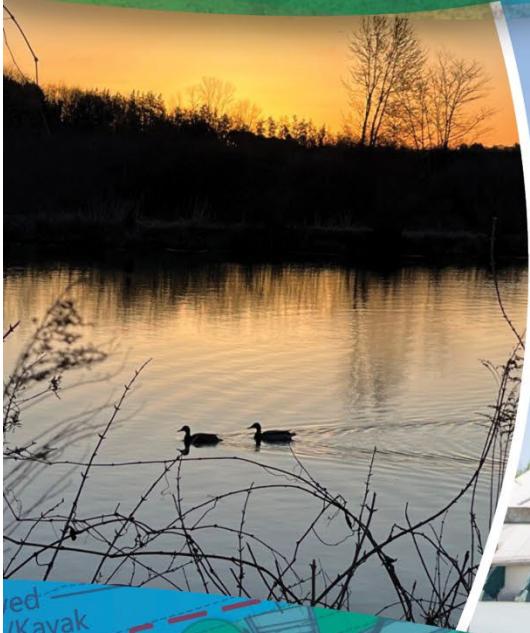




# Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Destination Master Plan



## **RESOLUTION 2025-51**

### **RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANHEIM, LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN AND MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS:** Article XXX - Park, Recreation Centers, Shade Trees and Forests of the PA First Class Township Code provides the statutory authority for the Board of Commissioners to designate and acquire land or buildings owned, leased or controlled by the Township for use as parks, playgrounds, playfields, gymnasiums, swimming pools and other similar recreational facilities, and

**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Comprehensive Plan establishes general priority community development goals that support the need to continue to provide high quality parks and recreation facilities and services to Township residents and visitors alike, and

**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Comprehensive Plan further acknowledges that it is desirable and practical to monitor community change, and as the Township continues to grow and develop into the future, it must consider (a) the need for open spaces, natural resources, and recreational facilities, (b) how to generate revenue to pay for and effectively maintain these facilities and services, and (c) how to coordinate and plan community open space, parks and recreational needs for all age groups of the population, in convenient locations, and

**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Recreation Department in support of the Comprehensive Plan's goals conducted a strategic planning process embodied in the attached 5-year Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan, which serves as a fundamental and necessary tool for the Board of Commissioners and Executive Staff to establish objective priorities and decisions related to the continued provision of and improvement to the Township's park facilities and recreation programs, and

**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan also serves as the foundation for the Recreation Department's new 10-year Parks & Recreation Master Plan, attached hereto, which was developed through an extensive planning process conducted in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan development process and inclusive of input received from the general public through a parks and recreation survey questionnaire, and

**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan establishes a set of parks and recreation policies and strategic actions, which through successful implementation in concert with the Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan and the

Township's Comprehensive Plan will strengthen the Recreation Department's organizational effectiveness to continue to maintain and grow Manheim Township's high-quality parks and recreation resources, inclusive of outdoor and indoor park facilities, diverse recreation programs, open spaces, and natural areas, all of which greatly contribute to the Township's residents high quality of living, and

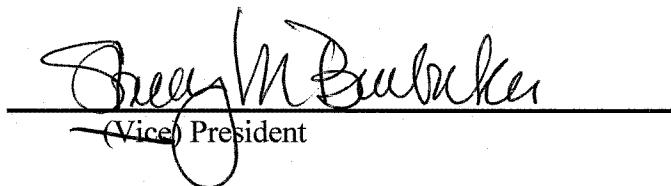
**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan and Master Plan have also been prepared with consideration and for the fulfillment of the requirements of the PA Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247 as amended, and shall serve as the Township's formally adopted recreation plan in accordance with the requirements of Section 503.(11) regarding the mandatory dedication of land for recreation, and required fees in lieu of land dedication, as a condition of plan approval, and

**WHEREAS:** the Manheim Township Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan and Master Plan have been formally reviewed and approved by the Manheim Township Executive Staff and Recreation Department as a recommendation for adoption by the Board of Commissioners.

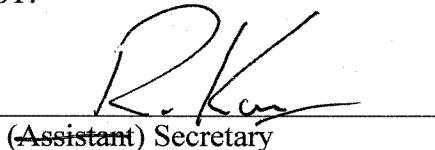
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Commissioners of Manheim Township hereby adopt the Manheim Township Parks & Recreation Strategic Plan and Master Plan 2025.

**RESOLVED**, this 8 day of September 2025.

COMMISSIONERS OF MANHEIM TOWNSHIP

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Vice) President

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Assistant) Secretary

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**Matt Hutchison**, Assistant Director of Recreation

**Andy Bowman**, Assistant Township Manager

### Advisory Group Participants

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**Carol Gifford**, Manheim Township Board of Commissioners

**Elizabeth Edwards**, MTSD Principal, Schaeffer Elementary

**Harry Norton**, Manheim Township Recreation - Adult Program Manager

**Alex Rohrbaugh**, PA Turnpike Planner, Manheim Township Planning Commission

**Stephanie Cooke**, MT Soccer Club Director

#### Park Ambassadors

Jeff Schreiber

Bob Freund

**Jim Damm**, Skyline Swim Team Board, MTBSA Board

**Bill Ziegler**, Former Parks/Rec Board, MTSD Teacher

**Jim Collier**, Sponsor for Youth Basketball, MT Business Owner

**Linda Piper**, Skyline Swim Team Board President

**Andy Mathers**, Overlook Swim Team - Former Board President

**Sheri Keller**, Dog Park Volunteer

John Felix

Ned Butz

### Consultant

Michael Baker International, Inc.

## **WELCOME LETTER FROM MATT STOPA, DIRECTOR**

Greetings!

Did you know the very first Manheim Township Recreation Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1972? In that year, Manheim Township had just under 22,000 residents and owned and operated only three parks: Community Park, Municipal Park (undeveloped), and Kiewick Park (Jaycee Park). The goal of that plan was simple: "To determine the needs of the residents now and in the future." The recreational needs at that time were much different than what we see today. In 1972, the Recreation Department ran programs such as Knitting, Bridge, Water Basketball, Ice Skating, Synchronized Swimming, and offered Interior Design classes. Even with careful planning, recreational needs and trends will change over time.

Fast-forward 53 years and four Recreation Comprehensive Plans later, and Manheim Township now owns and maintains 15 public parks. Although recreation program trends may have changed, our objective to support the recreational needs of Manheim Township residents has remained the same.

Since our last Recreation Comprehensive Plan in 2012, Manheim Township has grown by about 15%, with a population hovering around 44,000. Jaycee Park had a full park renovation with help from DCNR. We also operate a Nature Preschool in Landis Woods, recently installed eight pickleball courts at Overlook Park, and are in the process of a full renovation of Perelman Park.

In this 2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, we will focus on two main areas: Recreation Programming and Park Facilities. During the summer of 2024, we surveyed the community and received a lot of great feedback, which has helped us in developing this plan. Our short-term focus will be enhanced recreation program offerings and Park Facility Master Planning. We are in an era where a large portion of our Parks and Facilities have seen decades of usage; this plan will help us navigate a path forward.

As it was stated in the 1972 Recreation and Open Space Plan: "Recreational planning should be continuous within the Township. The most important consideration for determining the recreational needs of the population is strong communication between users and those responsible for providing the recreational facilities and programs. This will ensure the residents of Manheim Township are being met to the fullest extent possible."

Thank you for your continued support and guidance. I am thrilled to present the 2025 Parks and Recreation Master Plan to you and begin the next chapter of Parks and Recreation in Manheim Township.

Matt Stopa, Director



# INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

The Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan evaluates the park and recreation needs within the framework of Manheim Township's ongoing population growth, the availability of public park facilities throughout the community, and the variety of recreational programs available for residents of all ages and abilities. The plan articulates an ambitious yet attainable vision for parks and recreation in the future and outlines a series of goals, objectives, and strategies as a road map to shape the Township over the next 10 years.

The plan provides a framework for the Township's existing and future park facilities and recreational programmatic needs. The Strategic Business Plan was the first phase of the Park Facility Master Planning process, which led to a foundation for developing this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. While the business plan establishes policies and strategies to strengthen the function and financial systems within the Recreation Department, the Park Facility Master Plan will address the specific needs of the community in terms of parks and recreational programming.

The Park Facility Master Plan provides guidance for Manheim Township's needs based on stakeholder input and provides a foundation for developing the organization's priorities for the future. Implementing the Park Facility Master Plan will be highly dependent upon successfully executing the Strategic Business Plan.

Together, the Strategic Business Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan identify near-term priorities that include strategies that strengthen the organization's financial position to increase its staffing capacity and ensure its existing programs and facilities are delivered and maintained in a high-quality manner. Long-term priorities may seek to increase the organization's financial means to expand its program offerings and build new and improved facilities to serve Manheim Township's growing and diverse population. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the Strategic Business Plan and this Park Facility Master Plan.



*Figure 1 – Plan Relationships*

## Parks and Recreation Management Overview

Parks and recreation facilities, activities, and programs are managed cooperatively between Manheim Township's Recreation Department and the Parks Maintenance Division of the Public Works Department. Municipal involvement in creating and administering parks began in 1969 with the establishment of the Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Department.<sup>1</sup> The Township's first three park acquisitions were Community Park in December 1970, Jaycee Park in March 1971, and Municipal Park in February 1972.

Since that time, the system has expanded to include 15 parks and numerous recreation facilities and programs for both youth and adults. In 2023, recreation programs across all facilities attracted over 7,000 participants, and special events hosted another 5,000 attendees. That same year, Township public pools saw almost 12,000 people pay for

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<sup>1</sup> Manheim Township Recreation and Open Space Plan, Kendree and Shepherd Planning Consultants Inc, July 1972

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

admission. Recreation facilities and programs are managed by a staff of nine full-time Township employees, along with a part-time and seasonal staff of over 130.

The Manheim Township Recreational Advisory Committee (MTRAC) was created in December 2023 to build on our cooperative relationship with Manheim Township School District. The Committee is made up of nine members: three Township staff, three staff members from the Manheim Township School District, and three resident volunteers. The Committee's responsibilities include coordinating facility sharing, making recommendations regarding maintenance and capital improvements, and developing proposals for community events and programs that utilize the combined resources of both the Township and School District.

Parks and recreation funding and operations are also overseen by the Township Recreation Directors, Public Works Director, guided by the Township Managers with approval by the Board of Commissioners.

## Vision and Mission

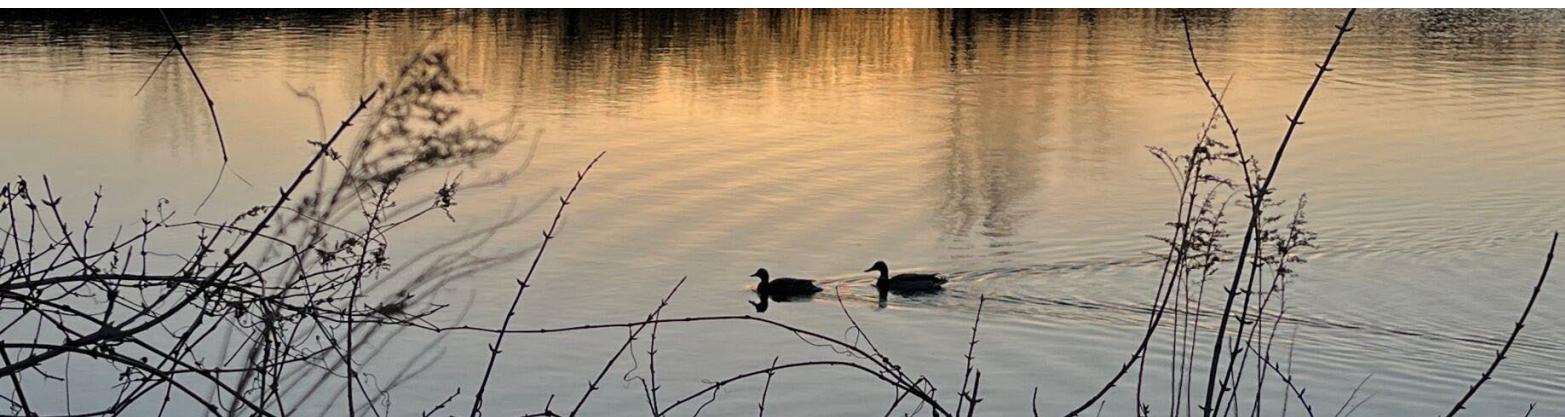
### Vision

Nurture a connected, cohesive, and thriving parks system which will continue to enhance and develop versatile programs and activities that will enrich the lives of our residents and visitors for many years to come.

### Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide an accessible network of diverse park facilities, fostering healthy lifestyle choices, which encourage our residents and visitors to participate in recreational opportunities that:

1. promote physical and mental well-being,
2. connect the parks and public spaces throughout the township, and
3. conserves and preserves natural resources for current and future generations.



## Guiding Principles

Manheim Township has adopted guiding principles to advise the organization's decision-making. Modeled after the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) "Three Pillars," the Township's guiding principles are as follows:

### **Equity**

Manheim Township strives for a future where all people have access to the benefits of quality parks and recreation.

### **Health and Well-Being**

Manheim Township believes that the parks, programs, and services it offers are key to a fully integrated public health system and play a vital role in meeting the evolving health needs of its communities.

### **Environmental Resilience**

Manheim Township believes that parks and green spaces are key components to creating healthy, resilient, and environmentally conscious communities for everyone.

## Planning Process and Engagement

Park Facility Master Planning ensures that the plan is representative of the needs of Manheim Township through a comprehensive approach to public engagement. Vital services like parks and recreation programs create a quality of life for residents that must be built on a foundation of meeting public needs now and in the future. To guarantee that plan recommendations incorporate the voice of Township residents, business owners and visitors, a multi-pronged public engagement approach was incorporated. Much of this work began with the Strategic Business Plan and was carried into the planning process for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Input strategies included gathering information and data from citizens, Township staff, and stakeholders, allowing for measurable feedback, which ensures that the Plan embodies the desires and meets the needs of residents, elected leaders, and Township staff. These strategies included feedback and direction from a community survey, a series of parks and recreational forums held during the Strategic Business Plan, and an Advisory Group composed of residents, elected officials, and staff to guide prioritization of park facilities and recreation programs.



## FEBRUARY 2024 – APRIL 2025

The Project Management Team met regularly to discuss progress on the Manheim Township Park Facility Master Planning. Efforts included biweekly work sessions for the team to work through challenges and share successes with the project.



## MARCH – MAY 2024

Three Stakeholder Forums were held during the development of the Strategic Business Plan. There were 21 people who attended the forums along with Township staff and MBI staff. The forums focused on analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges; creating a vision and mission for Township parks and recreation programs; and establishing goals for parks and recreation in Manheim Township.



## SUMMER 2024

The Township administered a 30-question survey to gather resident input on the needs, challenges, and future use of parks and recreational programming in the community. The survey was offered online and promoted through the Township's website and the Recreation Department's email contacts. Over 1,000 people responded to the survey. Appendix A includes a tabulated summary of the survey results.



## JULY 26, 2024

A Pop-Up Event was held at Jaycee Park to engage the public in envisioning the future of Manheim Township. The pop-up involved four stations where participants could use interactive visual preference surveys and voting to indicate their choices. 18 people participated in the event and indicated strong preferences for splash parks/pads and pool facilities. Complete streets were also identified as an area for investment.

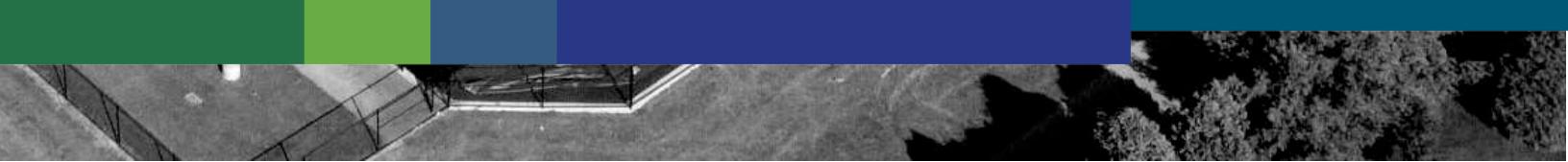


## FALL 2024

Advisory Group conducted a series of virtual meetings and responded to a survey to share their thoughts and feedback on the future of Manheim Township Parks and Recreation efforts.

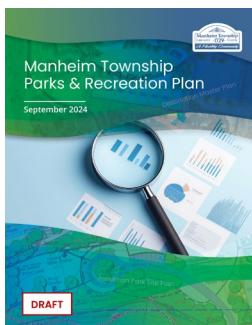


# PLANNING CONTEXT



## PLANNING CONTEXT

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is one of many planning efforts that have been updated or created recently by area agencies. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an important component of a holistic approach to improve the lives of people who call Manheim Township home. Other planning documents that have been reviewed and incorporated include:

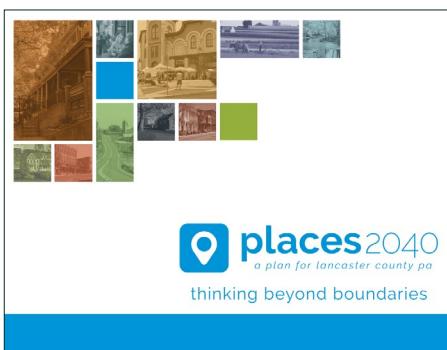
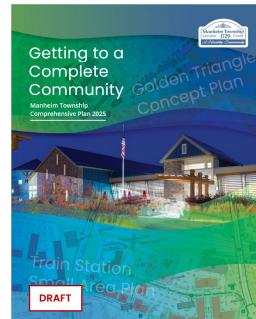


### Manheim Township Strategic Plan – Parks and Recreation

Updated concurrently with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Strategic Plan clearly defines the priority goals and strategies over the next five years (2025 – 2029). The Strategic Plan serves as a critical information management and communications between Manheim Township, Lancaster County, and other stakeholders vested in the continued growth and success of the parks and recreation facilities and services.

### Manheim Township Comprehensive Plan

With anticipated adoption late in 2025, the Manheim Township Comprehensive Plan envisions the future for our community. The plan focuses on four plan goals: Securing Fiscal Sustainability, Housing We Can Afford, a Transportation Network that Works, and Land Use Regulations that Support our Goals. The plan includes topics of demographics, land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and community facilities.



