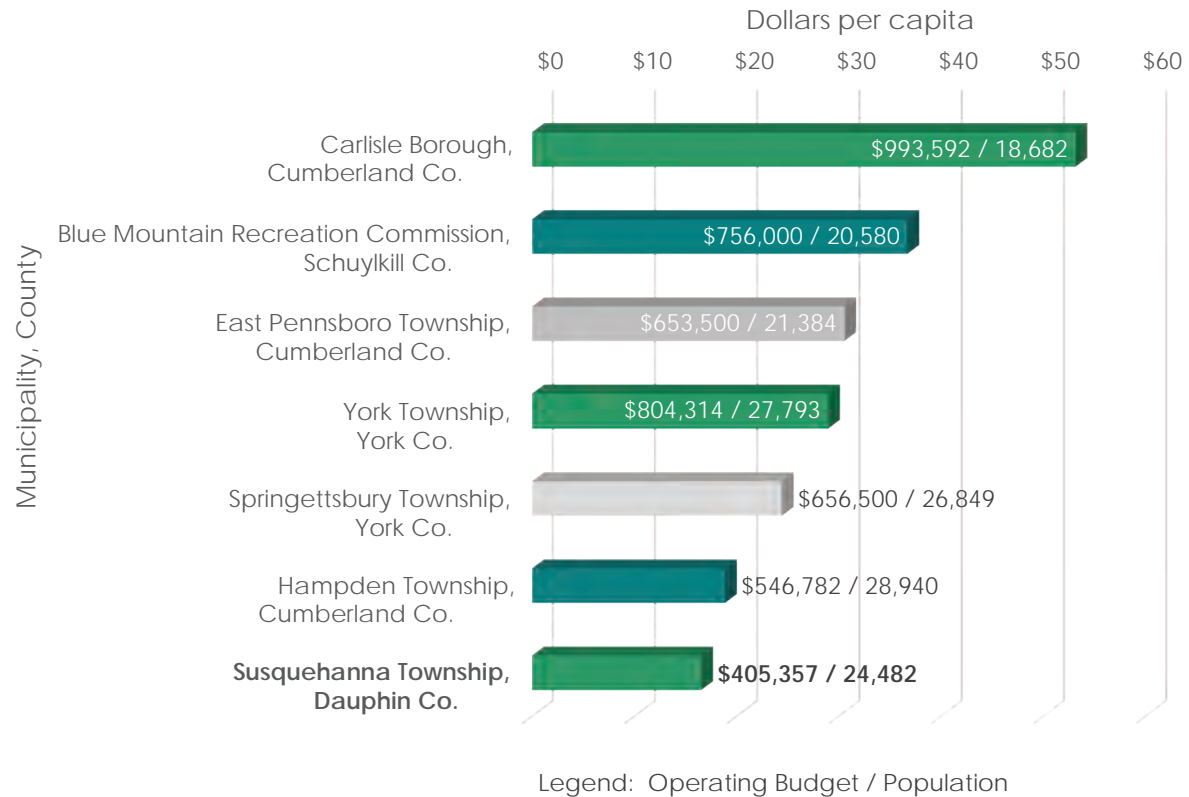
Susquehanna Township's 2015 operating budget is compared to surrounding communities and other Dauphin County communities with similar socio-economic characteristics in table 7-5. Based on this comparison, Susquehanna Township's per capita expenditure for parks and recreation is \$16.56 per resident, which is \$9.94 below the average expenditure of \$26.49 for other municipalities in Dauphin County that provided information.

Table 7-5 | Comparison of Park & Recreation Operating Expenditures to other Dauphin County Municipalities



Susquehanna Township's per capita budget is compared to recreation departments in nearby counties in table 7-6. The township's per capita expenditure for parks and recreation is \$16.56 per resident, \$13.35 below the average expenditure of \$29.91 in other counties.

