



Our Community's Plan for Parks and Recreation

Neshannock Township
Parks and Recreation Plan,
Including Pearson Park Master Plan

2018

Neshannock Township

Parks and Recreation Plan, Including Pearson Park Master Plan

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Adopted:
2018

Neshannock Township
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Chapter 1: Background



Recreation fields are integral in bringing the community together and teaching life long values. Community support from residents and businesses are critical to sustaining these spaces.



Purpose of This Plan

Neshannock's population is projected to grow rapidly through 2020 and then continue to grow at slower rates through 2040.

Recreation Planning

Our Community is rich in recreation resources. We can enhance those resources with strategic actions that will strengthen community amenities for existing residents and also serve to attract future residents and businesses looking for a place to locate where their employees have a great place to live and work.

This plan outlines recommendations and strategies for enhancing Our Community's resources, thereby enhancing Our Community and our future.

Demographic Analysis

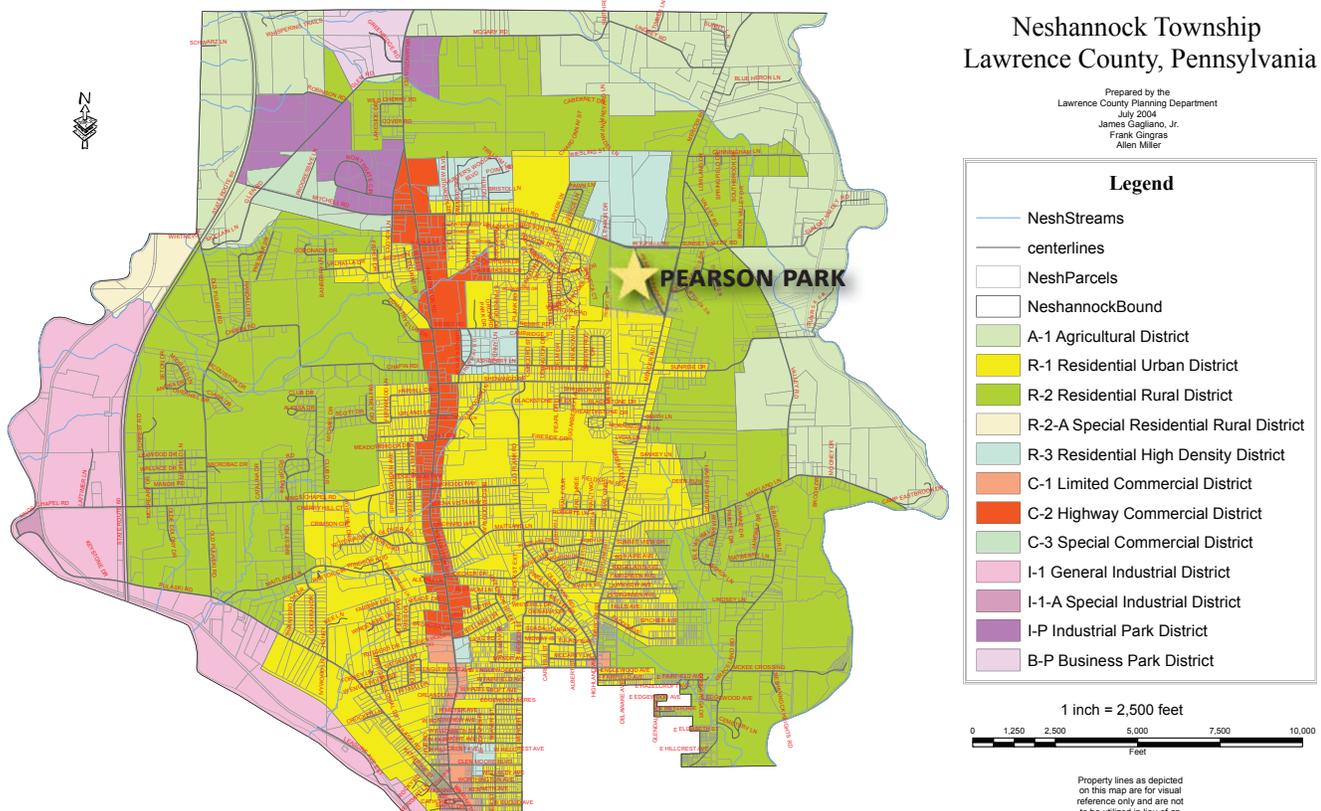
Population statistics are utilized to project population trends and conditions into the future. Future community needs, including recreational and facilities, are influenced by the current and projected population.