### Lancaster County Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in 2018, places2040 was developed with the idea in mind of ensuring Lancaster County remains a special place in the future. Throughout the development of the plan there are five guiding principles – place-based, innovative, catalytic, leadership-oriented, and measurable. Eight issues were identified as the focus of the plan including managing growth, urban places, housing choice, employment, transportation, parks, trails, and natural areas, agriculture and farmland, and thinking beyond boundaries.

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

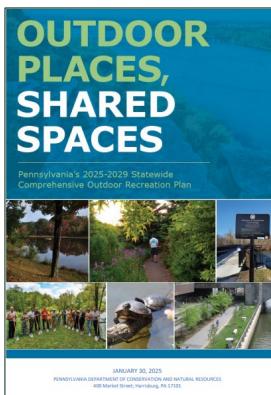
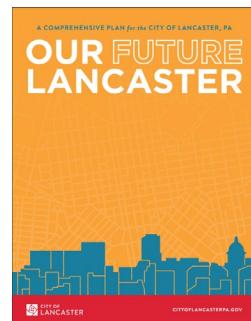


### Lancaster County Active Transportation Plan

Developed in 2019, the Lancaster County Active Transportation Plan was developed with a special focus on connectivity and changing the culture of transportation in the greater Lancaster area. Five plan goals were developed including Improve Access and Connectivity, Enhance Health, Protect the Environment, Create Economic Opportunity, and Increase Safety.

### City of Lancaster Comprehensive Plan

Adopted in 2023, Our Future Lancaster intends to connect past and present planning efforts, establish a cohesive and comprehensive vision, and set forth a means to achieve it. Perelman Park in Manheim Township is within the stream corridor section of the Our Future Lancaster City Comprehensive Plan and the 2026 Perelman Park restoration is timed well to support the Plan.



### Pennsylvania's 2025-2029 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Still in development at the time of this report, Outdoor Places, Shared Spaces is the newest SCORP reinforcing the commitment to preserving, enhancing, and expanding outdoor spaces that are vital to PA communities.



# TRENDS



## Trends

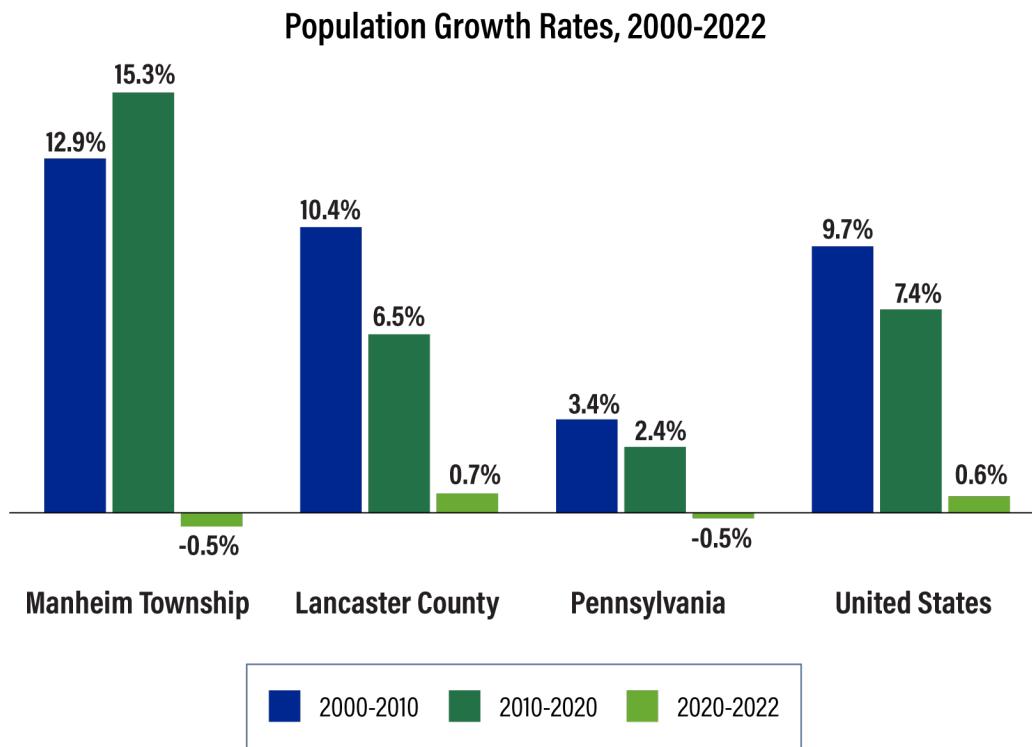
During the development of the Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan, a detailed Community Profile was developed to show a baseline analysis of relevant demographic and socioeconomic data between 2010 and 2022. The following is a summary of those findings that impact the future of parks and recreation needs over the next 10 years. In general terms, the Township is showing the following trends that will impact demand for parks and recreation programming over the next 10 years:

1. The population is growing, but growth may be slowing down from previous decades.
2. Households are predominantly single-family, but the share of rental households is on the rise and likely to increase as new units are constructed, mostly in the area south of Route 30, near the City of Lancaster.
3. The population has minimal diversity, but Hispanic households are increasing.
4. Median Household Income outpaces the county and the state as a whole.

## Population Growth

- From 2000-2022, Manheim Township's population grew by 29.6%, from 33,770 residents to 43,757. The highest period of growth was between 2010 and 2020, when the Township grew by 15.3%.
- The rate of growth in Manheim Township has been substantially higher than the average for Lancaster County, the state of Pennsylvania, and for the United States overall. From 2000 to 2022, Lancaster County grew by 18.3%, Pennsylvania grew by 5.6%, and the U.S. population grew by 18.4%.
- While population growth in the Township is still occurring, **there are signs that it may be slowing**. The 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) showed the Township population as 43,757 residents, which is a -0.5% decline from the 2020 Census count.

However, it should be noted that the ACS data represents estimates generated from smaller data samples.



*Figure 2 - Growth Population Rates 2000-2022 (Source: U.S. Census)*

## Population Diversity

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Manheim Township does not have a high level of racial diversity, though it is becoming more diverse over time.

- In 2022, the population of the Township was 82.9% White, which is a decline from 88.1% in 2010.
- Residents of the Township who identified as Black or African American also declined from 3.7% of the population in 2010 to 2.6% in 2022.
- Other populations, such as residents who identified as Asian or those identified as two or more races, have increased, from 5.4% to 6.1% and 0.8% to 5.5%, respectively.

One trend that is especially noteworthy is regarding ethnicity within the Township. There has been a notable increase in Township residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino. This population more than doubled between 2010 and 2022, increasing from 2,051 to 4,893, a 138.6% increase. This far outpaces the growth of Hispanic or Latino residents in Lancaster County, which grew by 42.6%, Pennsylvania, which grew by 54.5%, and the United States, which grew by 25.3%, between 2010 and 2022.

Manheim Township Racial Composition, 2010 and 2022

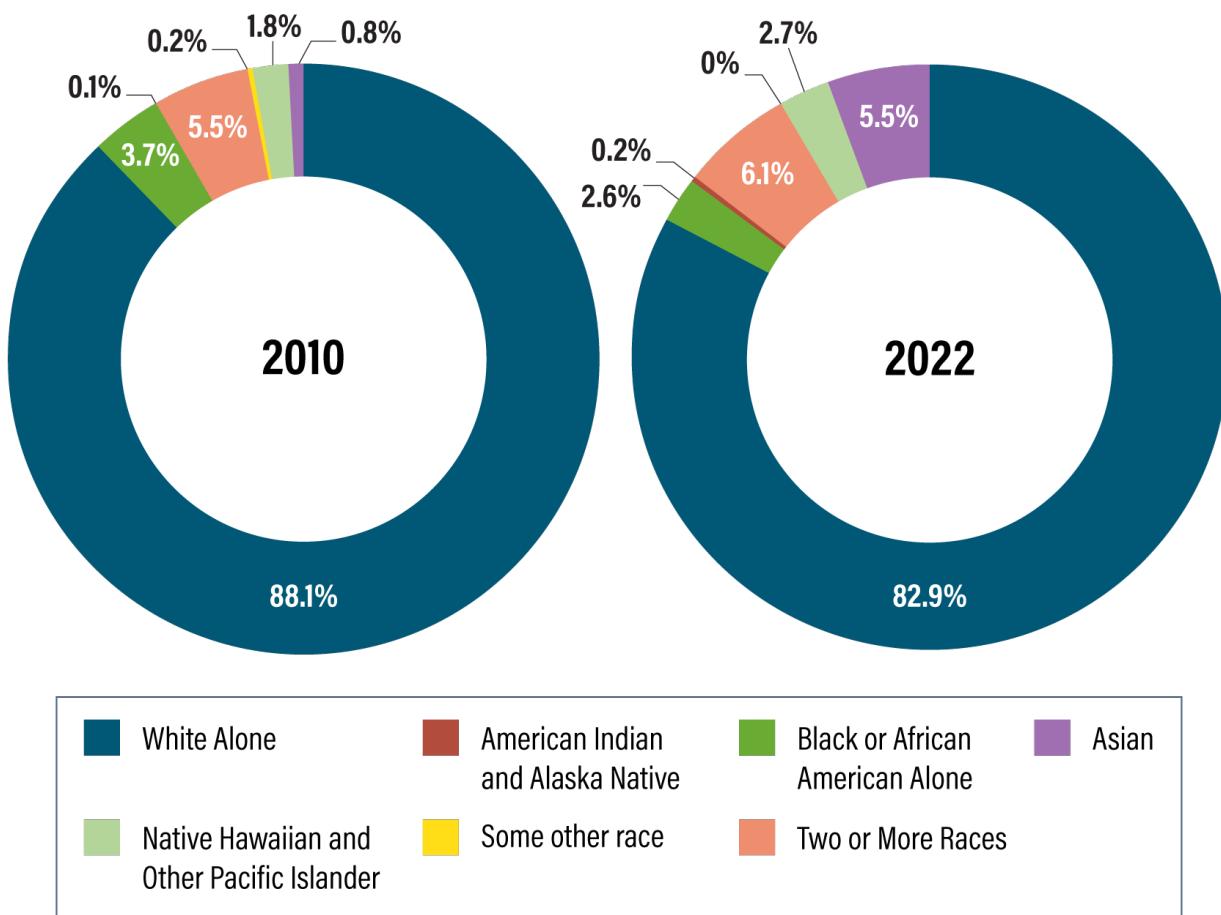


Figure 3 - Manheim Township Racial Composition 2010-2022 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

## Household Income

Manheim Township has a high average level of income, and relatively low levels of poverty, especially when compared to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and the U.S. average.

- In 2022, **the median income in Manheim Township was \$93,413**. This is significantly higher than the median income in Lancaster County, which stood at \$82,691, Pennsylvania at \$71,798, and the national median income of \$74,555.
- **The income categories that saw the highest population growth in Manheim Township were households making more than \$75,000 a year.** Households making \$200,000 a year or more rose by 494.1% between 2000 and 2022. In contrast, Township households with an annual income of less than \$50,000 have declined in number. Households making between \$49,999 and \$35,000 declined by 37.5% between 2000 and 2022.
- In 2022, **896 households in Manheim Township lived below the Federal Poverty Line** or 5.1% of all households in the Township. This is lower than the share of households below the Poverty Line in Lancaster County, 9.1%, in Pennsylvania, 12.5%, or the national average of 12.8%.
- It should be noted that **the share of households in Manheim Township below the Poverty Line has increased, rising 8.7% between 2010 and 2022**. This rate is in stark contrast to both Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and the United States as whole, which saw declines of -10.4%, 2.0%, and -8.6%, respectively.



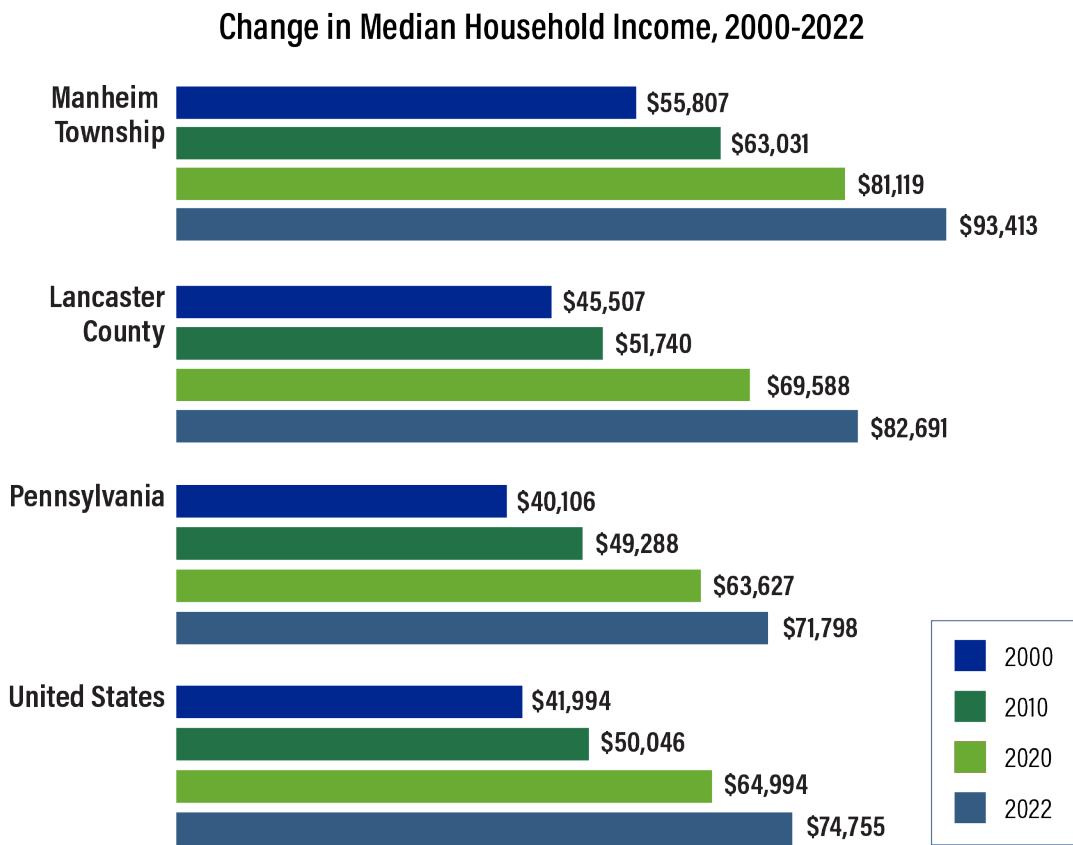
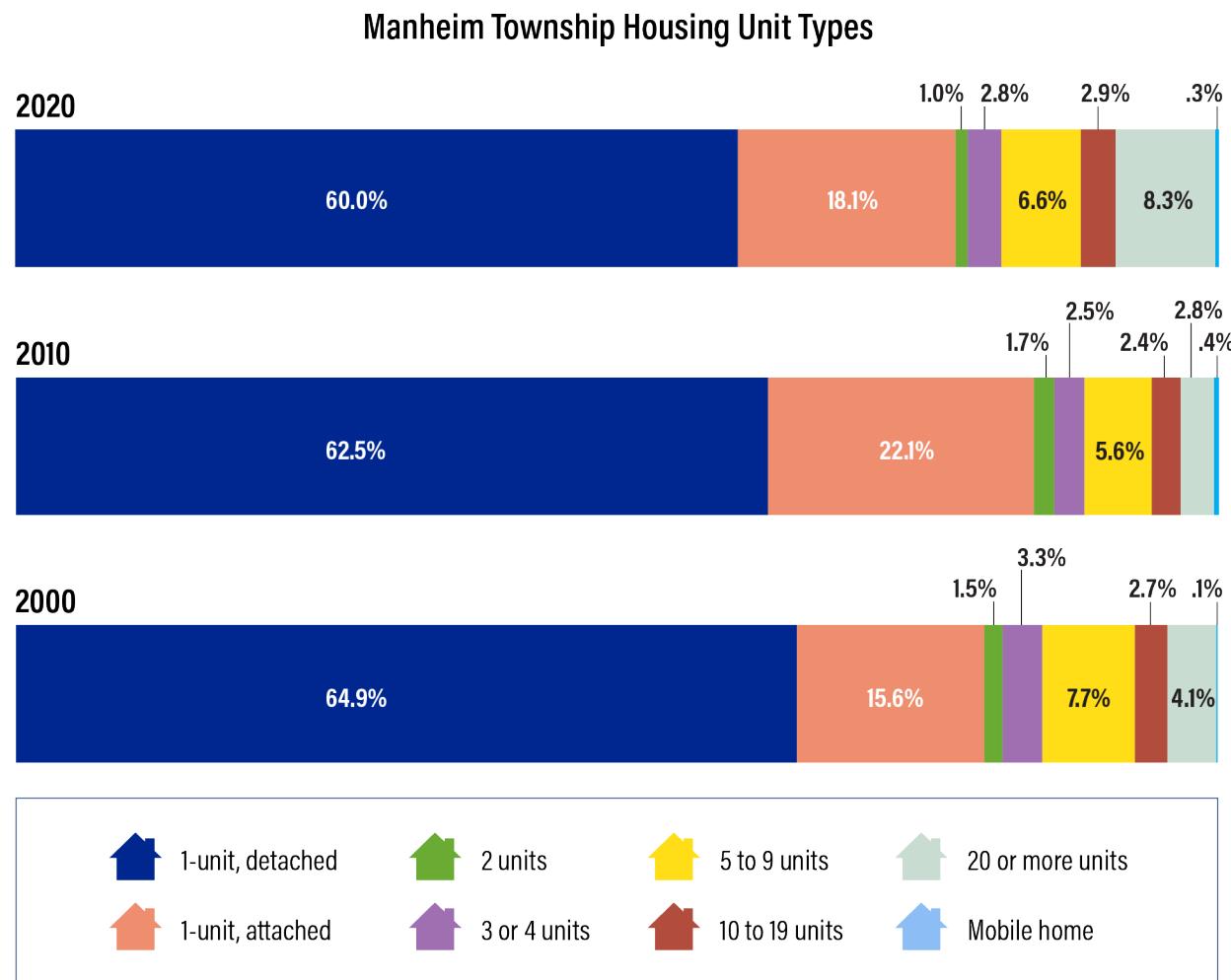


Figure 4 - Change in Median Household Income, 2000-2022 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

## Housing Types



**Figure 5 - Manheim Township Housing Unit Types (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)**

Data from the U.S. Census shows that the mix of different housing types in Manheim Township is changing. While detached single-family homes remain the dominant housing type, their share of total housing units in the Township has declined, shrinking from 64.9% of all housing units in 2000 to 60.0% in 2020. In contrast, the share of denser housing types is increasing. One-unit attached housing increased from 15.6% of the total to 18.1%, and the share of buildings with 20 or more units more than doubled between 2000 and 2020, rising from 4.1% to 8.3%.