Table 7-4 | Department Expenditures Comparison



For this comparison only the park and recreation operating expenditures were considered using the budgeted expenditure information from the general fund. Some of the communities listed have parks and recreation departments that both maintain the parks and operate recreation programs. Other communities provide some recreation programs through their recreation boards but handle park maintenance through their public works departments. All communities in the comparison operate a park system, with type and size of parks varying by community. It must be noted that some of the communities, including Susquehanna Township, do not include the public works maintenance hours in the park and recreation operating budget. Additionally, Hampden Township and Blue Mountain Recreation Commission do not include any park maintenance in their budget. Thus the figures used are not fully representative of the actual budget expenses for these communities. Variations from year to year were not included in this comparison because of the substantial fluctuation that can occur in each community's annual budget.

Susquehanna Township's budget is, nonetheless, substantially lower for park and recreation operating expenditures. The township's park operating expenditures are 55.5% below the average per capita expenditure. This suggests that there is an opportunity to significantly impact recreation in Susquehanna Township by increasing the parks and recreation department budget.



Budgeting Process

To properly develop a good budget, it is imperative to analyze the previous year's revenues and expenditures, taking into account the economic conditions at the time, and seeking employee input. Budget revenue and expenditure considerations include:

- Projected revenues from various sources
- Proposed program expenses
- Administrative expenses
- Staff expenses
- Park expenses such as utilities, maintenance supplies, equipment, and *contracted work*

The Parks and Recreation Director, with input from the park employees, develops the budget based on current and projected needs for the coming year. Once the initial budget is formulated, the director meets with the manager and finance officer to review the requested budget. The budget request is then submitted to the township supervisors, who review the request, make any adjustments necessary and formally approve the budget.

There isn't a current or projected capital budget for parks and recreation. Historically, capital requests have been met as needed. It is recommended to develop a projected capital budget that extends out to ten years, and to update the projections yearly. This projected budget would take into consideration scheduled updates to existing facilities, development of new recreation areas and facilities, acquisition of park land, and equipment replacement. This would be a guide for current and future staff in developing budgets that ensure that the parks are maintained to the existing standard, and help to buffer fluctuations in the township budget.

Funding Sources

Most communities charge user fees to finance recreation programs on at least a break-even basis. Fees and charges are perhaps one of the best methods to cover programming costs. Through user fees, those participating in the programs or utilizing the facilities are supporting the recreational opportunities that they value. The fees charged for a program should cover both the direct and indirect costs of a program and preferably provide a profit. Susquehanna Township charges user fees to subsidize the cost of providing recreation programs. However, the only program that has a non-resident rate is the day camp program. A resident/non-resident rate should be established for all of the programs. Additionally, a written revenue policy should be developed by the township to establish a framework for setting fees and charges for both the programs and facilities. The policy should detail the procedure for proper expenditure of all types of revenues generated through the department and/or the advisory committee.



Rental of facilities is one of the key income-producing sources for many communities. Susquehanna currently rents the following facilities:

Picnic Pavilions are rented out for birthday parties, family reunions, graduation parties, etc.

Sport Fields are rented to adult leagues and sports organizations. Home school groups are another source of rental revenues for fields during hours normally not in use by other organizations.

Courts are also rented to generate additional revenue.

Grants are perhaps one of the best sources of alternative funding to supplement township monies, and are offered by various government agencies and foundations. Currently, Susquehanna Township has two pending grants: (1) A DCNR grant for \$175,000 to install two playgrounds, storm water management, wetland enhancements, and restroom renovations at Veterans Park, and (2) A DCED grant for \$34,608 for the planning and design of an accessible trail at Logan Farm Park. Susquehanna Township has been successful in obtaining grants for past park projects, and should increase its pursuit of these supplemental sources of funding.

It is important to thoroughly research the sources to determine their requirements for obtaining grant funding. Many grants are reserved for feasibility studies, planning and implementation, acquisition, or development. It is more difficult to find funding sources to help start a specific program or supplement supplies needed for an existing program. This can be an opportunity for the township to fund new programs without initial capital outlay, but it does take time to research requirements for the type of grant that will best fulfill the township's needs. Applying requires a thorough knowledge of the project to be funded. It is recommended that the person responsible for writing grants attend seminars and workshops that are offered in by DCNR and other groups. The format and requirements of some of the grants change yearly, requiring a continual update. (See Appendix B for a list of numerous grants that are available.)