Our Community's change in population has followed the patterns of Lawrence County although Neshannock's population grew between 1990 and 2010 and the county's population continued to decline. Lawrence County's population is projected to stop declining in 2020. Neshannock's population is projected to grow rapidly through 2020 and then continue to grow at slower rates through 2040. Neshannock's population is projected to grow by nearly 40% between 2010 and 2040. Neighboring Townships are also projected to experience growth - although at slower rates.

Neshannock Township's population is largely native-born Americans (98%) and white (97%). The median age is high (49.1 years) in comparison to Lawrence County (43.6 years) and the 10-county region (42.5 years). 20% of Neshannock's population is age 65 or over; 20% is under age 18. Neshannock's population in 2010 was 9,609 and is projected to increase to 13,390 by 2040. Refer to the Township Comprehensive Plan for additional demographic information and analysis.



Figure 1. Neshannock Township Zoning Map



Zoning and Adjacent Land Use

A review of the Township's zoning map indicates the following insight:

- Property West is zoned residential rural district.
- Property North is zoned residential high-density district. This area contains a new residential area, the YMCA and the Neshannock School District complex.

Property South and East is zoned residential urban district. There is a parcel in the Southeast corner that is zoned residential rural district. A single home is located on this parcel.

Pearson Park

Pearson Park is the primary recreational facility in Neshannock Township. Located at the intersection of Mercer and Mitchell Roads in the northeastern portion of Our Community, this 88-acre park provides numerous amenities including: two Little League Fields, two small playgrounds, one large playground, forested walking trail with exercise equipment, two restroom facilities, parking, gazebo, basketball court, community center, six pavilions, six tennis courts and member only swimming pool. The Hess Sports Complex, in Pearson Park, amenities include an ice rink, Pony field, batting cages, practice football field and parking.

Safety Audit

A Safety Audit of Pearson Park's amenities was conducted as a part of these planning efforts. The audit detailed the conditions of current playground equipment, picnic areas, surfacing trash receptacles, signage, and fencing and made recommendations for the enhancing the parks overall safety.

Pearson Park is the primary community recreation facility in Our Community. The Park provides a variety of recreation amenities, is easily accessible, and is conveniently located for our residents.



Pearson Park Playground Audit

Maintenance Inspection Checklist

Playgrounds

Location: NESHANNOCK TOWNSHIP, PEARSON PARK
 Date: OCTOBER 5, 2018
 Inspected By: BOB GOOD, CPSI HEATHER CUYLER

PLACE A "Y" IN THE BOX IF THE ITEM MEETS THE STANDARD OR "N" IF IT DOES NOT. MARK SECTIONS "N/A" THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE.

A. Play Equipment

<input type="checkbox"/>	Play equipment meets ASTM and National Playground Safety Institute standards. - <u>SEE ADDITIONAL NOTES</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Play equipment is free of graffiti.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Age appropriateness for the play equipment is noted with the proper signage.

B. Benches & Picnic Tables

<input type="checkbox"/>	Hardware and bracing are structurally sound and intact.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Seating surface and table tops are clean and free of protrusions. No catch points or sharp edges are exposed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with the surface.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Painted surfaces are in good repair with no rotten wood or rusted metal visible.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No graffiti is visible.