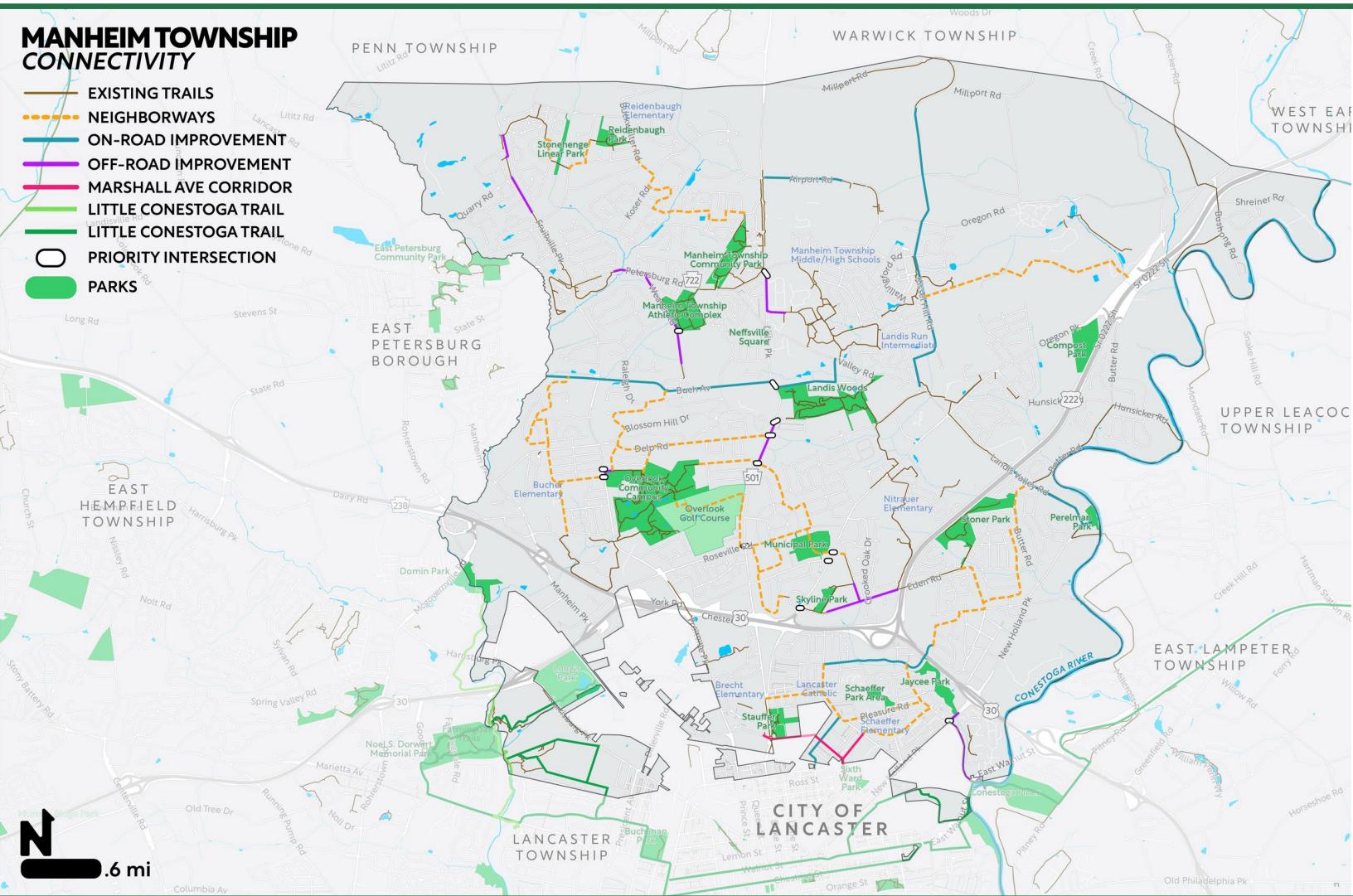


# CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY



## Connectivity and Accessibility

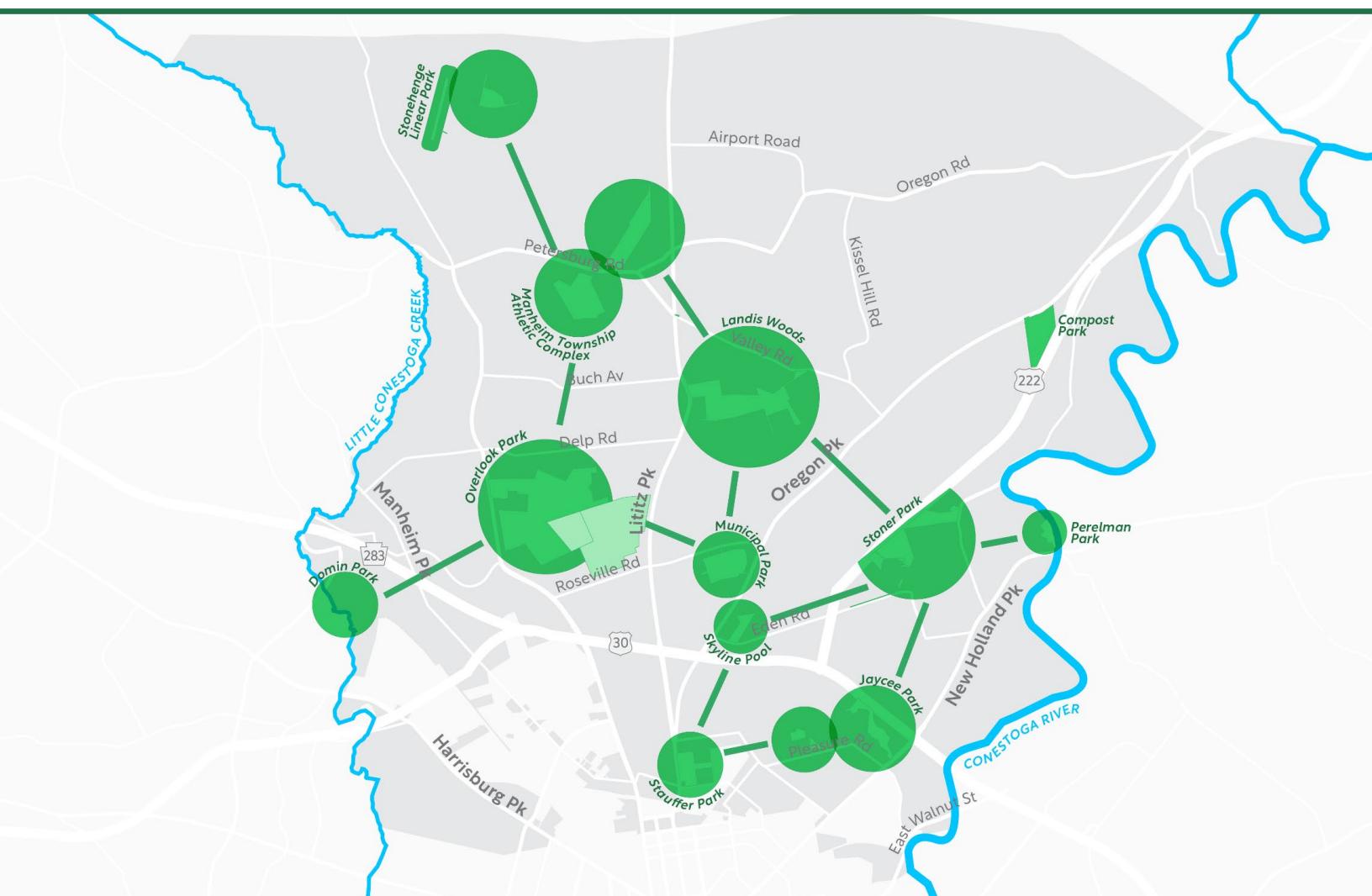
Figure 6 highlights the existing and planned trails, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian improvements identified as part of the mobility analysis conducted for the Manheim Township Comprehensive Plan. A goal of this analysis was to identify opportunities to better connect parks in the Township with active transportation infrastructure, so that residents of all ages could access recreation amenities without having to drive a car.



**Figure 6 – Existing and Planned Mobility Infrastructure, Comprehensive Plan Mobility Analysis**

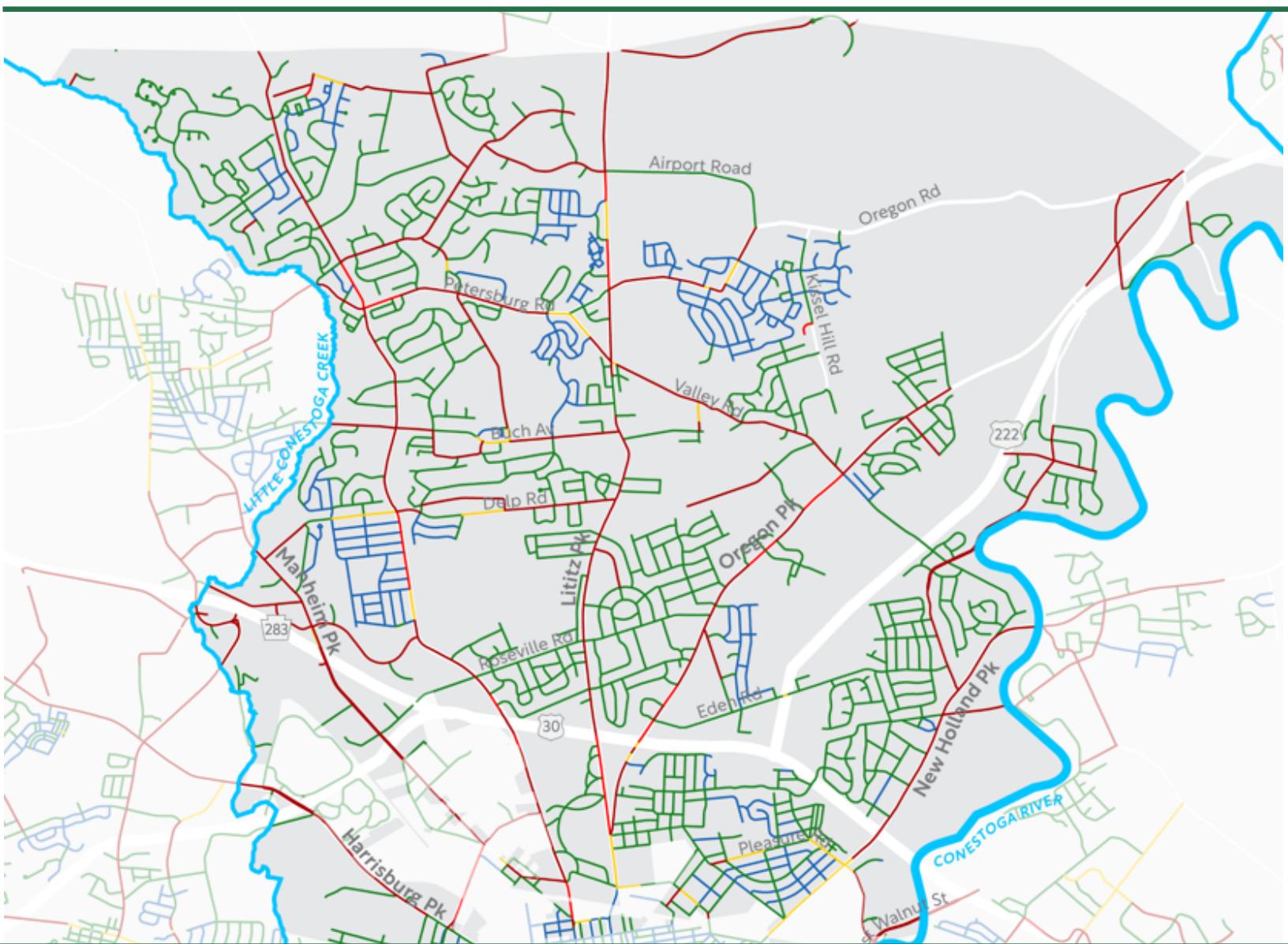
## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

Figure 7 highlights the parks within Manheim Township and their proximity to each other, as identified in Manheim Township's Comprehensive Plan Mobility Analysis. This overview demonstrates the potential for connecting parks in the Township with bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, given their locations relatively close to one another.



**Figure 7 – Manheim Township Parks and Potential Connectivity, Comprehensive Plan Mobility Analysis**

Figure 8 shows a pedestrian level of stress analysis conducted on roadways in the Township as part of the Lancaster County Active Transportation Plan. Roadways highlighted in darker red, orange, or yellow indicate areas of high stress for pedestrians on roads due to high vehicle speeds and high traffic volumes. Unsurprisingly, most of these roadways are the major connecting roads in the Township. Residential areas are shown in green or blue, indicating slow speed, low traffic volume roads that most users would feel comfortable using. Due to the major connectors being higher stress, neighborhoods are separated into islands of pedestrian activity.



**Figure 8 - Pedestrian Level of Stress Analysis, Lancaster County Active Transportation Plan**



# NATIONAL TRENDS



## National Trends

The NRPA monitors nationwide trends impacting parks and recreational programs throughout the United States. Many, if not all, national trends will filter their way to Manheim Township, so a plan that addresses and prepares for rising and declining demands from families, residents, and tourists is important to understand how to prepare for changes in the future. Many of these trends have been identified early by staff and stakeholders and have been incorporated into the priorities of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The following trends have been noted from the NRPA in 2024<sup>2</sup>.

**Artificial Intelligence:** AI will enable us to answer phone calls, respond to the public more quickly, write speeches, summarize meetings, prepare reports, count visitors, monitor building systems, surveil parks, provide security, plan new parks, and massively save energy. This is not a years-in-the-future blue-sky prediction about some far-off trend. It is already happening, and at breakneck speed.

**Privacy:** The average smartphone has about 25 location-aware apps installed on it reporting your location. Some of these apps report your location hundreds or even thousands of times a day! This personally identifiable data is aggregated, matched with other data, like your spending habits, purchasing histories and other very personal data, and is sold on the open market by more than 4,000 data brokers to anyone who wants to buy it. It is a \$200 billion a year market, growing by leaps and bounds.

Park and recreation agencies might want to purchase such location-aware data about their customers to better identify who is using their parks, where people come from, and what they did before and after they visited their parks. However, there is a sharp downside to

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<sup>2</sup> National Recreation and Parks Association, Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2024.

[Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2024 | Feature | Parks & Recreation Magazine | NRPA](https://www.nrpa.org/feature/top-trends-in-parks-and-recreation-for-2024/)

public agencies obtaining and using such personally identifiable information — the public strongly objects to such invasions of personal privacy.

**Walking Trips Down by 36% Nationwide:** A new report published by Streetlight Data, a transportation analytics firm, finds that walking activity nationwide declined an average of 36 percent since 2019. In some Midwest urban areas, walking trips have declined by 50 percent, a shocking turn toward sedentary behavior.

One interesting correlation about the decline of walking, says Emily Adler, director of content for Streetlight, in Bloomberg's urban news site, City Lab, is that "If walking is declining less in warm weather metros, or coming back faster, it suggests that walking is becoming primarily a form of recreation." Adler speculates that more recreational walking is good for public health outcomes, but less so for walking as a mode of transportation to destinations.

The implications for parks and recreation are significant. Recreation programmers, health staff and trail managers should have a ready audience to promote the much-needed health benefits of walking by offering more guided and self-guided walking activities. Other program trends, such as family engagement activities, outdoor youth programs and senior walks, are tailor-made for parks and recreation to lead the way through walking.

**More Pickleball:** Like Godzilla rising from the sea, the recreation behemoth pickleball has still not slowed its seemingly unstoppable march through cities as the fastest-growing recreational sport in the nation.

Along with all the good that pickleball brings, the noise factor is drowning out even residents of communities who are most willing to accept the good about the sport: healthful active recreation, great for older adults, all ages can play — what's not to like? Unfortunately, conflicts over noise are growing. Neighbors are suing neighbors. Public hearings in some localities have become so heated that law enforcement has had to intervene.

As a result, park and recreation agencies have become much more careful when deciding where to site pickleball courts. Some agencies are now conducting sophisticated sound studies when planning new courts and are looking at sound abatement measures that will reduce the incessant "thwack-thwack" noise that travels improbable distances from pickleball courts. Centennial, Colorado, a suburb of Denver, has just lifted a six-month

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

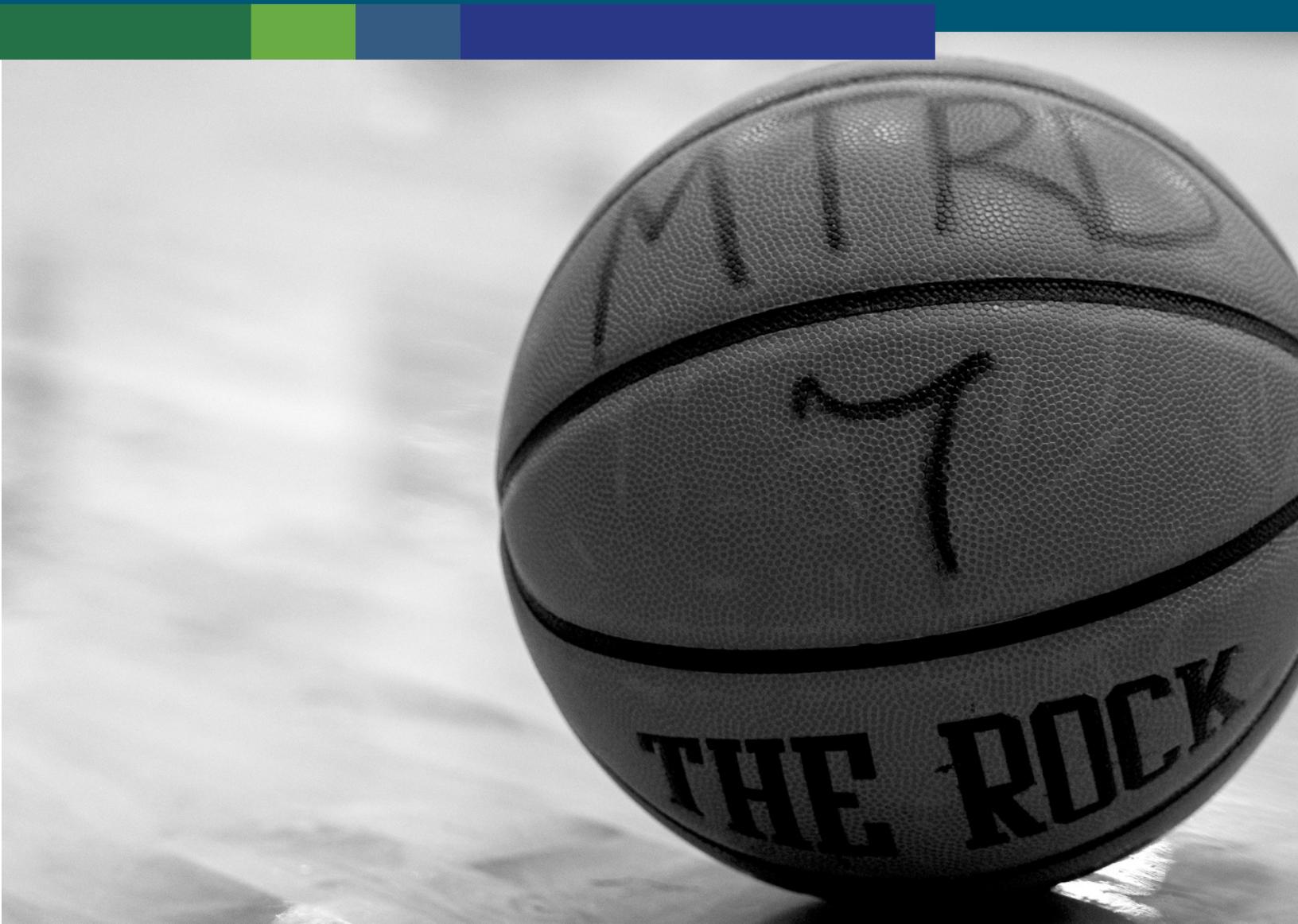
moratorium on new courts and passed first-of-their-kind regulations that prohibit any courts within 250 feet of a nearby home's property line. Also, any new courts will require a city permit within 600 feet of a home and noise must be under a 47-decibel limit.