Foundations are another source of funding that may provide additional resources for park facilities and various programs that may be offered. Many foundations establish specific types of projects that they will fund and include specified project locations. There are generally four types of foundations: (1) private family foundations; (2) community foundations; (3) national foundations; and (4) operating foundations. (See Appendix B for a list of numerous foundations that may provide funding.) Susquehanna Township has received funding from the Stabler Foundation for park development.

Many communities have a "Friends of Park" organization that helps generate revenues and can provide additional volunteers. The organization should develop a set of bylaws and become a 501(c)3 organization so they can seek tax deductible contributions. They can raise money for all aspects of recreation and deposit it into an individual bank account earmarked for specific expenses. Since they are not a government agency they can avoid bureaucratic obstacles and make things happen quickly.

Sponsorships or naming rights are other excellent ways to obtain additional monetary funds to enhance parks. It does take some time and effort to develop a quality brochure that readily explains the project they will be sponsoring or receiving naming rights for. A strong explanation of the benefits to the sponsoring organization, including increased visibility of their organization and how it will improve their image is very important.



Many businesses look for an opportunity to get their business name in front of people, get involved in the community, and create a positive image. Obtaining business sponsors can be easy if you are well prepared to sell the opportunity to the business. An enticing project or program must be put together in a professional manner and properly presented. Some businesses will buy into this at a high level right away, while others will start at the lower levels and increase to higher levels as they see the benefits paying off. Therefore, you must continually improve your efforts and show the businesses the value derived from sponsorship or naming rights. Susquehanna Township has obtained sponsorships mostly through the sports organizations, and directly for Day Camp and the Playground Program. The township also has a naming rights policy in place.

Donations can include monetary donations, materials, supplies, volunteer time, or other donations. It benefits businesses providing a tax advantage and a positive public image. Seeking donations can be time consuming, but volunteers can help locate donations. Fundraising can generate significant additional funds and, with proper planning, can be conducted on a large scale. It must first be determined what is to be accomplished and what will work in Susquehanna Township. A fundraiser will take considerable time and planning to be successful, but it can be very rewarding by providing an event to get the community involved in providing for their recreation programs or facilities. Finding a volunteer with fundraising experience is recommended.

School Specialty is a resource for purchasing products that can be used in recreation programs. School Specialty works with donors and Adopt-a-Classroom to collect donations on behalf of an organization and facilitate the process of obtaining materials. This may be an opportunity to partner with the school district.



Public Dedication of Land

Susquehanna Township has an excellent public dedication of land/fee-in-lieu of ordinance in place that generates significant revenues. The ordinance provides detailed information for developers concerning the type of land that can be donated. The developers have a choice to donate the land or pay a fee-in-lieu-of, currently set at \$2,750 per dwelling unit. Throughout the public input process many references were made concerning the need for more open space in the township. Therefore, consideration should be given to acquiring additional open space through public dedication of land or the use of fees collected, possibly at the site of the former Harrisburg State Hospital.

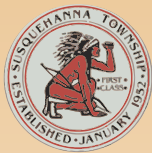
The Township Commissioners, Planning Commission, and Recreation Advisory Board should periodically hold a joint meeting to ensure that the recreation plan, subdivision and land development process, and fee-in-lieu-of requirements reflect actual community recreation and parkland needs. As the township continues to grow, the park and recreation staff should be involved to ensure that dedicated land meets the ordinance requirements, and fees collected are properly designated. Fees must be set aside in a separate interest-bearing account designated for recreation development. They can be used for purchasing land, providing infrastructure, purchasing recreational equipment, or improving existing facilities. The monies collected by the township in place of the public land dedication have primarily been used as a match for grants obtained for park development.

In general, municipal public dedication of land or fees-in-lieu-of are imposed on residential developments, but can also be applied to commercial and industrial development. Municipalities that enact this requirement generally have significant park and recreation demands generated by employees of these businesses. Therefore, businesses should help defray some of the financial burden created by this use. The fee can be determined by (1) the number of square feet of building area; or (2) the number of parking spaces.