C. Surfacing

<input type="checkbox"/>	Fall surface is clean and free of litter and debris.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wood Carpet surfaces are loose, level, and free of compaction. <u>SEE NOTES</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Surface material is well drained and no evidence of standing water is apparent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rubber surfaces are free of major holes and tears with minimal deterioration. <u>SEE NOTES</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rubber surfaces are secure to the base material and curbing. <u>SEE NOTES</u>

D. Trash Receptacles

<input type="checkbox"/>	Sufficient barrels are available in high traffic areas.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Barrels are not overflowing and have liners in place.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receptacles are cleanly painted with no rusted metal or graffiti visible.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lids are in place where appropriate.

E. Signage

<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency and Parks Hotline signs are in visible locations and secured properly. - <u>RECOMMENDED NEW WAYFINDING</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Signs are readable and not faded or broken.

F. Fences

<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence fabric is free of holes and is properly tied to the upright and crossing supports.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fence posts are secure in the ground and are straight upright. Crossbars are properly tied to the uprights.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Posts have caps in place.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gates and hardware are functional with all hardware in place.



Pearson Park Playground Safety Audit

October 5, 2017

Area 1: Large Fenced Playground Area/Gametime '98

Action Items:

1. Poured in place rubber surfacing tiles are separating. Tiles should be removed and replaced with engineered wood fiber. Areas of rubberized tile can remain in identified areas such as under the swings.
2. Bulldozer rocking component needs to be refastened
3. Rolling component needs to be removed
4. Repair or remove gliding apparatus; does not slide
5. Install wayfinding, safety, and age appropriate signage

Area 2: Playground Structures Outside of Fenced Area

Action Items:

1. Remove clown toddler swing structure
2. Remove Gametime swings or replace swings
3. If Gametime swings are replaced, safe surfacing must be reestablished to meet safety standards
4. Reestablish safe surfacing to meet standards under purple climber
5. Firehouse structure has missing hose. Replace or repair area.

Area 3: Animal Kingdom

Action Items:

1. Edging should be moved at least 18" from current location to meet playground safety guidelines
2. Engineered wood fiber should be reapplied to entire play area



Other Recreation Facilities

The Walmo School and property owned by the Township also provides play fields and playground equipment in a centrally located area along Maitland Lane. The Preston-Chambers Y-Zone is a premier Lawrence County recreational facility that provides an array of recreational activities, including a senior citizen program, Silver Sneakers. Other recreational opportunities in Our Community include Castle Hills Golf Course, the New Castle Country Club, the Lawrence County Sportsmen Club, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission access areas along Neshannock Creek, and the Pennsylvania State Game Lands 178.



Natural Features

Water Features and Wetlands

Pearson Park falls within the Shenango River Watershed ultimately leading to the Ohio River. A review of the National Wetland Inventory Map indicated that a wet area existed where Field #2 is located. There are no water features located within the park that would seriously inhibit recreation facility development.

Soils

The United States Department of Agricultural Soil Conservation Service provides data on soil properties. The majority of soils in the community, as well as those within Pearson Park, are classified as silty loam and do not have hydric components. Silty loam is moderately well drained and should not inhibit recreation development opportunities.

Vegetation

A mixed hardwood forest comprises about 2/3rd of the park vegetation. The areas around Pearson Park amenities consist of mowed turf with widely dispersed mature trees.