**Recreation Programs that are Hot in 2024:** Family engagement nights, seasonal festivals, fitness programming, holiday karaoke, "eldertainment," games and activities for "kidults," and partnerships with libraries are all hot program trends for 2024, according to observations from park and recreation staff around the country. The growth of new seasonal programming and festivals leading to the hiring of more part-time program staff is a strong trendline as well, said a group of park and recreation staff at a recent Virginia Park and Recreation Society trends discussion.

**Communities Going to the Dogs:** Dog ownership surged during the pandemic and now comprises 45 percent of all families. Eighty-five percent of dog-owning families consider their dogs to be members of the family, according to a Forbes Advisor survey, and dog owners make "professional, financial and lifestyle choices" for their dogs. Dog parks remain the fastest-growing type of park and off-leash dog parks are the fastest-growing type of dog park. Even so, says Beth Miller, CEO of Wagtown, a national group that advocates for responsible dog-friendly people and communities, their survey of park and recreation leaders showed that "the top three barriers to great dog park experiences are available land, financial support and subject matter expertise.



# PARKS AND RECREATION TODAY



## Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programs

### Park Facilities

Manheim Township is responsible for providing and maintaining a portfolio of 15 clean and safe parks and recreation facilities totaling approximately 460 acres. These facilities are located fairly evenly, but there are fewer in the northeast area of the Township. In addition, the Township cooperatively works with the Manheim Township School District to share its facilities.

Manheim Township has utilized Park Facility Master Planning to provide an initial evaluation and conditions assessment of each park facility. The assessment was conducted via the Advisory Committee and analysis from the staff and project team. Many of the facilities have been identified to undergo individual master planning in the future as funding permits. Based on this discussion, each facility was ultimately assigned an overall condition rating score of fair/good/excellent.

**MTAC is the most frequently used facility for MT Youth Sport Leagues. The demand for artificial turf within this complex exceeds what we can offer.**



**Appendix B provides a summary profile of the 15 park facilities, including a listing of their current amenities and offerings.**

Table 1 includes a summary of Manheim Township's park typologies. Table 1 below provides a description of each park type classification. Next, the Steering Committee used the conditions assessment scores and results from the public survey to preliminarily prioritize each park facility with respect to future capital investments (see Policy Goals and Action Items).

***Table 1 - Park Type Classification***

Park Type Classification	Description	Size	Service
<b>Countywide</b>	Contains multiple uses within the park boundary; attracts visitors from all over Lancaster County	10 to 50 acres	0-25 miles from users
<b>Neighborhood</b>	May include multiple uses within the park boundary; attracts nearby residents	0.5 to 10 acres	0-5 miles from users
<b>Pocket Park</b>	Small open space; mainly single use attracting nearby residents	Under 0.5 acres	.25-0.5 miles or less from users
<b>Natural Resource Area</b>	Includes open spaces that are primarily passive-use or preservation areas.	No minimum or maximum	Countywide

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

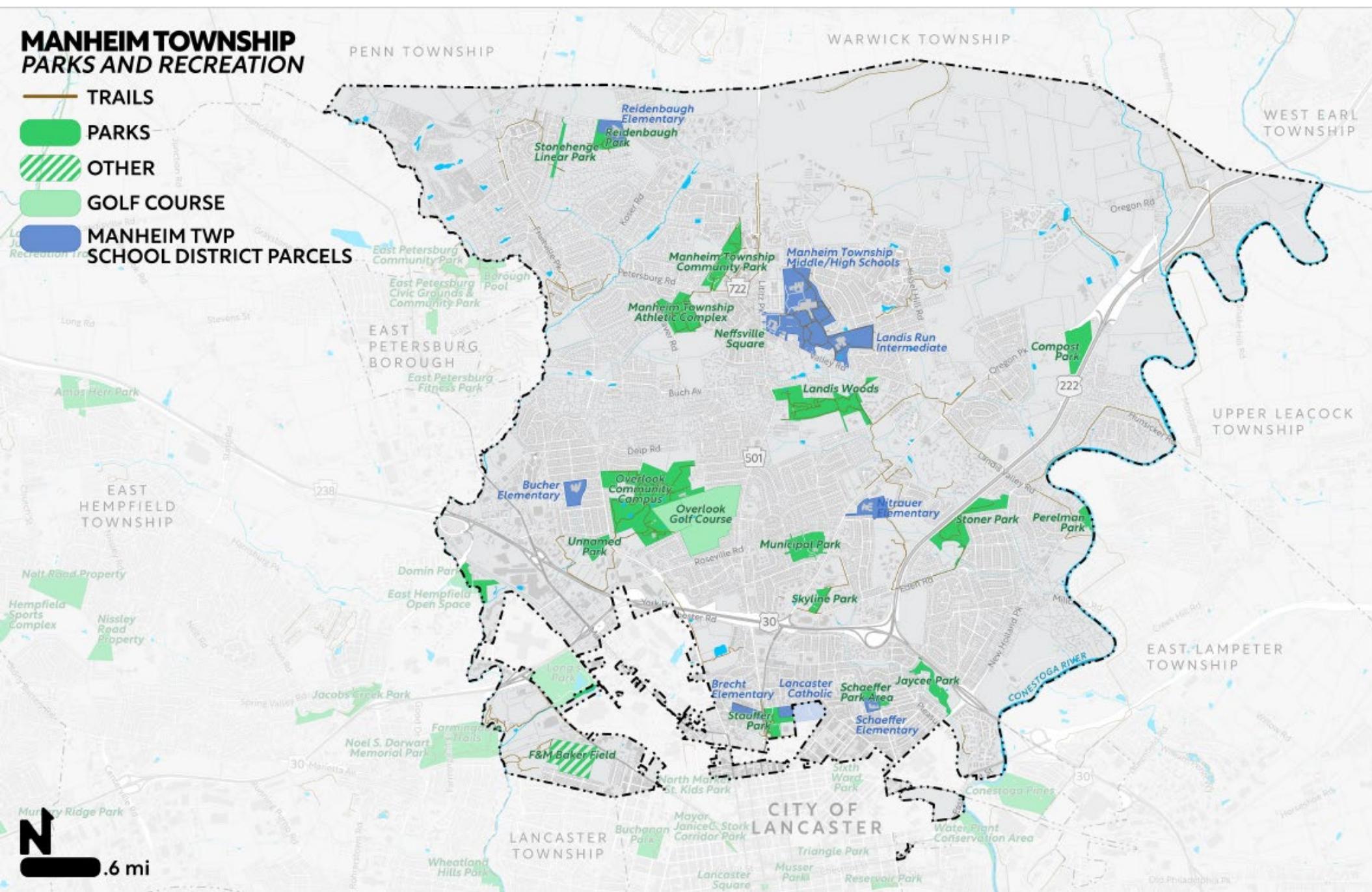


Figure 9 - Manheim Township Facilities

Park	Typology Classification	Condition	Investment Priority	Acres	Baseball/Softball Fields	Basketball Courts	Bike Share	Canoe/Kayak Location	Dog Park	Exercise Stations	Football Fields	Garden Plots	Naturalized/Wooded	Off-Street Parking	Pavilion Rentals	Pickleball Courts	Picnic Tables/Structure	Playground(s)	Restroom Facilities	Skate Park	Soccer Fields	Stream Access	Swimming Pools	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Walking/Biking Trails
Community Park	Countywide/Community	Good	1	33.43	◆◆							◆	◆◆				◆◆◆							◆◆		
Compost Park	Neighborhood	Good		30.00								◆		◆◆												
Jaycee Park	Neighborhood	Excellent	8	15.99		◆◆						◆				◆◆	◆◆					◆			◆	
Landis Woods	Natural Resource/Countywide	Good	3	67.38								◆	◆◆				◆								◆	
MTAC - Weaver	Countywide	Good		38.46	◆						◆			◆◆							◆◆	◆◆			◆	
Municipal Park	Countywide/Neighborhood	Fair	6	29.32	◆◆	◆					◆			◆◆				◆◆◆			◆◆	◆◆				
Neffsville Square Park	Pocket	Good	10	0.18																						
Overlook Community Campus	Countywide	Excellent	2	151.75	◆			◆				◆		◆◆	◆◆	◆◆	◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	◆◆◆◆	
Perelman Park	Natural Resource	Good	Active Project	5.70			◆					◆		◆◆			◆					◆				
Reidenbaugh Park	Neighborhood	Good		9	11.57	◆◆	◆							◆◆			◆◆			◆◆	◆◆		◆	◆	◆	

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

Park	Typology Classification	Condition	Investment Priority	Acres	Baseball/Softball Fields	Basketball Courts	Bike Share	Canoe/Kayak Location	Dog Park	Exercise Stations	Football Fields	Garden Plots	Naturalized/Wooded	Off-Street Parking	Pavilion Rentals	Pickleball Courts	Picnic Tables/Structure	Playground(s)	Restroom Facilities	Skate Park	Soccer Fields	Stream Access	Swimming Pools	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Walking/Biking Trails
Schaeffer Natural Area (potential future park)	Natural Resource	Good		3.60								◆														
Skyline Park	Countywide	Good	4	8.20		◆								◆		◆		◆			◆	◆	◆			
Stauffer Park	Neighborhood	Good	7	16.87	◆	◆	◆							◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		
Stonehenge Linear Park	Natural Resource	Good		6.10								◆									◆				◆	
Stoner Park	Countywide/Neighborhood	Excellent	5	37.67	◆					◆		◆	◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	
Unnamed Granite Run Park	Neighborhood	N/A		7.00								◆									◆				◆	

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

Well-maintained parks are crucial for community well-being, sustainability, and livability. However, many municipalities lack the resources to manage them effectively. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Pennsylvania's Recreation Departments created Parks and Facilities Departments that report directly to the Recreation Department's management. With increased park usage and demand for quality facilities, dedicated staff are needed for safety, cleanliness, planning, and operations. Special events and park programming have risen significantly nationwide in the past four years, leading many departments implementing direct oversight by the Recreation Director to develop necessary plans for these events and programs.

A maintenance plan should aid staff in managing park upkeep and provide documentation for liability coverage. Preventive maintenance prevents safety issues. Certified Playground Safety Inspectors should document play area maintenance. Courts, fields, and trails must be safe. Natural areas should support vegetation and wildlife. Picnic facilities need to be clean and functional. Facility security and lighting are critical for community safety. Inspections, cleaning, audits, signage, and security are essential components of the plan.

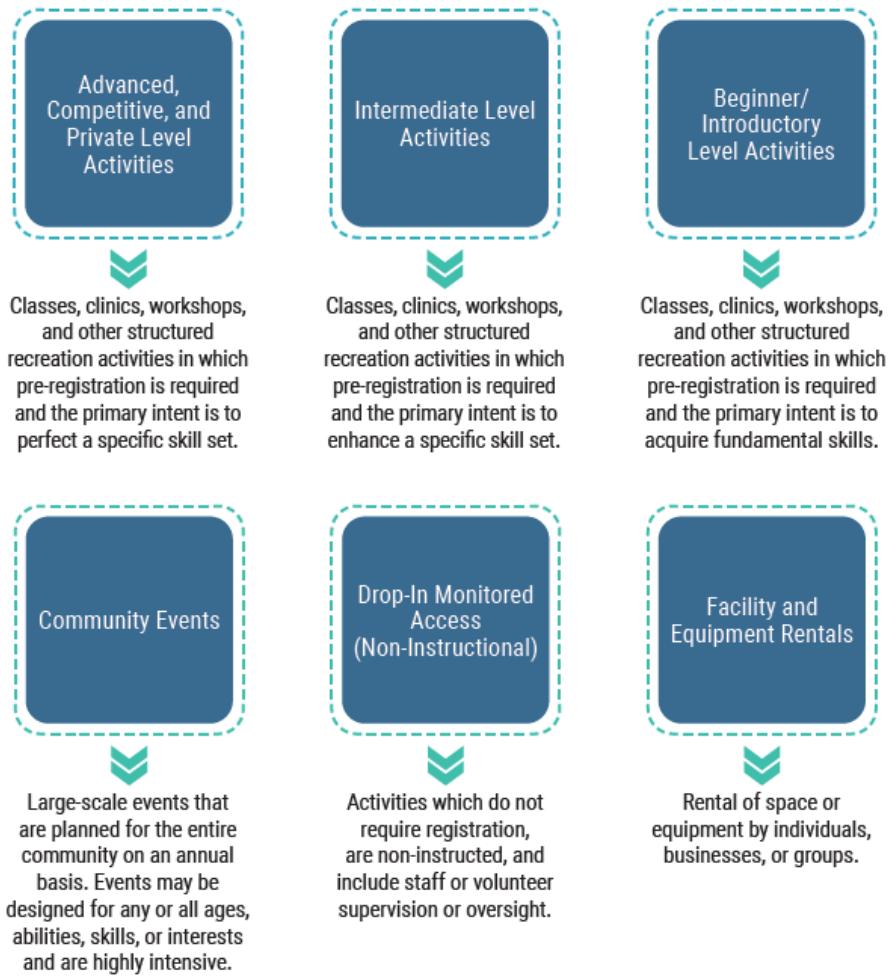
## Recreation Programs and Events

The Manheim Township Recreation Department offers over 40 programs and events throughout the year. The most comprehensive programs include Landis Woods Nature Preschool, Overlook Swim Team, and the Youth Basketball League. Programs range from Youth Summer Camps, Drop-in Adult Sport Programs, and All-Level Swim Lessons. Along with these programs, they also offer a variety of large-scale special events and themed sessions during their public skate sessions.



In 2023, the Recreation Department reached 12,000 people for their program participation. These programs and participation numbers do not include the services the department provides, including operating two public pools, public roller skating, or managing private rentals for 9 pavilions, 26 athletic fields, and the indoor skating rink.

Planning, implementing, conducting, and evaluating a diverse range of recreation programs and special community-wide events, as well as managing multiple facilities, occur year-round. Residents of all ages have numerous offerings in the following core program areas:



**Figure 10 – Types of Parks and Recreation Programs and Events**

Manheim Township strives to ensure that programs are offered to meet the needs of every resident at every age level and ability. Figure 10 above highlights several types of park and recreation programming. As trends change and populations continue to diversify, Manheim Township must be nimble and responsive to those changing needs.

## Program Analysis Review

All recreation programs undergo a lifecycle evolution. Understanding where a program is in its lifecycle can inform strategic decisions about the overall recreation program portfolio. Determining what stage in its lifecycle a program is in relies not only on quantitative data, but on Township staff knowledge. As documented in Table 2, the Township has a strong distribution of programs across the various age categories. However, a systematic analysis of current and potential new recreation programs is needed to truly understand where each exists within the program's lifecycle.

***An ongoing and annual review and evaluation of the Township's recreation programs will be needed to identify the community's needs and to potentially eliminate certain programs.***

***Programming analysis should be informed through a combination of the following:***

- Staff, customer, volunteer and focus group surveys
- Data collected over a defined period regarding the number of participants
- The diversity of programs offered during a certain time period, such as by season
- The cancellation rate and retention of customers
- Any identified unmet needs for the program within the community

A program lifecycle analysis involves reviewing each program offered by the Township to determine the stage of growth or decline for each. This provides a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall mix of programs managed by the Township to ensure that an appropriate number of programs are offered, and if any need to be discontinued. This analysis does not need to be based on strict quantitative data but, rather, can be based on staff members' knowledge of their program areas.

Township staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with the desired performance. Furthermore, the Township should include annual performance measures for each core

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

program area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of first- and second-year programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.

The various stages of program lifecycles are as follows:



**Figure 11 - Program Lifecycle Analysis**

Consideration of partnerships with local community businesses, non-profits, and the school district is also important, as it can lead to innovative programming and marketing opportunities. A critical examination of *programming for all ages* is an important consideration because great park and recreation systems attract new families into the community. Staff should monitor the demand for preschool programming and adjust the focus in this area as necessary/appropriate. Staff should also monitor senior programs and trends with these programs, as the demographic across Pennsylvania is the increasing number of active seniors and retirees.



## Youth Sports

There are eight privately operated youth sports organizations serving Manheim Township which utilize Township facilities. These youth sports leagues combined serve just under 4,000 residents each year. The Manheim Township Recreation Department provides field and facility space for these groups. Fees collected go towards the operating and maintenance of the facilities and fields.