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8 Recommendations

When compared to nearby or similar municipalities, Susquehanna Township's expenditures for parks and recreation operating expenses are significantly lower. The township's per capita park operating expenditures are 55.5% below the average, which suggests that additional funding should be provided to improve the parks and enhance the programming. Both the recreation survey and the key person interviews support this recommendation. The survey showed that 74.42% feel that parks and recreation expenditures should be increased, while 67.44% of those responding would be willing to donate additional funds to further support parks and recreation. Eleven out of twelve key persons interviewed feel that additional funding should be designated for parks and recreation in the township.

 High Priority
1 - 3 years

 Medium Priority
4 - 6 years

 Low Priority
7 - 10 years

GOAL | 1

Build capacity to improve the *Administration* of parks and recreation.

Implementation Strategies		Partners	Potential Funding	Potential Cost
1.1	Develop a transition plan for new administrative personnel.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
1.2	Develop a written use policy for park facilities.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
1.3	Establish a well-defined administrative manual.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
1.4	Purchase a recreation software program to better administer recreation.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Township budget	\$1,000 - \$10,000
1.5	Establish a resident/non-resident policy for program participation and facility rentals.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
1.6	Establish an online registration program to improve and enhance program registrations and facility rentals.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time



GOAL | 2

Develop first class *Facilities* that will meet the needs of all park users.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Potential Funding</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
2.1	Effectively plan for the future needs of the township.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
2.2	Ensure all existing and new facilities are ADA compliant. See park matrix.	Director & Staff	Grants	Dependent on scope
2.3	Acquire property and develop a park in the southern part of the township, possibly the state hospital property.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	DCNR	Dependent on scope/ cost of land
2.4	Coordinate all park signage, including wayfinding and internal signs.	Commissioners, Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$300 - \$3,000 per sign
2.5	Ensure proper signage is displayed at all playgrounds.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$150 - \$300
2.6	Coordinate park trash receptacles with domes, not 55 gallon trash cans, to improve park aesthetics.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$300 - \$700 per receptacle
2.7	Install water fountains in parks.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$1,000 - \$3,500 per fountain
2.8	Provide ADA accessible picnic tables in all parks pavilions.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$400 - \$1,200 per table
2.9	Construct a small parking area at Plum Alley Park.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	Dependent on scope
2.10	Install swing/slide mats to decrease maintenance and increase safety.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$200 - \$500 per mat
2.11	Develop a comprehensive trail plan for the township	Commissioners, Manager, Director & Staff	Grants	Dependent on scope
2.12	Ensure adequate open space is available throughout the township.	Commissioners, Director & Developers	Grants & Developers	Dependent on scope
2.13	Consider the construction of a community center for programming and rentals.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Grants, Foundations, Businesses	Dependent on scope

2.14	Install dog waste stations in parks where dogs are permitted.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	\$150 - \$300 per station
2.15	Ensure designated handicap parking spaces with proper surface markings and signage at every parking area.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	Dependent on scope
2.16	Overlay tennis courts with pickleball courts.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	Staff time and material
2.17	Retain Waverly Woods and Margaret Grove as natural open space areas with trails and viewing areas of the pond.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Grants, Donations, Twp. Budget	Dependent on scope
2.18	Replace the playgrounds at Stabler Park, McNaughton Park, and Edgemont Park	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Grants, Donations, Twp. Budget	\$100,000 - \$400,000
2.19	Construct a pavilion and playground at Apple Creek Park	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Grants, Donations, Twp. Budget	\$100,000 - \$200,000
2.20	Construct new athletic fields if open space becomes available.	Commissioners, Manager, Director, & Partners	Grants, Donations, Twp. Budget	Dependent on scope





GOAL | 3

Manage existing and new facilities and equipment to ensure a high standard of *Maintenance, cleanliness, safety, and aesthetically pleasing areas and facilities.*