**Table 2 – Manheim Township Youth Sports Programs**

Program	Facility/Park Usage
Manheim Township Baseball Softball Association (MTBSA)	MTAC, Overlook Community Campus, Municipal, Community, Stauffer, Stoner, Reidenbaugh
Manheim Township Boys Youth Lacrosse Association (MTBYLA)	Manheim Township Athletic Complex (MTAC)
Manheim Township Girls Youth Lacrosse Association (MTGYLA)	Manheim Township Athletic Complex (MTAC)
Manheim Township Soccer Club (MTSC)	MTAC, Overlook Community Campus, Municipal, Community, Stoner, Reidenbaugh, Skyline
Manheim Township Youth Field Hockey	Manheim Township Athletic Complex (MTAC)
Manheim Township Youth Football Association (MTYFA)	Manheim Township Athletic Complex (MTAC)
Overlook Dolphins Swim Team	Overlook Pool
Skyline Sharks Swim Team	Skyline Pool

The table below indicates programming analysis by measuring the importance and community demand of the program(s) to meet the vision, mission, and guiding principles of recreation within the community. The top seven programs listed, not in priority order, but by importance and demand within the community are represented by a set of diverse programs from ages, experiences, and abilities, from Open Gym Pickleball, Adult Masters Swimming, Landis Woods Nature Preschool, Day Camps and Skiing. These programs represent over 7,000 program participants. The programs at the other end of the spectrum

are programs that have low demand, and/or programs that are offered elsewhere in the Township, and therefore, the need is being met by another provider.

It is important to document programs over a three-year period, as they may change due to environmental influences. Sometimes, it is best to take the programs offline, document them, and implement them in a few years. Sometimes, it is just changing the name of the program or the dates and times at which they are being offered.

The ranking of these programs is based on the Mission Statement developed by the Advisory Group.

- **Green** indicates we are connecting people with parks and promoting physical and mental well-being while either serving an underserved population or programs with extensive waitlists.
- **Orange** indicates programs that meet the participants' mission, vision, and values. These program areas are usually implemented at a high level of participation and are not in danger of being postponed or cancelled.
- **Yellow** indicates the programs are recreational; however, they may not be specific to Manheim Township Recreation, and those programs can be offered by other entities. These programs are running at a lower level of participation.
- **White** indicates low levels of participation and may be better suited to be offered by another entity.

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

**Table 3 - Recreation Programs**

Program Title	(5 & Under)	(6-12)	(13-18)	(19 - 34)	(55 - 64)	(65+)	Location	2023 Participation
Open Gym Pickleball				◆	◆	◆	Overlook Activities Center	3,515
Manheim Township Masters Swim Team				◆	◆	◆	Skyline Pool	39
Landis Woods Nature Preschool (participation numbers in summer semester)	◆						Landis Woods	451
Nature Day Camp		◆	◆				Boettcher House	303
Overlook Day Camp		◆	◆				Overlook Activities Center	600
High School Ski Club			◆	◆			N/A	82
Middle School Ski Club	◆	◆					N/A	51
High School Rec Basketball League			◆				Spooky Nook	100
Youth Recreational Basketball		◆	◆				MTSD Elementary Schools	545
Intro to Pickleball				◆	◆	◆	Overlook Activities Center	11
Overlook Swim Team		◆	◆				Overlook Pool	143
Aquatics Lessons (All Levels)	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	Multiple	187
Lifeguarding Classes		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	MTSD Pool	16
Little Kickers Soccer	◆	◆					Stauffer Park	40
Teen Adventure Camp			◆				Community Park	192
Playground Program		◆	◆				Multiple	163
Youth Dance	◆	◆	◆				Carriage House	629

## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

Program Title	(5 & Under)	(6-12)	(13-18)	(19 - 34)	(55 - 64)	(65+)	Location	2023 Participation
Learn to Skate	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		Overlook Activities Center	Not offered in 2023
Elementary Fun Run	◆	◆	◆				MTSD High School	60
High School Ski Trip			◆				N/A	28
Adult Open Gym Basketball				◆	◆	◆	MTSD Middle School	71
Youth Tennis Lessons	◆	◆	◆				Stauffer Park	87
Nature Yoga	◆	◆	◆				Boettcher House	42
Water Polo		◆	◆	◆			Multiple	26
OAC Community Walking				◆	◆	◆	Overlook Activities Center	Varies
Daddy Daughter Dance		◆	◆				Stoner Grill	42
Adult Inline Hockey				◆	◆	◆	Overlook Activities Center	132
Lancaster Youth Field Hockey League		◆	◆				MTAC	146
Geocaching	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	Landis Woods	Not offered in 2023
Mother & Son Dance		◆	◆				Stoner Grill	42
Scouting Badge Program		◆					Boettcher House	14
Adult Yoga				◆	◆	◆	Multiple	25
Tai Chi				◆	◆	◆	MTSD Elementary Schools	38
Creative Kids	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	Library	8
Art Smarties	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	Library	6
Intro to Girls Lacrosse		◆	◆				MTAC	11
First Goal Lacrosse		◆	◆				MTAC	52

## Manheim Township Programming Processes

Manheim Township Recreation Aquatic programming, Special Events and the Nature Preschool are benchmarks for programming across Pennsylvania. A variety of aquatic programs for all levels, from swim lessons to a summer swim team, are offered by utilizing the Township's two public pools, and the Manheim Township School District Pool. The department is renowned for its year-round special events. The seven special events draw well over 5,000 community members yearly. The roller-skating program, dating back to the 1950s, is one of the nation's longest skating programs. Landis Woods Nature Preschool fills up each semester with an extensive waitlist. Class offerings include 3-year-old and 4-year-old morning classes and a mixed-age afternoon class.

The Department should consider implementing the following so that it can analyze, develop and continue to implement diverse programming within the community to provide recreational opportunities for all citizens:

<b>Recreation Program Surveys</b>	<b>Developing Program/Event Focus Groups</b>
<b>Comprehensive Recreational Surveys</b>	<b>Revenue, Expenses and Cost Analysis of Each Program</b>
<b>Assessment of Community Traditions and Preferences</b>	<b>Developing a Marketing Plan</b>
<b>Annual Staff Program Retreats</b>	<b>Offering Diverse Programs</b>
<b>Continuing Routine Advisory Group Meetings</b>	

Participants should complete **recreational program surveys** once the program is completed. This will enable management to analyze crucial data for program development.

**Comprehensive recreational surveys**, which would include parks and program questions to guide staff discussions on next steps, should be completed approximately every three years to understand the citizens' desire for trends, programming in areas that might not have been considered, or an increase in programming that is already offered.

The most effective way to plan recreation programs is to complete an **assessment of community traditions and preferences** by studying the community and gathering facts and inventory to understand its desires and needs. Consider the community's traditions, preferences, characteristics, existing recreation opportunities, and citizen interests.

Start by gathering these three types of information:

- Social, economic, political, and environmental characteristics of your community
- Inventory of existing and potential recreation and parks resources
- Assessment of citizen needs, interests, and preferences

Manheim Township should consider an **annual staff retreat** to research, analyze, and plan for the next eighteen months, working together to develop a robust comprehensive program. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) should guide these discussions with the department's Mission and Vision statements ensuring alignment with community core values.

Manheim Township does an excellent job of seeking the public's input by **utilizing routine advisory committee meetings** that reflect different aspects of recreation and facilities. These committees are crucial for department management, providing insights from knowledgeable citizens about resource assessments.

**Focus groups** gather detailed feedback on recreation programs by selecting individuals with unique perspectives or representing the community. They work best with up to 12 members and a trained facilitator, focusing on specific issues. Consulting knowledgeable community members provides insight into recreation needs, helps dispel rumors, and spreads accurate information.

A **revenue, expenses and cost analysis of each program** should be developed seasonally so the data can be compared to previous years and enable the program managers to budget for the following year well in advance. The cost analysis process should be able to be incorporated into the registration system for a quick analysis of a program at any time. The yearly staff retreat is a time to consider the fees charged per program based on the cost analysis, as well as a market analysis of fees locally and what the market is predicting in the future.

**A comprehensive marketing plan** incorporates many different types of communication to establish a positive outcome of programs and events offered by the organization. It is imperative that the community is aware of programs by cooperation with partners, other non-profit organizations, free advertising, and social media. Analyzation of what advertising tools increase participation should be a goal within the department.

The development of **diverse programs** in a comprehensive recreational program should range from pre-school age to senior citizens within the community. These programs should align with the community's values and cater to the participants' abilities, interests, and hobbies. It is essential to consider the age groups and developmental stages of those for whom the programs are being created.

The most requested adult and youth programming from the 2024 Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Survey are below:

## **ADULTS**

GROUP FITNESS CLASSES

ADULT SPORT LEAGUES

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

## **YOUTH**

NATURE BASED  
PROGRAMMING

COMMUNITY EVENTS

ARTS AND CRAFTS

## **Bolstering Park and Recreation Planning**

The Parks and Recreation staff are highly engaged and eager to provide the services to residents that enhance their quality of life. They are busy performing numerous daily tasks to keep the operation of parks and the programs offered functioning smoothly. In order to have time to reflect on the success of their department and plan for future initiatives, it is recommended that dedicated staff retreats be held on an annual basis.

Staff retreats are helpful in analyzing the direction of the department and in establishing a robust diversity of programming. Brainstorming with staff, volunteers, and even instructors can lead to implementing exciting, innovative programs for community residents. Staff meetings and staff retreats held on a regular basis will develop a sense of cohesiveness and cooperation among the staff, instructors, and volunteers. Agenda items for staff retreats should focus on an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to the organization and its programs. It should also include a lifecycle analysis of recreation programs and help prepare a capital improvement plan. For example, a SWOT analysis was conducted as part of the Parks and Recreation Department's strategic planning process conducted in 2024 as a precedent to the Park Facility Master Planning. Among other findings, the SWOT analysis identified the need and opportunity for the Township to improve its programming for individuals with special needs and to do so by partnering with agencies and organizations, including the Manheim Township School District, that specialize in providing such services.

Indoor recreation space was also identified as a weakness in the SWOT analysis. Not having a true indoor recreation facility hinders the department's ability to expand on programming such as aquatics and basketball. The programs the department offers, like summer camps and youth dance, are limited by the current facility size and layout. The department is reliant on outside resources, such as the school district, for facility space. With the growing number of residents and the number of wait-listed participants, the Township's programs could expand if there were indoor recreation spaces.

The program survey, conducted in July 2024, suggested several programming opportunities. For adults, yoga, pickleball, and aquatics were the top-rated programs that should be offered. For youth, basketball, disc golf, and volleyball were the top-rated programs that should be offered. In the last five years, the department has increased its special event offerings to include Groundhog Day and Outdoor Movie Night.

Those events have been some of the most well-attended programs it offers. Given the size of the outdoor park system and increased staffing, there can be opportunities for more events.

## **Regional Recreation Opportunities and Advisory Committees**

The Township is well-positioned to think regionally for providing its residents with parks and recreation amenities through its working relationship with the Manheim Township School District. This relationship helps to offer programs using district facilities and other areas throughout the community.

In 2023, the Township and the school district formed the Manheim Township Recreation Advisory Committee (MTRAC). This committee is comprised of Township and District staff as well as citizens of Manheim Township. This committee has been tasked with creating a better working relationship, which includes shared facility usage and joint efforts in offering programming to Manheim Township residents. The Township and the school district's cooperative relationship to increase indoor and outdoor facilities usage will provide their residents with quality-of-life amenities that are significant to the health and wellness of the citizens. This partnership will assist in offering programs using district facilities and other areas throughout the community.

In Central Pennsylvania, local governments and agencies are collaborating to maximize assets and enhance opportunities for residents to access parks and recreation facilities, thereby promoting the health and well-being of the community. Regional collaboration can take many forms from cooperative agreements to working with local business to increase the diversity of program offerings. There are diverse types of Recreational Agreements across the Commonwealth.

Advisory boards demonstrate excellence in government efficiency as they assist with policy decisions, advise elected officials, prioritize community input and strength community empowerment and participation. The benefit of establishing these advisory boards should be highlighted when submitting grant applications.

### **Manheim Township Recreation Advisory Committee**

To coordinate the shared use of facilities and to collaborate on ways the facilities could be utilized for activities, events, and programs that serve the Manheim Township community.

The MTRAC proactively includes members from the Manheim Township School District. The committee's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Develop policies and procedures for joint use and sharing of Facilities
2. Develop and maintain a master schedule for the joint use and sharing of Facilities
3. Evaluate and make recommendations regarding maintenance, capital improvements or additional facilities that the Committee determines should be considered by the Township and/or District;
4. Develop proposals for community events, programs, and activities that can be jointly undertaken by the Township and the District;
5. Respond to requests or questions from the Township Manager and/or District Superintendent related to the joint use and sharing of Facilities or regarding proposed events, programs, or activities.

### Sustainability Advisory Committee

The Sustainability Advisory Committee is a citizens' advisory committee to review and recommend to the Board of Commissioners short-term and long-term policies and actions that would help create the most effective ways for monitoring and preserving our natural resources to sustain and protect our environment for future generations. This committee should review actions and policies Manheim Township can take related to specific uses and properties within Manheim Township, related to the Township's municipal operations and related to Manheim Township as a whole. The committee should include in its review and recommendations key sustainability issues, including, but not limited addressing water, air, storm water, electric/gas, natural gas, solar/wind energy savings, and the carbon footprint.

### Connections Advisory Committee

The Connections Advisory Committee is a citizens' advisory committee for the purpose of evaluating, discussing, and preparing recommendations and proposals to the Board of Commissioners for providing safe, convenient access to schools, parks, neighborhoods, and other destinations via a network of connected pathways within the Township.

### Pickleball Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Pickleball Advisory Committee is to review and recommend to the Manheim Township Board of Commissioners rules, regulations, and best practices for the

Manheim Township pickleball courts. The committee will continue to analyze and review the ongoing needs for additional pickleball facilities as well as additional programming opportunities such as leagues, classes and tournaments.

## **Manheim Township Parks and Recreation – Financial Overview**

The administration, operations, and maintenance of Manheim Township's parks and recreation programs and facilities is the responsibility of two separate Township departments: Recreation Department and Public Works Department.

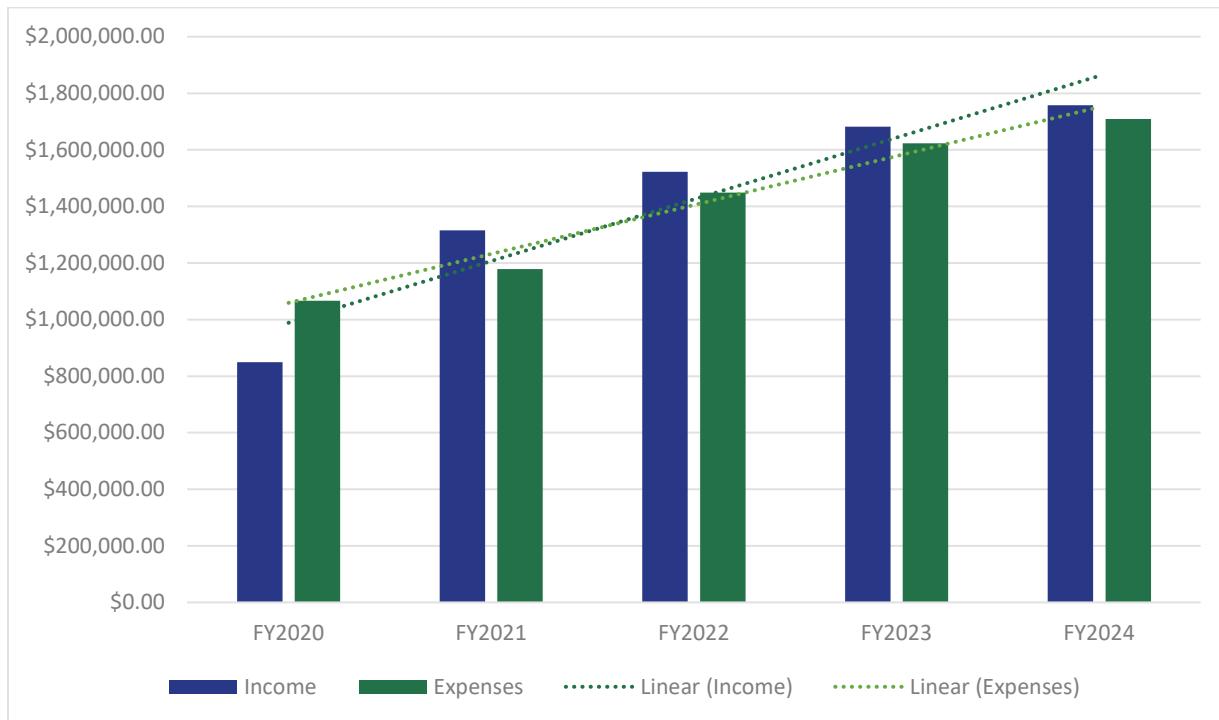
- **Recreation Department** – The Recreation Department is responsible for providing safe and attractive facilities for sport, play, and enjoyment by its residents and numerous organizations, and the delivery of a variety of recreational programs to meet the diverse needs of the township. The Recreation Department employs nine full-time and approximately 130 part-time/seasonal staff to support the operations of the Township's two municipal pool facilities, various summer camp programs, youth sports leagues, and the Landis Woods Nature Preschool program.
- **Public Works Department** – In addition to its responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day construction and maintenance of the Township's roadway and street infrastructure, fixed assets, equipment, public lands and grounds, government buildings and structures, and similar programs and services, the Public Works Department is also responsible for the construction and maintenance of Township's public park facilities, which include ~1.1 million square feet of surface parking area and over 1,400 parking spaces. The Department's Parks Maintenance workforce in 2025 is comprised of 14 full-time staff.

The budgets for the Recreation and Public Works departments are comprised of a series of operating accounts that are developed and managed individually by each department.

Figure 12 shows the Recreation Department's revenues and expenses for fiscal years 2020 – 2024, and Figure 13 illustrates their respective annual percentage growth during this same period. Except for FY2020 (COVID-19 Pandemic year), the Recreation Department's revenues exceeded expenses, and both continued to grow (albeit at an increasingly diminished rate) through FY2024. This diminishing growth rate is indicative of the

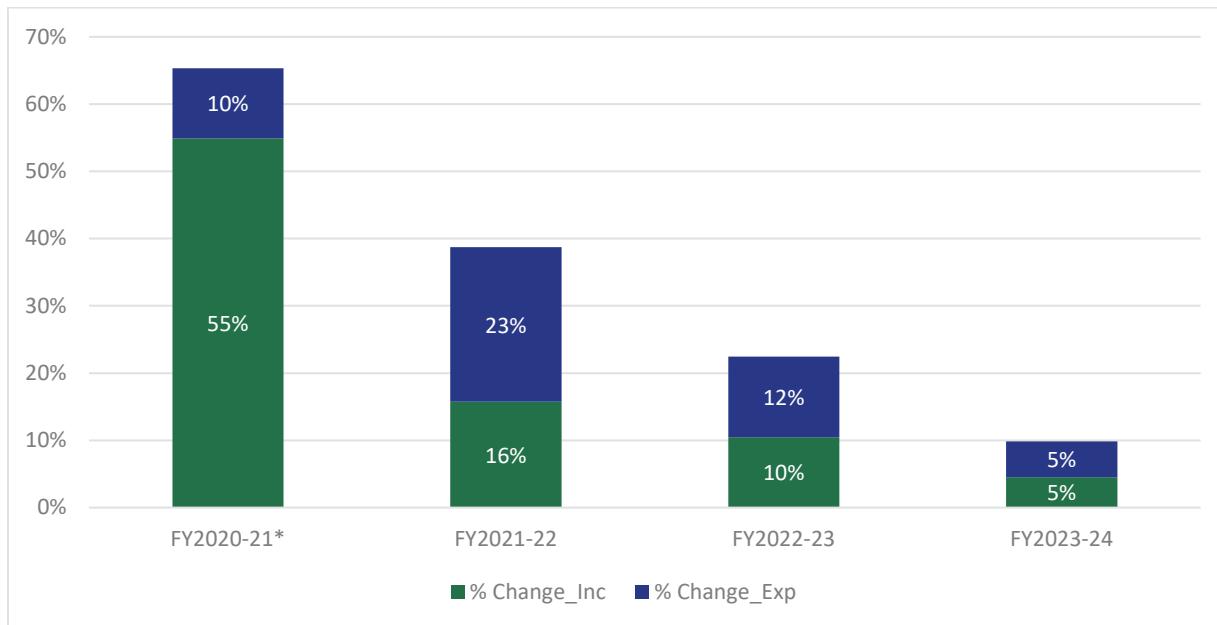
## Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2035

Recreation Department's participation levels (and associated revenues and expenses) normalizing to pre-pandemic levels.



**Figure 12 - Manheim Township Recreation Income and Expenses FY2020-2024**

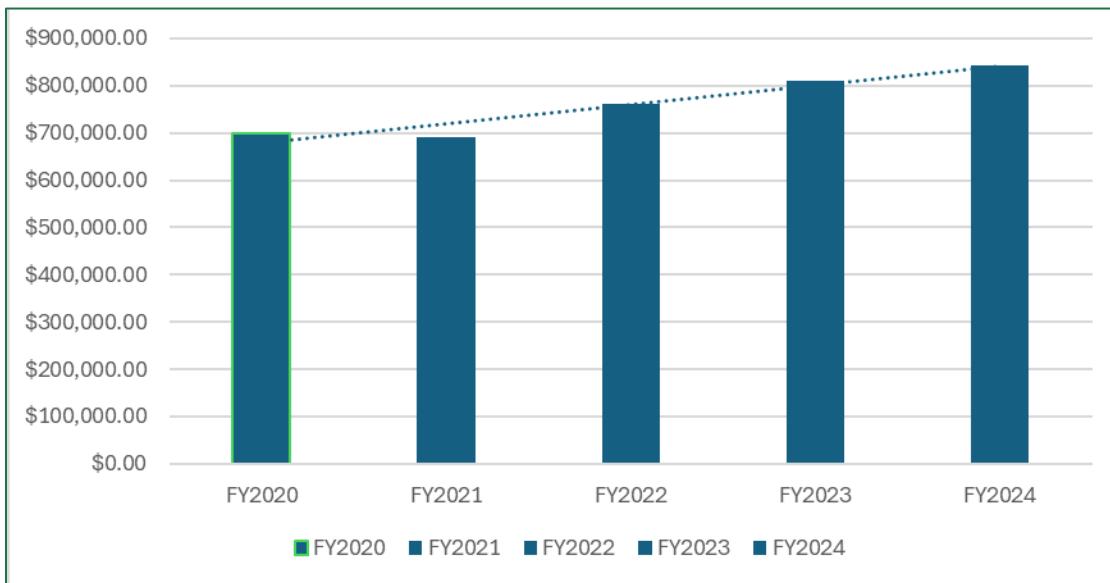




**Figure 13 - Recreation Income and Expenses Growth FY2020-2024**

Except for FY2020 (COVID-19 Pandemic year), the Recreation Department's revenues exceeded expenses, and both continued to grow (albeit at an increasingly diminished rate) through FY2024. This diminishing growth rate is indicative of the Recreation Department's participation levels (and associated revenues and expenses) normalizing to pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 14 illustrates the Public Works Department's FY2020 – 2024 annual operations budget totals. Over this five-year period, the annual budget increased by approximately 4%, which was nearly equal to the 3.97% average inflation rate based on the Consumer Price Index for this same period.



*Figure 14 - Parks Maintenance Operating Budget FY2020-2024*

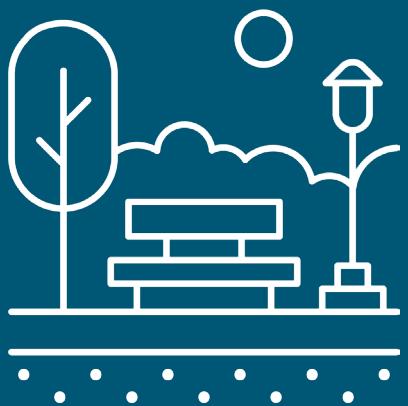
## Park Facility Capital Investments

Capital investments for the parks are funded by either the Township's Capital Reserve Fund (Fund 30) or the Parks Capital Reserve Fund (Fund 32). The Capital Reserve Fund (30) is primarily funded by appropriation from the General Fund (01). The Parks Capital Reserve Fund (32) is comprised of revenue collected as part of a recreation fee structure charged to developers who provide money in lieu of dedicated park lands pursuant to the Township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance requirements.

Capital projects are proposed annually by both the Recreation and Public Works department directors along with input from the Township Manager and the Assistant Township Manager. The proposed capital project list is reviewed with the Board of Commissioners through a series of annual budget workshops. The Board of Commissioners decides what projects will be funded annually and decides which capital fund will be used for the chosen projects.



# PARKS & RECREATION TOMORROW

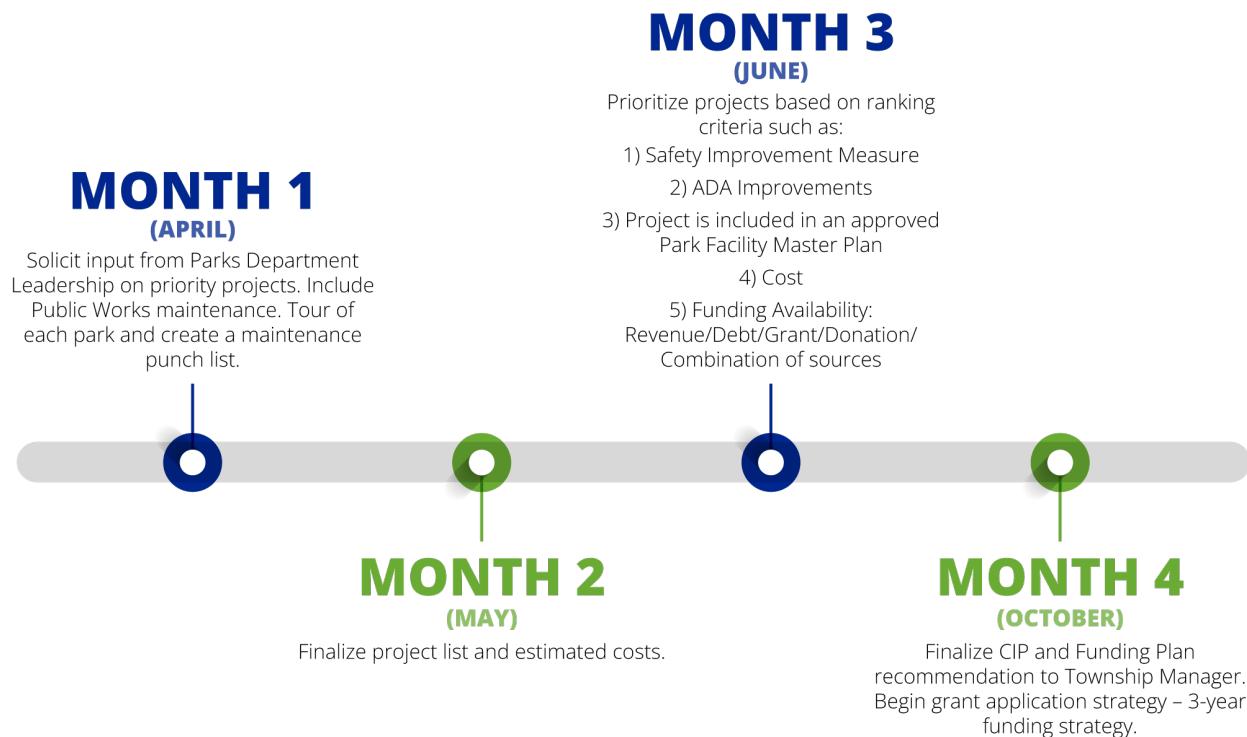


## Park and Recreation Program Needs Assessment

As the Township continues to grow and its demographics continue to diversify, so too will the community's park facilities and recreation programs need to evolve to meet future demands. The public survey conducted by Manheim Township in Summer 2024 coupled with the guidance and feedback obtained from the Advisory Committee and Township Staff have collectively identified parks and recreation needs for the future. The survey identified among other issues that there are currently unmet needs in terms of improved information about existing parks and recreation programs, accessibility upgrades, trails and connections to existing parks, and a diversity of programs. Future needs identified include a demand for more biking and walking trails and environmental educational programs.

Staff identified a need for more master planning work for priority parks, improvements to their capital planning process, more proactively identifying and diversifying funding of major programs and projects and formalizing a process to review the lifecycle of park facilities and recreation programs. The demand for the current system is influenced not only by the citizens' daily use activities and programs. Manheim Township supports seven youth sports organizations that meet the needs of over 4,000 children. Local organizations and clubs' utilization of skateboarding, biking, disc golf and other recreational activities held within the parks by churches, day cares, and groups meeting within the parks by social met up groups are all external demands on the current park system.

A park facility review includes an assessment of both existing and proposed new facilities based on feedback provided by Township Staff, the plan Advisory Committee, Resident Survey results, and guidance by professional consultants. The following provides a 3-Year Action Plan for 1) Overall needs for park facilities and departmental operations and 2) Priorities for each individual park facility. A detailed 10-Year Implementation will also be developed that anticipates the outcomes from the realization of the 3-Year Action Plan strategies.



## Overarching Needs for all Manheim Township Park Facilities

- 1. Branding and Signage** - Develop branding and consistent design for all park signage. Ensure that there is consistent messaging throughout each park such as emergency contact, events, park amenities, wayfinding for trails and points of interest. Consider educational opportunities in natural areas.
- 2. Capital Improvements Planning** - Prepare and maintain a 5-year capital improvement plan (CIP) for all park facilities supportive of applicable Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards and guidance. The CIP process should be inclusive of the Township's Public Works Department staff who are responsible for park facility maintenance. Also, consider the proposed timeline to develop and annually maintain the CIP.
- 3. Connectivity and Pathways** - Coordinate connecting all parks through sidewalk, trail and signage connections. Identify staff who will be responsible for implementing the Connectivity Plan to ensure that sidewalk and trail connections to parks are completed. Coordination between the Director of Community Development, Recreation and Public Works Departments, Connections Committee should be considered to help complete key connections. Support including

improvements into the Lancaster County SS4A Plan. Include improvements in Long Range Transportation Plan with the Lancaster MPO.

- 4. Future Park Area Analysis** – Assess additional park area acquisition based on service area needs identified in the Northeast Area of the Township and areas west of Manheim Pike.
- 5. Implement the Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives** – A Five-Year Strategic Plan was completed in 2025 in concert with the development of this 10-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Ensure both the Strategic Plan and Master Plan are implemented concurrently and congruently and are reviewed annually to ensure their alignment.

Table 4 outlines the recommended needs for Manheim Township's existing park facilities.

***Table 4 - Manheim Township Park Facility Recommended Improvements/Needs***

<b>Park Facility</b>	<b>Recommended Improvements/Needs</b>
<b>Community Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As noted above, develop a Park Master Plan for Community Park in conjunction with MTAC-Weaver. The master plan should consider the following needs/improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Continued development of connecting bicycle and pedestrian pathways between the parks and throughout the community (as also highlighted in the Township's Comprehensive Plan).</li> <li>» Consider developing a multi-use "pump track" for beginner and intermediate bike trail riding enthusiasts.</li> <li>» Ensure a safe and accessible pedestrian crossing is provided across Petersburg Road to include piano key crosswalk striping, additional ground-level signage, and push-button lighting.</li> <li>» Identify opportunities to introduce "no-mow" and naturalized areas to reduce maintenance costs as well as benefit pollinators and ground-nesting birds, etc. Further, these areas add character and texture to the landscape in a park or community setting. The plants are allowed to grow naturally without being mowed close to the ground to maintain the appearance of a traditional lawn. For more information, see Appendix H.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Manheim Township Athletic Complex (MTAC)

- As Manheim Township's premier sports complex, create a Park Master Plan for MTAC-Weaver Park that strengthens and reinforces the park's sporting facility needs and improvements to include the following improvement needs, and is completed in concert with Community Park given their close proximity and connecting pedestrian pathways. The Master Plan should consider the following:
  - » Adding dugouts, lights and a home run fence to create a premier baseball field.
  - » Enhance the crosswalks at Petersburg Road (between Community Park and MTAC) as well as the crosswalk across Weaver Road from Ludwell to MTAC. Include Piano Key crosswalks, additional ground-level signage and push-button rapid lights at Petersburg Crossing. Review the 2009 Park Facility Master Plan and develop a new Master Plan that meets the current needs for sports fields and youth sports amenities.
  - » The addition of the pavilions and consider the small kitchen type additions at other parks. Like what is currently at Community Park
  - » Address the lack of shade around the playground and spectator areas by planting more shade trees.
  - » Install covered areas like those at pools.
  - » Increase parking facilities, especially near the smaller bleacher side of the park.
  - » Continue to improve upon the stormwater management facilities to include stormwater BMPs including naturalized areas with pollinators.
  - » Lighting and irrigation of grass field areas.
  - » Additional turf field(s) to provide all-weather use and reduced impact on grass field areas.
  - » Consider adding a rebound wall to benefit multiple sports groups, specifically permitting users to complete workouts in lieu of field usage and in turn freeing up high demands for field space.

<b>Park Facility</b>	<b>Recommended Improvements/Needs</b>
<b>MTAC (Continued)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Evaluate a joint parking strategy between MTAC and Community Park to ensure the high parking demand is met during peak use times such as tournaments.</li> <li>• Continue to implement 38-acre Master Plan created by ELA Landscape Architects. Phase 1 of the plan was completed in 2009-2010 to include Synthetic Multipurpose Athletic fields, Scoreboards, Field Lighting, Bathroom/Concession Building, Walking Trails, and Parking Lots. Phase 2 of the project was not completed. That Phase included a baseball/softball field, basketball court, volleyball courts, pavilion and additional parking.</li> </ul>
<b>Compost Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider Compost Park's potential for passive recreation and public spaces for residents in the Northeast area of the Township.</li> <li>• Additional features could include grass walking paths and additional garden plots.</li> </ul>
<b>Jaycee Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A multi-phased Park Master Plan (Appendix D) was recently completed for this park: Phase 1 (South Side) in 2019; Stream Restoration in 2020; and Phase 2 (North Side) in 2021.</li> <li>• An extension of Jaycee Park will be completed in 2025. A 14-acre nature preserve with an expanded stream restoration and walking trails was given to the Township as part of the Celadon Development.</li> <li>• Add interpretive signage regarding flora and fauna, sustainability, environmental aspects, invasives and native plants.</li> <li>• Continue to implement the 13.6-acre expansion of Jaycee Park to be completed in 2025. The park expansion is part of an agreement with the developer of the apartment complex on this property. The fully constructed expansion is being completed by the developer and will be turned over to the Township in the summer of 2025.</li> </ul>

Park Facility	Recommended Improvements/Needs
<b>Landis Woods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Park Master Plan. Landis Woods' rich, large natural areas have a lot of potential for outdoor and environmental amenities that the Park Master Plan should consider. This should include providing guidance on a new nature-driven playscape area to meet the needs of the growing preschool program. An enhanced preschool facility can expand the nature-based curriculum, increase class size, and provide opportunities for kindergarten-level education.</li> <li>To maintain the park's natural ecosystem, ensure invasive plants are managed and native species are planted and maintained.</li> <li>Widen trails to accommodate their current heavy use by residents.</li> <li>Add more benches.</li> <li>Enhance connections between the park and nearby neighborhoods with additional walking and biking paths.</li> <li>Encourage responsible dog ownership by enforcing leash laws and proper disposal of dog waste and add dedicated dog waste stations at trailheads.</li> <li>Promote community-driven projects like art and nature displays.</li> <li>Enhance amenities for handicapped visitors to ensure accessibility for all.</li> </ul>
<b>Municipal Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Park Master Plan. There is a lot of potential for this park, but the Township should hold off on any substantial improvements until the future use of this site has been determined. It is where the Municipal complex is located, and the expansion of those facilities may impact the park.</li> <li>Review no-mow possibilities. "No-mow" areas and naturalized buffers can add character and texture to the landscape in a park or community setting. The plants are allowed to grow naturally without being mowed close to the ground to maintain the appearance of a traditional lawn. Reducing mowable acreage and establishing more naturalized areas will also help decrease demands on staff time and equipment, which will help cut costs. See Appendix H.</li> </ul>
<b>Neffsville Square Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the plantings are native species and require little maintenance.</li> <li>Review fencing on the Northern border with adjacent property owner as fence is in disrepair.</li> </ul>