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Potential Funding</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
3.1	Address the issues/recommendations stated in each park matrix.	Commissioners, Manager, Director & Staff	Township Budget	Dependent on scope
3.2	Develop a detailed maintenance management plan with a preventative schedule & responsive maintenance plan.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.3	Develop a park maintenance manual.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.4	Develop a risk management manual.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.5	Develop a replacement schedule for equipment and facilities.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.6	Develop a turf management plan.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.7	Ensure that at least one employee maintains a certified pesticide license in core and applicable category areas.	Manager & Director	Township Budget	Staff Time & certification cost
3.8	Improve safety and security in the parks.	Director & Staff	N/A	Dependent on scope
	a. Immediately repair or restrict usage of hazardous areas and facilities.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
	b. Post contact information so park users can report safety issues.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
	c. Provide adequate lighting to improve safety, security, & visibility.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Twp. Budget, Grants	Dependent on scope
	d. Post park rules and regulations in visible locations.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.9	Sanitize playground equipment regularly, especially during peak use periods.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	Staff Time & Materials
3.10	Develop a comprehensive landscape management program for indigenous & diverse species of trees, shrubs, & flowers.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
3.11	Provide employees & other entities with "Right to Know" information, as explained in the maintenance narrative.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
3.12	Control invasive species in the parks.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time



GOAL | 4

Develop Programs that meet the needs, interests, and desires of all residents.

	Implementation Strategies	Partners	Potential Funding	Potential Cost
4.1	Ensure that all programs offered comply with ADA requirements.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
4.2	Offer a couple specific special needs programs throughout the year.	Director, School, Special Entities	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.3	Offer a variety of events/festivals for families that are not provided by other entities.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent on type of event
4.4	Plan outdoor concerts/movies.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & Sponsorships	Dependent on event
4.5	Provide passive recreational opportunities for all ages.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.6	Ensure programs opportunities for all ages –preschool through seniors.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.7	Include a variety of adventure programs.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.8	Offer technology programs, such as Minecraft.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.9	Offer interpretative programs using the natural features in the parks.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.10	Become a Get Outdoors Local Partner through PRPS.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Staff time; marketing requirements
4.11	Diversify programs in the areas of arts & crafts, performing arts, cooking, etc.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.12	Develop various intergenerational programs.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee

4.13	Include outdoor winter program opportunities.	Director & Staff	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.14	Develop outdoor educational/environmental programs, possibly in conjunction with the County and/or utilizing NRPA Wildlife Explorers.	Director, Staff & County	Township Budget & User Fees	Dependent upon instructor fee
4.15	Develop a program operational manual, especially for any future special events/festivals.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time

GOAL | 5

Promote facilities and programs with the most effective forms of *Publicity* for the intended audience.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Potential Funding Sources</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
5.1	Develop a coordinated marketing plan.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
5.2	Increase communication and awareness of township parks, facilities, and programs.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
5.3	Install a calendar of programs and events on the township website.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
5.4	Utilize social media when appropriate to promote recreation in the township.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
5.5	Provide a link on the township website to other recreation providers in the area.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
5.6	Develop a comprehensive email data base of residents who would like to receive recreational information.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
5.7	Create a map of facilities on the township website.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time



GOAL | 6

Employ adequate *Staff* and volunteers to develop, implement, and maintain successful recreational facilities and programs.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Potential Funding Sources</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
6.1	Increase staff to improve park maintenance and development.	Manager, Commissioners & Director	Township Budget	Budgeted wage
6.2	Develop a record sheet for maintaining volunteer information.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
6.3	Expand the organizational chart showing all levels of employees.	Commissioners & Director	N/A	Staff Time
6.4	Complete job descriptions for all positions.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
6.5	Establish a list of volunteers, including opportunities for scout organizations, businesses, and other entities.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
6.6	Continue providing employees and volunteers the opportunity to attend workshops, seminars, and conferences.	Manager & Director	Township Budget	Dependent upon opportunity
6.7	Periodically review staffing levels for the parks to meet the demands by the public.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
6.8	Update background checks periodically.	Manager & Director	Township Budget	Dependent upon background check fee
6.9	Implement alternative hiring practices to supplement staffing needs, such as interns, practicum students, or other as indicated in the narrative.	Manager & Director	Township Budget if stipend is paid	Dependent upon stipend

GOAL | 7

Ensure the long term *Financial* sustainability for the operation, maintenance, and development of facilities and programs.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Funding Sources</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
7.1	Provide additional funding for parks and recreation to improve and enhance recreation.	Commissioners & Manager	Township Budget, grants & alternative funds	Dependent upon scope of work
7.2	Pursue a variety of grants for park development.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
7.3	Utilize any funds previously received for parks as a match against grants to lessen the financial output of cash reserves.	Manager & Director	Alternative Funds	Staff Time
7.4	Establish credit card capabilities for program registration and facility rentals.	Manager & Director	Township Budget	Dependent upon company used
7.5	Review the fee structure yearly for rental facilities and programs.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
7.6	Develop relationships with potential sponsors, foundations, and other funding sources.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
7.7	Establish well defined revenue policies for fundraising, sponsorships, donations, program fees, facility rentals, and other forms of revenue.	Commissioners & Manager	N/A	Staff Time
7.8	Design, develop, and maintain facilities to be financially sustainable.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Township Budget, grants	Dependent upon scope of work
7.9	Include a line item in the park budget for the time public works employees devote to maintaining the parks.	Manager, Treasurer & Director	N/A	Staff Time
7.10	Design recreation programs that are financially sustainable through user fees, donations, and sponsorships.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff time
7.11	Establish a resident/non-resident fee structure for programs and facilities.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time

7.12	Develop a three, five, & ten year capital improvement budget and capital purchase budget.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
7.13	Adopt an ordinance that implements public dedication of land or fee-in-lieu-of for commercial, industrial, and other business developments.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	N/A	Staff time
7.14	Show developer fee revenues collected from fee-in-lieu-of in the parks and recreation budget.	Manager, Treasurer & Director	N/A	Staff Time

GOAL | 8

Develop strong *Partnerships* to enhance recreation opportunities for residents.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Funding Sources</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
8.1	Partner with municipalities, local organizations, and other recreation providers to foster a culture of open communication and collaboration.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
8.2	Develop and expand partnerships with regional organizations to provide new recreation facilities and programs.	Director & staff	N/A	Staff time
8.3	Expand partnerships with area businesses, school district, Greenbelt Association, Dauphin County, and the Jewish Federation.	Director & staff	N/A	Staff time
8.4	Develop a municipal alliance with recreation directors from nearby communities.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff time
8.5	Partner with the owner and developer of the state hospital property to provide recreation opportunities in the southern part of the township.	Commissioners, Manager & Director	Township Budget, grants	Dependent upon scope of project

GOAL | 9

Promote *Conservation and Preservation* of valuable Open Space.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Funding Sources</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
9.1	Preserve open space areas that contain features of natural or cultural significance.	Manager & Director	N/A	Staff Time
9.2	Build a culture of sustainability within the parks and recreation organization to promote green building practices and the use of alternative methods for park development and maintenance.	Manager, Director & Staff	Township Budget, grants	Dependent upon scope of work
9.3	Preserve and maintain the integrity of streams, hillsides, and environmentally sensitive areas in the parks, including riparian buffers and stream erosion controls.	Director & Staff	Township Budget	Dependent upon scope of work
9.4	Retain natural areas and greenway corridors throughout the parks.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time
9.5	Preserve for wildlife all dead and down trees in areas that will not create a hazardous condition for park users.	Director & Staff	N/A	Staff Time

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Expand a comprehensive, interconnected *Multi-Modal System* to provide safe bicycle & pedestrian access routes throughout the Susquehanna Township area.

	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Funding Sources</i>	<i>Potential Cost</i>
10.1	Develop a community wide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity plan.	Township, County, Greenbelt Assoc.	Township, County, Greenbelt Assoc. Budgets, Grants	Dependent upon scope of work
10.2	Develop trail connections to the parks and neighborhoods.	Township, County, Greenbelt Assoc.	Township, County, Greenbelt Assoc. Budgets, Grants	Dependent upon scope of work
10.3	Develop trail connections to the parks and businesses.	Township, County, Greenbelt Assoc.	Township, County, Greenbelt Assoc. Budgets, Grants	Dependent upon scope of work