Park Facility	Recommended Improvements/Needs
<b>Overlook Community Campus (OCC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The highest priority is to complete the current needs assessment of the outdoor pools located at Overlook Community Campus and Skyline Park. Following this assessment, a comprehensive feasibility study is highly recommended to determine the community support for, legal and financial cost of maintaining the current outdoor pools, compared to constructing a new, multi-generational indoor aquatics and recreation complex to meet the community's ever-growing needs.</li> <li>• Continue to work towards completion and implementation of the Active Master Plan for the 10-acre Destination Playground area. This would include installation of a parking lot, and consideration for a skate park on the western side of Master Plan as shown in the site plan. Consider moving the skatepark to the area near the pavilion as mentioned in the Destination Park Master Plan. Plan attached as Appendix F.</li> <li>• Complete a Park Master Plan for Overlook Park to include its connectivity to the community, including safe crossings across both Fruitville Pike and Lititz Pike and other improvements/needs listed below.</li> <li>• Maintain the agreement with the Manheim Township Soccer Club with maintenance and the soccer complex.</li> <li>• Remove the existing bocce ball courts and consider a splash pad in this area.</li> <li>• Add additional pavilion areas.</li> <li>• As also recommended under Community Park, identify opportunities to introduce "no-mow" and naturalized areas to reduce maintenance costs as well as benefit pollinators and ground-nesting birds, etc. See Appendix H to learn more.</li> <li>• Continue to implement the 10-acre Master Plan created by JMT Landscape Architect. Phase 1A (8-court Pickleball Complex) was completed in 2024 with partial funding coming from a grant award in the amount of \$250,000 from the Pennsylvania Greenways, Trails and Recreation Grant Program. The Master Plan includes phases for additional parking, a relocated skate park, enhanced loop walking trail, and the redevelopment of the center portion of the Destination Playground.</li> </ul>

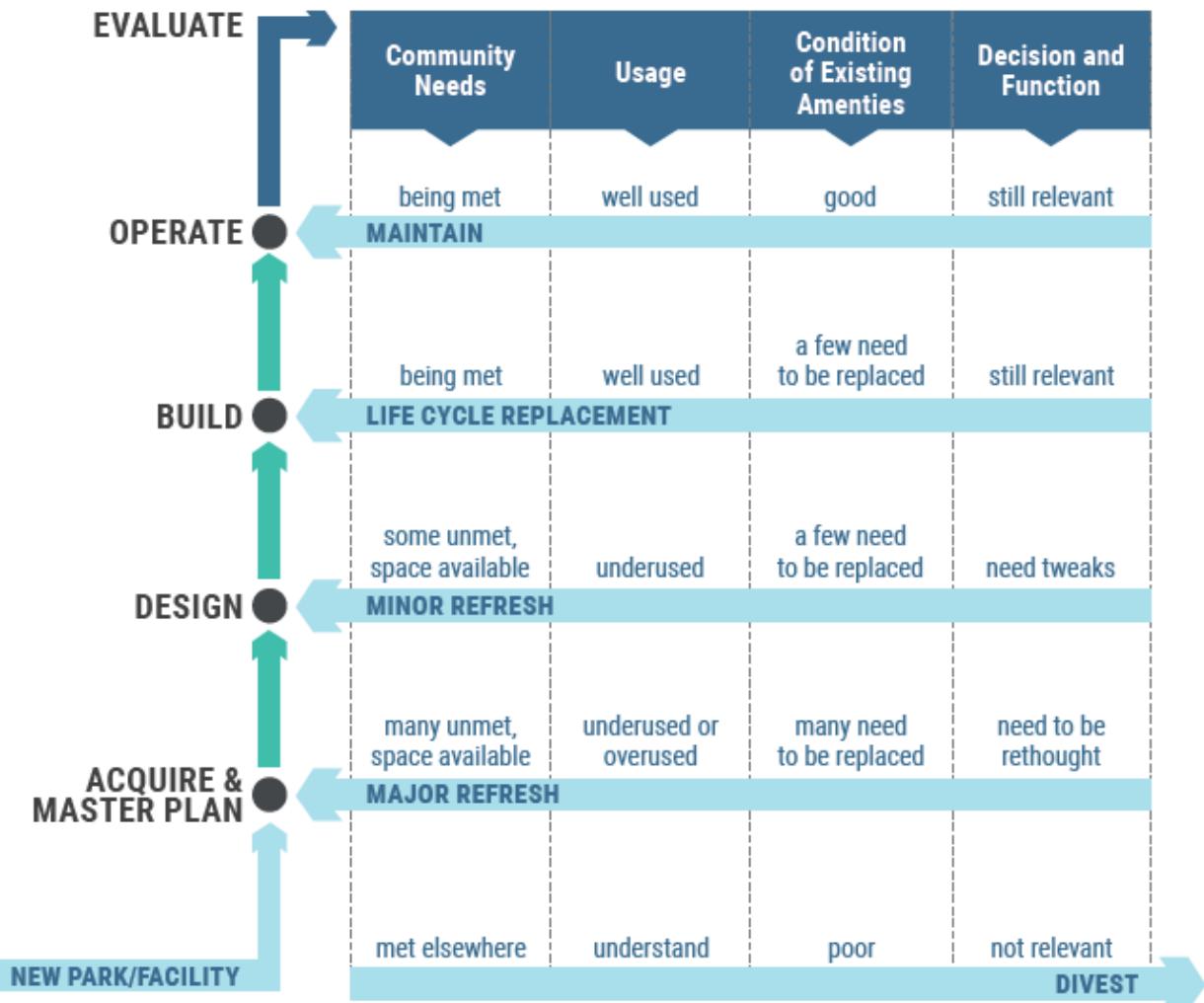
<b>Park Facility</b>	<b>Recommended Improvements/Needs</b>
<b>Perelman Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current active plan and funding for improvements is in place. Continue towards completion of plan.</li> <li>• Purchase additional land in this area as it becomes available.</li> <li>• Continue to implement 5-acre Master Plan created by YSM Landscape Architect. The re-constructed park and canoe/kayak launch is scheduled for completion in 2026. Final design and permitting is taking place in 2025. A \$422,800 grant award was received from Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) through their Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Community Partnership Program.</li> </ul>
<b>Reidenbaugh Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The park is a shared-use park with the Manheim Township School District MTSD. A shared use cooperation agreement with the School District is necessary to develop the park that best meets the needs of the community.</li> <li>• Once a shared use cooperation agreement is in place, proceed with preparing a Park Master Plan to identify the necessary facility improvements and needs investments, including consideration of pickleball courts.</li> </ul>
<b>Schaeffer Natural Area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain Schaeffer's natural/passive amenities and consider adding additional preservation areas in the Township as they become available.</li> <li>• Given that this natural area is adjacent and connected to Manheim Township School District property at Schaeffer Elementary School, it is recommended that the Township and School District have an agreement for the area's development of underutilized fields and land as a formal Township Park.</li> </ul>
<b>Skyline Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The highest priority is to complete the current needs assessment of the outdoor pools located at Overlook and Skyline parks. Following this assessment, a comprehensive feasibility study is highly recommended to determine the community support for, legal and financial cost of maintaining the current outdoor pools, compared to constructing a new, multi-generational indoor aquatics and recreation complex to meet the community's ever-growing needs.</li> </ul>

Park Facility	Recommended Improvements/Needs
<b>Stauffer Park (Owned by The Elizabeth Ludgate Trust and maintained by Manheim Township)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Park Master Plan in collaboration with the Trust.</li> <li>Stauffer Park courtyard and landscaping were replaced in 2023 with updated patio areas and plantings. Other outdoor spaces and parking amenities need repairs and/or replacement.</li> <li>Complete a historic survey of park areas and consider listing those of significance on the National Register of Historic Places.</li> <li>Repair and resurface existing tennis courts and consider expanding offerings, such as pickleball, as recreation programs trends progress</li> <li>Repair existing basketball court, to include a level surface that is more conducive to playing basketball.</li> <li>Enhance the formal garden area with new fencing.</li> <li>Add pavilions and picnic/recreation areas.</li> <li>Improve parking spaces and walking surfaces throughout the park.</li> <li>Expand the playground area and consider more swings.</li> <li>Provide additional seating and picnic tables near the playground.</li> <li>Add more walking trails or a walking trail loop.</li> </ul>
<b>Stonehenge Linear Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to maintain the park's natural/passive features and add additional preservation areas as they become available.</li> <li>Walking bridge improvements are currently planned for 2025/2026.</li> </ul>
<b>Stoner Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a Park Master Plan. This 37-acre park is split into two distinct pieces; half is programmed with ballfields, walking trails, basketball, and volleyball, and the other half is a meadow with a walking trail and stream restoration. The meadow area and stream restoration have no signage or wayfinding, making it largely unknown to many residents. Additionally, 5 acres were acquired in 2023 on the park's eastern side that has potential for additional walking trails and passive recreation.</li> <li>In addition, the park's current improvement needs include lighting the basketball court and adding more native plantings to support wildlife and ecosystem health.</li> <li>Similar to other parks, identify opportunities to introduce "no-mow" and naturalized areas to reduce maintenance costs and improve natural resources. See Appendix H.</li> </ul>

Park Facility	Recommended Improvements/Needs
<b>Unnamed (aka Granite Run) Park</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Walking trail and pedestrian bridge reconstruction were completed in 2024.</li><li>The SRBC Grant Award has been received to restore the stream that runs through this property. The design and construction of this stream will take place between 2026-2027.</li><li>Include benches, shade trees, and interpretive signage along with the planned stream restoration.</li></ul>

In addition to the needs cited above for each park facility, Figure 15 illustrates the life cycle evaluation process that Manheim Township should consider and implement as part of its overall park facility operation and maintenance program functions. This life cycle evaluation process supports the recommendations above concerning the need to prepare park master plans for each of Manheim Township's existing and new park facilities, followed by the preparation of engineering design plans, construction, operations, and ongoing evaluation to ensure each facility meets the needs of the community.





Source: Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Master Plan Park Facility Life Cycle

**Figure 15 - Life Cycle Evaluation Process**

# POLICY GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS



## Policy Goals and Action Items

Each goal describes an ideal future for the parks and recreation system in Manheim Township. These goals have been established to be aspirational yet attainable over the next 10 years. Action items are delineated to support each goal which provide a step-by-step roadmap for Manheim Township to work through in order to achieve the ideas and meet the needs of the community. A Three-Year Action Plan outlining the key priority actions for immediate implementation is included in the Implementation section.

### **POLICY AREA – PARK FACILITIES**

#### **GOAL 1**

PROVIDE PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT MEET A HIGH LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR ALL RESIDENTS NOW AND OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS.

Manheim Township provides a substantial inventory of parks and recreation facilities that are valued by residents. A life cycle evaluation approach to the operations, renovation, enhancement, or replacement of the existing facilities is needed to ensure they are maintained and improved annually.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- 1.1 Park Facility Maintenance: Ensure all park facilities are maintained to the required standards.**
  - 1.1.1 Prepare and annually review standard operating procedures and policies for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of all parks and associated facilities to ensure they are kept in a good state of repair.
  - 1.1.2 Upgrades to existing facilities should be initially based on the investment priority ranking established in this document.

- 1.1.3 Ensure all parks and associated facilities are ADA-compliant. Focus on providing universal accessibility in all public recreation areas.
- 1.1.4 Ensure all park and pool facilities are evaluated annually for safety in accordance with NRPA and other applicable standards to include having staff trained and certified, i.e., Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI), Aquatic Facilitator Operator (AFO), or Certified Pool Operator (CPO).
- 1.1.5 Create a formal written maintenance plan that allows you to track maintenance performance and help with future maintenance planning and decision making.

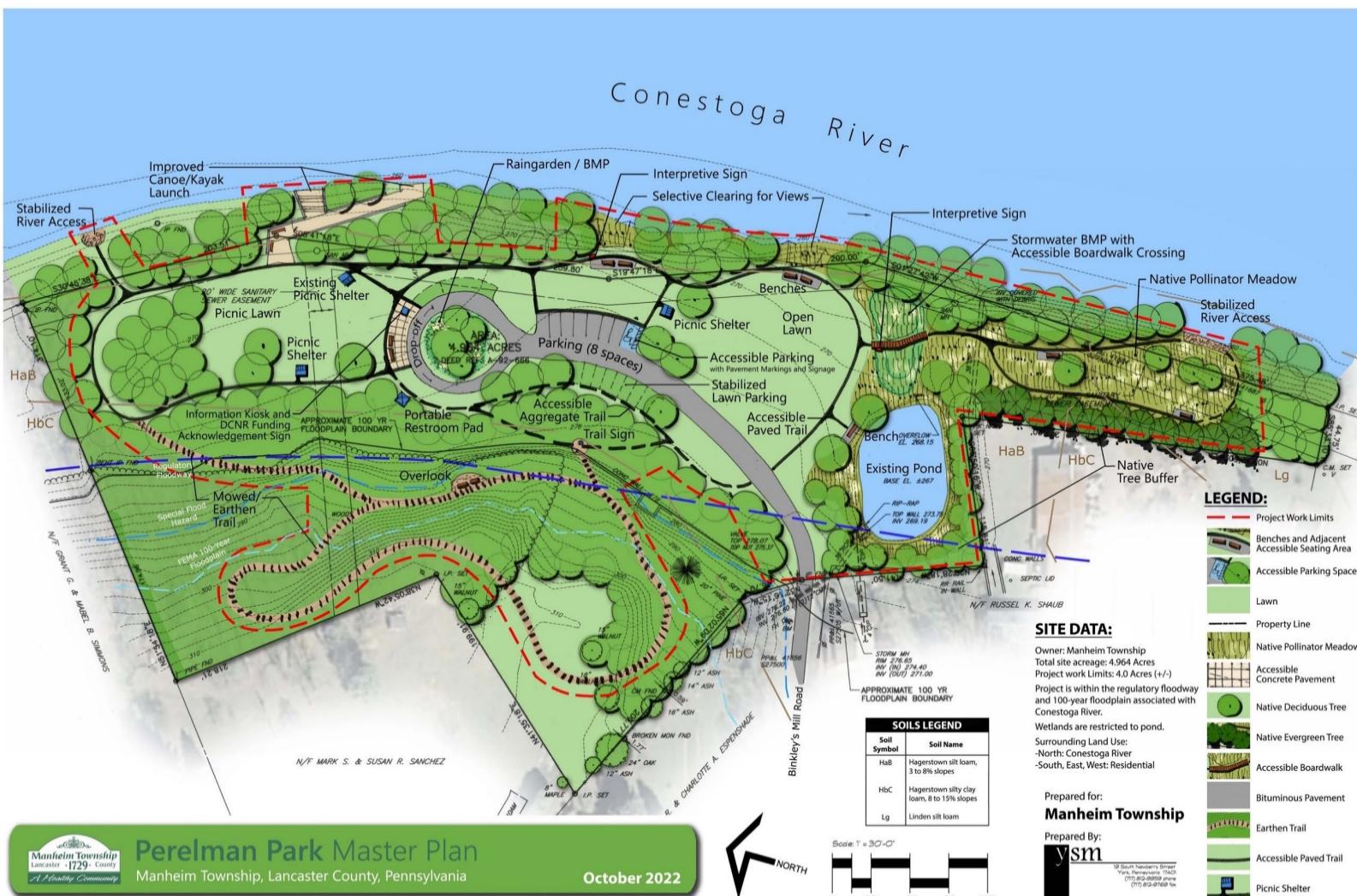
**1.2 Park Facility Master Planning: Develop long-term master development plans for facilities to ensure that problems are identified early, and potential expansion opportunities are capitalized in a timely manner.**

- 1.2.1 Complete the implementation of the Destination Playground Master Plan for Overlook Community Campus. (See Appendix F).
- 1.2.2 Complete the Pool Facility Audit and needs assessment of the Township's two operational outdoor pools located in Overlook Community Campus and Skyline Parks.
- 1.2.3 Conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to determine the community support for, legal and financial cost of maintaining the current outdoor pools, compared to constructing a new, multi-generational indoor aquatics and recreation complex to meet the community's ever-growing needs.
- 1.2.4 Ensure a Park Master Plan is prepared and maintained for each Township-owned and/or maintained park facility that identifies existing and future facility improvement needs, and includes detailed cost estimate of the improvements supported by a five-year capital improvements plan (CIP). Where noted in Table 4 - Manheim Township Park Facility Recommended Improvements/Needs, ensure such park facility master plans are prepared in cooperation with the Manheim Township School District (Reidenbaugh Park and Schaeffer Park) and The Elizabeth Ludgate Trust (Stauffer Park).
- 1.2.5 Conduct ongoing evaluations of the park facility needs to support the Township's growing and continually diversifying population.

1.2.6 Continue to consider the purchase of open space/recreation land within the township.

1.2.7 Focus new parks development within the communities along major corridors.

**1.3 Park Facility Signage and Wayfinding: Create a unified, Township-branded signage and wayfinding system to identify the Township parks and park facilities and provide a welcoming and informative gateway to each park facility. Consider examples shown in the [Pulse Design portfolio](#).**



## **POLICY AREA – RECREATION PROGRAMS**

### **GOAL 2:**

PROVIDE RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES AND ARE DESIGNED TO CREATE A LIFETIME CONSUMER.

The health benefits of open space, recreation and community gathering impact our lives at every stage. Manheim Township will ensure that programming meets the needs of our residents of every age so that we can live long and healthy lives.

### **ACTIONS:**

#### **2.1 Programming Planning Processes: Develop planning processes to meet the needs of the community.**

- 2.1.1 Expand existing programs, where possible, to serve the growing community needs.
- 2.1.2 Conduct regular (annual, etc.) public surveys to collect information and data to help assess the community's recreation program needs.
- 2.1.3 Consider national and regional trends in recreation, local demand and projected usage and participation before introducing new programs or amenities.
- 2.1.4 There are currently over 40 different recreation and education programs offered by Manheim Township. These programs must be maintained and expanded at a level that meets the needs of current and future populations. Annual assessments of these programs in terms of cost and effectiveness should be completed to help guide decision-making and direct resources to meet programmatic needs.
- 2.1.5 Promote and broaden the availability of facilities and programs to cater to diverse ages, interests, abilities and cultures.

- 2.1.6 Conduct program surveys at the completion of each program. Analyze seasonally.
- 2.1.7 Expand Park programming through small community/neighborhood events at lesser-known parks/open spaces at least once a year to increase awareness.
- 2.1.8 Develop a "Featured Park" quarterly abstract series to publish in newsletters, brochures or post on the Township website. The features should be formatted as short abstracts that describe the park/open space's location, size, amenities, most notable qualities and where applicable - historical and/or cultural significance.
- 2.1.9 Develop and implement effective marketing strategies to build awareness of programs, events, facilities and benefits of parks and recreation.
- 2.1.10 Prepare a detailed annual report showcasing programs, including program numbers, new programs, cancellations and survey results, highlighting successes throughout the year.
- 2.1.11 Hold an annual meeting for recreation staff to review and discuss research, surveys, questionnaires, feedback from front desk staff, and drop box questionnaires located at park and pool facilities.

## **2.2 Develop New Programs: Create new programs to meet the demands of a growing population.**

- 2.2.1 Offer nature-based education programs that cater to different age groups, including children, teens, adults and seniors.
- 2.2.2 Expand the nature-based preschool offering that has proven success and demand.
- 2.2.3 Expand special needs program offerings as mentioned in community surveys.
- 2.2.4 Expand Family Programming to include recreational activities for families, especially those with small children. Such programs could include more "Mommy & Me" activities, intergenerational activities, and programs that include grandparents.
- 2.2.5 Expand Senior programs to include social programming, bridge lessons, card parties, walking club, and gardening classes.
- 2.2.6 Partner with local organizations to provide free activities for low-income families to address social equity ensuring everyone can benefit from recreation.

## POLICY AREA – FINANCIAL

### GOAL 3

#### ENHANCE THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Additional capital and operational funding are needed to ensure all parks and recreation facilities continue to provide the level of experience that residents seek. A full and diverse range of funding needs include day-to-day operation and maintenance costs as well as capital costs for replacing individual park and recreation amenities at the end of their life cycles, refreshing existing parks, and building new parks and recreation facilities in both growing and established parts in the community.

#### ACTIONS:

**3.1 Financial Management of Park Facilities and Programs: Establish clear financial goals, including sustainable funding, financial planning, to support existing and future levels of service to the community.**

- 3.1.1. Develop and maintain a five-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for Manheim Township's Park facility improvement needs as identified in each Park Master Plan. The CIP includes a capital program (5-10 year plan) and a capital budget (annual spending plan).
- 3.1.2. Develop and maintain a detailed income and expense report for each recreation program and park facility to support an overall financial business plan for the Parks and Recreation Department (inclusive of Public Works supporting park maintenance services). This will include reviewing and updating the annual fee schedule for facility rentals and program user charges.
- 3.1.3. Regularly update recreational fees and charges based on a defined pricing and cost recovery philosophy.

**3.2 Sustainable Funding and Financing: Maintain sustainable funding and financing to support the maintenance and improvements of existing and new park facilities and sustain and grow existing and new recreation programs.**

- 3.2.1 Build financial resources and diversify funding so that reliance on grants for long-term maintenance is diminished, and capital needs can be met in a timely manner rather than depending on the uncertainty of grant programs and varying award schedules.
- 3.2.2 Continue to generate revenue from parks, recreation facilities, and programs that can be reinvested back into these assets.
- 3.2.3 Consideration and exploration of incorporating a parks tax/fee. Reference Park and Recreation Fees under funding sources.
- 3.2.4 Develop a corporate sponsorship program to expand opportunities to improve and maintain park facilities.



## POLICY AREA – PARTNERSHIPS

### GOAL 4

#### DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT PARK AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES.

Developing and maintaining partnerships with Township residents, organizations, and businesses are vitally important to the ongoing operations and financial sustainability of Manheim Township's expansive and ever-growing parks facilities and recreation programs. For example, each summer, Manheim Township Parks and Recreation Department relies on hundreds of volunteers to operate and manage its various programs and services.

### ACTIONS

- 4.1 Develop partnerships: Develop partnerships with a wide range of entities to increase programming, reach new audiences, and leverage resources.**
  - 4.1.1 Continue to maintain and strengthen the Township's cooperative working relationship and partnership with the Manheim Township School District and The Elizabeth Ludgate Trust for the continued maintenance and improvements of their respectively owned land areas utilized as part of the Township's park system.
  - 4.1.2 Partner with local non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, and senior centers to provide assistance to specific needs and interests.
  - 4.1.3 Seek opportunities for donations, financial support, naming rights, and corporate sponsorships programming opportunities with local businesses.
  - 4.1.4 Consider developing a partnership with the [Susquehanna Area Mountain Biking Association \(SAMBA\)](#) to seek resources to construct a pump track in the community.

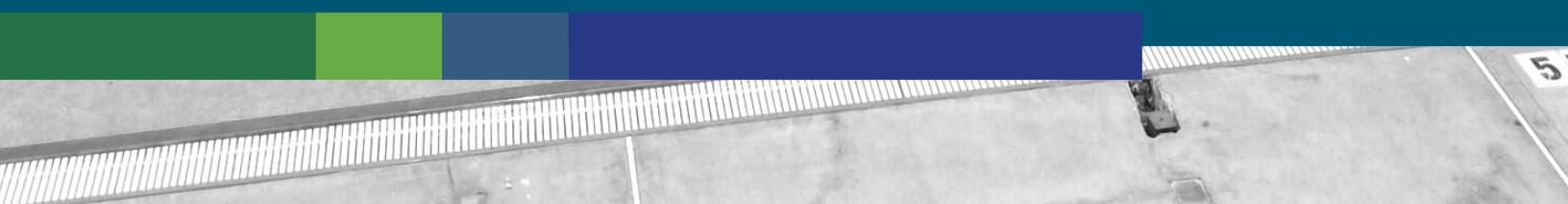
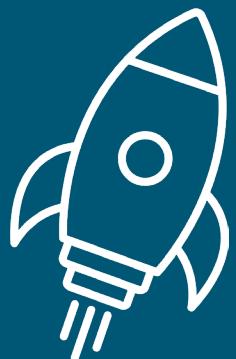
**4.2 Increase Programming with Partnerships: develop a positive connection with the community, increase involvement, volunteerism, and support staff planning and direction.**

- 4.2.1 Continue to work cooperatively with the Manheim Township School District through the MTRAC Committee and with ongoing and open dialogue to strengthen the relationship which could lead to increased programming and facility usage. This also includes offering joint recreation programs with the Manheim Township School District (after-school programming, collaborating with summer programs and summer feeding programs).
- 4.2.2 Strengthen and support resident opportunities for their continued and expanded involvement, volunteerism and giving in support of parks, recreation programs, and trails.
- 4.2.3 Expand partnerships for recreation programs to increase program locations, staffing, promotion, and reduce program costs.
- 4.2.4 Encourage workplace giving programs and “days of service” for volunteer days and community campaigns with corporations, institutions, non-profits, and large companies.





# IMPLEMENTATION



## IMPLEMENTATION

### Three-Year Action Plan Priorities for Individual Park Facilities

Table 5 identifies the top and most immediate priorities that Manheim Township should consider over the first three years of the 10-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These priorities were identified through the planning process as the most critical actions that must be completed among all park facility improvements and needs assessment recommendations included in this plan.

However, it is important that while these represent the current three-year outlook of priorities, it is imperative that the Township annually evaluate these priorities along with the park facility needs identified above to ensure they align with the Parks and Recreation Five-Year Strategic Plan as well as address year-to-year evaluation of needs and any change in financial or other critical circumstances affecting the successful implementation of these priorities.

Each annual evaluation should also consider new priority actions to ensure a continued focus on a Three-Year Action Plan approach.

***Table 5 – Park Priority Actions***

Park Facility	Program Year	Action(s)
<b>Perelman Park</b>	2025 - 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025 – Proceed with Perelman Park's design that is funded (via a 50% DCNR Grant award) and permitted through PA DEP (NPES Permit)</li> <li>• 2026 – Commence project construction.</li> </ul>
	Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire adjacent land to expand park and water access.</li> </ul>
<b>Overlook Community Campus and Skyline Pool Facilities</b>	2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the audit and feasibility study for both pool facilities.</li> </ul>

Park Facility	Program Year	Action(s)
<b>Overlook Community Campus and Skyline Pool Facilities (Continued)</b>	2026 – 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the findings from the Pool Facility Audit and proceed with conducting a comprehensive feasibility study to determine the community support for, legal and financial cost of maintaining the current outdoor pools, compared to constructing a new, multi-generational indoor aquatics and recreation complex at Overlook Community Campus to meet the community's ever-growing needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Overlook Community Campus</b>	2026 – 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the implementation of the Destination Playground Master Plan (See Appendix F).</li> </ul>
<b>MTAC-Weaver/Community Park</b>	2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update the 2009 Park Master Plan (See Appendix C) and evaluate the park's facility and recreation programming needs. The master plan should be developed as combined plan for both MTAC-Weaver Park and Community Park given their proximity, trail connection linkage, and opportunity to maximize existing and future amenities for the benefit of both park facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Reidenbaugh Park</b>	2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the Manheim Township School District to develop a cooperative agreement prior to making any improvements to Reidenbaugh Park.</li> <li>Develop a Park Master Plan in cooperation with the School District to provide positive recreational benefits for school children and for residential homes located near the school.</li> </ul>

Park Facility	Program Year	Action(s)
<b>Stoner Park</b>	2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete a Park Master Plan. This 37-acre park is split into two distinct pieces; half is programmed with ballfields, walking trails, basketball, and volleyball, and the other half is a meadow with a walking trail and stream restoration.</li> <li>The meadow area and stream restoration have no signage or wayfinding, making it largely unknown to many residents.</li> <li>Additionally, 5 acres were acquired in 2023 on the park's eastern side has potential for additional walking trails and passive recreation.</li> <li>In addition, the park's current improvement needs include lighting the basketball court and adding more native plantings to support wildlife and ecosystem health.</li> </ul>
<b>Landis Woods</b>	2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Park Master Plan as a complete revision to the 2012 Park Master Plan, which is no longer valid since the plan was developed when the Boettcher House was a museum.</li> <li>The Park Master Plan should include providing guidance on a new nature-driven playscape area to meet the needs of the growing preschool program.</li> <li>An enhanced preschool facility can expand the nature-based curriculum, increase class size, and provide opportunities for kindergarten-level education.</li> </ul>

## Funding Sources

Table 6 outlines federal, state, and local funding sources and mechanisms that may be used to implement the plan recommendations. In addition, Manheim Township should continue to pursue partnerships with the city, County, and school district to assist with grant program identification and application development. Such intergovernmental partnerships will be critical to the plan's implementation success.

***Table 6 – Funding Sources***

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>LOCAL</b>	
<b>Township Budget Allocations</b>	The Township allocates funding in their annual budget to parks and recreation expenses.
<b>Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Lancaster County Redevelopment Authority</b>	Lancaster County is a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) entitlement community that receives CDBG funds from HUD to carry out a wide range of community revitalization activities in low- and moderate-income persons. Such activities include parks and recreation facilities projects. CDBG funds may only be used to construct new facilities or purchase new equipment. All CDBG Projects must be designed to serve those areas of the community with the highest percentage of low- and moderate-income persons, using current census data or recent (less than three years old) income survey results.

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>Parks and Recreation Fees</b>	<p>Section 503(11) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968 as reenacted and amended) authorizes municipal subdivision and land development ordinances to include provisions for the payment of a fee-in-lieu of a developer's public dedication of land suitable for the construction of recreational facilities. Accordingly, Article VIII, Section 809 of the Manheim Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance authorizes such a fee-in-lieu of dedication payments for projects creating 100 or more new dwelling units as part of a new or expansion to existing residential and mixed-use development. The fees are based on the fair market value of the amount of land area that otherwise is required to be dedicated as specified under Section 809.5 of the ordinance.</p> <p>In addition to the fee-in-lieu of dedication, the Township also generates parks and recreation revenue through fees charged for the rental of park facility rentals and participation recreation programs.</p>

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>Dedicated Taxes</b>	<p>Pennsylvania's Act 153 of 1996, which was enacted as an amendment to Pennsylvania's Conservation and Land Development Act (Act 442 of 1967), allows—with a simple majority vote—all cities, boroughs, and townships to levy dedicated earned income, property, and realty transfer taxes for the purchase of open space lands or easements. Act 115 of 2013, which amended Act 153, provides that, in addition to acquiring land and easements, dedicated open space taxes may be used to develop, design, improve, and maintain open space that has been protected under Act 153 referenda. It also clarifies that a referendum is required to repeal voter-approved open space taxes.</p> <p>Act 15 of 2022, which further amended Act 153, authorizes local governments to create an open space maintenance fund into which up to 25% of the annual revenue from the open space tax may be deposited.</p>

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>Election Ballot Voter Referendums</b>	<p>The method for placing electoral debt bonding and earned income or property tax referendum question on the ballot is set forth in the Pennsylvania Election Code (P.L. 1333, No. 320). First, the governing body must pass an ordinance to have the question placed on the ballot. For property and earned income tax measures, the ordinance is then filed with the County Board of Elections at least 13 Tuesdays before the next primary or general election.</p> <p>According to The Trust for Public Land, since 1988, over 130 counties and municipal ballot measures that support the acquisition of land for open space, farmland, and recreational purposes have been approved by Pennsylvania voters, generating nearly \$1.2 billion. The overall passage rate for local ballot measures in Pennsylvania is 80 percent. Pennsylvania voters have approved 90 percent of 63 bond measures, 72 percent of 89 earned income tax measures, and 88 percent of 16 property tax measures. Of the twelve county conservation finance measures (all bonds) since 1988, only one (Delaware County, 1996) has failed.</p>

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>Sponsorships</b>	Corporate and community partnerships to sponsor community programs, events, and facilities as part of their business plans for funding. Community and corporate support may range from fund raising activities such as selling pavers, businesses sponsoring an event or sports team, and/or the purchase of naming rights for a public facility for a period. Sponsorships are most frequently used to fund various parks and recreation programs, but some jurisdictions have also explored naming rights as a potential revenue source.
<b>STATE</b>	
<b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Community Recreation and Conservation Planning</b>	Planning projects "lay the groundwork" for future land acquisition, development and/or management of parks, recreational facilities, critical habitat, open space, natural areas, greenways, and river/watershed corridors.
<b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</b> <b>Land Acquisition and Conservation Grants</b>	These projects involve the purchase and/or donation of land for park and recreation areas, greenways, critical habitat areas and/or open space.

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<p><b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</b></p> <p><b>Motorized Trails</b></p>	<p>Pennsylvania Recreational Trails (PRT) motorized projects. PRT motorized projects include the development, rehabilitation or maintenance of designated routes on land for all types of motorized recreation activities, as well as the purchase or lease of equipment to be used exclusively for the maintenance or construction of land and water trails and trail-related facilities. Funding for projects in this category comes from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and DCNR is the designated state agency to administer this federal program in Pennsylvania. ONLY motorized trail projects applying for PRT funding should be submitted in this category. Match requirements are established at a minimum of 20%.</p>
<p><b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</b></p> <p><b>Non-motorized Trails Grant</b></p>	<p>Trail projects include the acquisition, planning, development, rehabilitation, or maintenance of designated routes on land or water for non-motorized recreation activities, as well as the purchase or lease of equipment to be used exclusively for the maintenance or construction of non-motorized land and water trails and non-motorized trail-related facilities.</p>
<p><b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</b></p> <p><b>Park Rehabilitation and Development</b></p>	<p>These projects involve the rehabilitation and development of public parks, recreation facilities, greenways and river conservation projects.</p>

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</b> <b>Peer and Circuit Rider</b>	<p>These grant programs fund projects that help municipalities, counties, multi-municipal partnerships, and councils of governments to increase local capacity for recreation, parks and conservation. The Peer program funds projects that, through a collaborative process, focus on a specific need identified by the grantee and its partners. The Circuit Rider program aids in the hiring of a full-time park, recreation or conservation professional whose services are shared by the members of a formal partnership, commission or authority.</p>
<b>Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</b> <b>State and Regional Partnerships</b>	<p>Partnerships projects are collaborative statewide or regional initiatives that help build local, county, regional and statewide capacity to better develop and manage recreation and park facilities and to promote the conservation of natural and heritage resources through plan implementation, education and training.</p>
<b>PA Department of Community and Economic Development</b> <b>Multimodal Transportation Fund</b>	<p>Funds may be used for the development, rehabilitation and enhancement of transportation assets to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development.</p>
<b>Pennsylvania Department of Transportation</b> <b>Multimodal Transportation Fund</b>	<p>The program is intended to provide financial assistance to municipalities, councils of governments, businesses, economic development organizations, public transportation agencies, and ports and rail freight entities to improve transportation assets that enhance communities, pedestrian safety, and transit revitalization.</p>

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<b>PA Department of Community and Economic Development</b> <b>Local Share Account – Statewide</b>	<p>Projects of public interest. Projects that improve the quality of life of citizens in the community. Eligible projects must be owned and maintained by an eligible applicant or a nonprofit organization.</p>
<b>PA Department of Community and Economic Development, Commonwealth Finance Authority</b> <b>Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP)</b>	<p>The Marcellus Legacy Fund was created by Act 13 of 2012 to provide for the distribution of unconventional gas well impact fees to counties, municipalities, and commonwealth agencies. The Marcellus Legacy Fund allocates funds to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects using the Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program. Grants shall not exceed \$250,000 for any project. A 15% match of the total project cost is required.</p>
<b>Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development</b> <b>Municipal Assistance Program (MAP)</b>	<p>MAP provides funding to assist local governments to plan for and efficiently implement a variety of policies, programs, or projects, and soundly manage development with an emphasis on intergovernmental approaches. Funding is available for two groups of activities: shared services, and community planning.</p>
FEDERAL	
<b>U.S. Department of Interior</b> <b>National Park Service State and Local Assistance, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)</b>	<p>The LWCF provides matching grants to state and tribal governments to support the development of public parks and outdoor recreational opportunities, and the Great American Outdoors Act passed in 2020 permanently funds the Land and Water Conservation Act at \$900 million annually.</p>

Proposed Program	Needs/Recommendations
<p><b>U. S. Department of Agriculture</b></p> <p><b>Community Facilities Loan and Grant Program</b></p>	<p>The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides grants, low-interest direct loans, and/or combinations of the two to develop essential community facilities in rural areas, including public facilities, community support services, and local food systems such as community gardens and food hubs. Public entities, nonprofit organizations and tribal entities in rural communities are eligible to apply.</p>
<p><b>U.S. EPA Brownfield Redevelopment</b></p>	<p>The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Program provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes and others to assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse contaminated properties. EPA's Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, environmental job training, technical assistance, training, and research.</p>





# APPENDICES



## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Parks and Recreation Survey Results

Appendix B: Park Facility Profiles

Appendix C: MTAC Overall Site Plan 2009

Appendix D: 2022 Jaycee Park Expansion Master Plan

Appendix E: 2022 Perelman Park Site Plan Update

Appendix F: 2023 Destination Playground Master Plan

Appendix G: Executed Joint Recreation Committee Agreement 2024

Appendix H: No Mow Best Management Practice



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