Wildlife

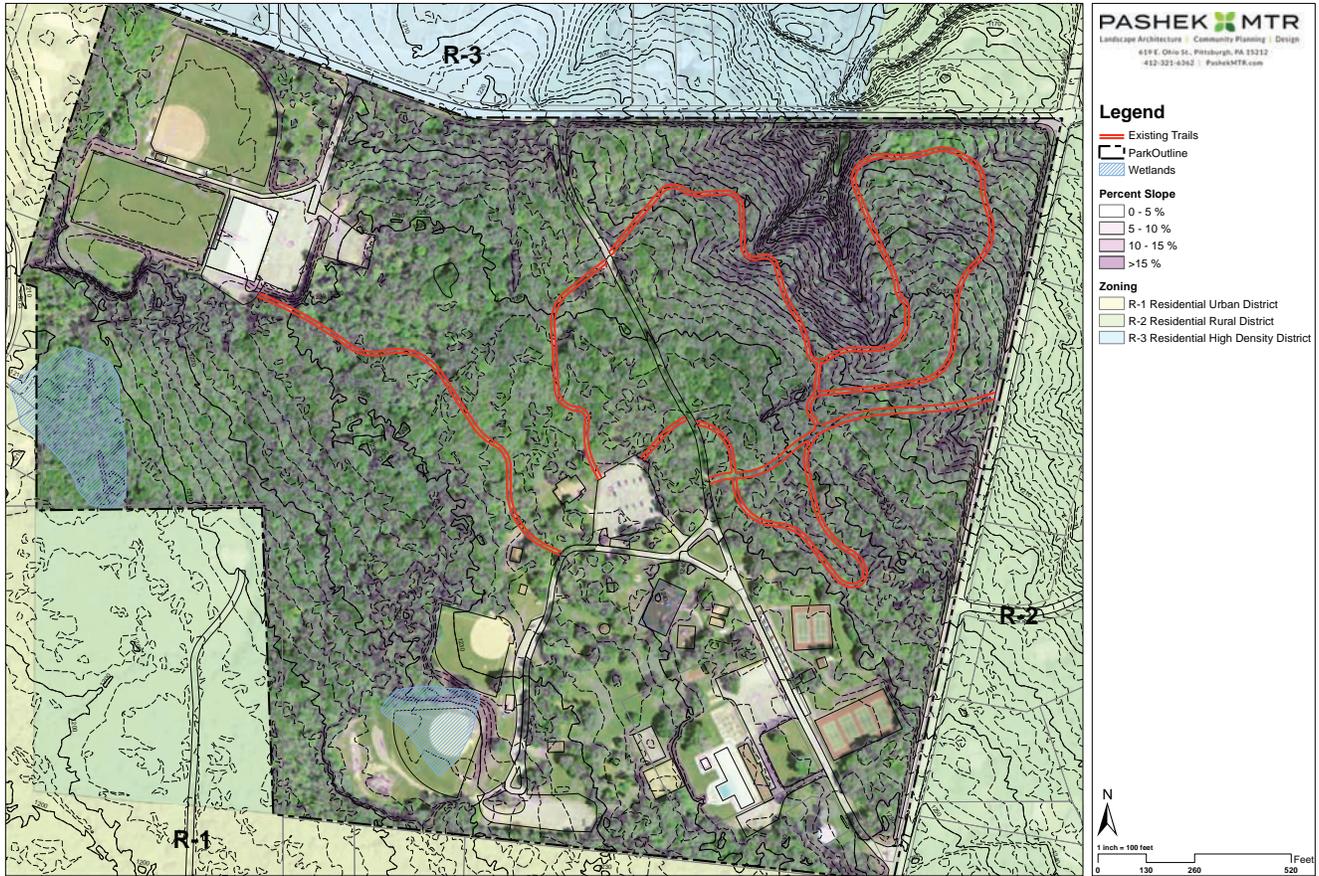
To determine the presence of species of special concern (rare, threatened, or endangered species), the Lawrence County Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) was reviewed and a Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Index (PNDI) environmental review of Pearson Park was conducted. PNDI records indicate no known impacts within the site, meaning no further coordination is required with jurisdictional agencies.



Topography

Overall, the slope of the site is generally within the 0-10% range. The majority of the level terrain in the park is developed. The steepest topography exists in the northeast corner of the park. This area features existing trails and is generally unsuitable for development.

Figure 2. Pearson Park Topography Map



Existing Recreational Facilities

The following tables document existing facilities located in the park, their condition, whether they are considered to be ADA accessible and other additional comments as appropriate.

Table 1. Existing Conditions Parking Analysis - Hess Sport Complex at Pearson Park

Existing Conditions Parking Analysis Hess Sport Complex at Pearson Park					
Facility	Description of Peak Use	Persons / Vehicle	Peak Use # of Spaces	Daily Use 60% of Peak	Surplus / Deficiency
Baseball Field #1	4 teams of 12 players + 2 coaches per team + 12 parents per team + 5 fans per team = 124 persons	2.5	50	30	
Rectangular Field	2 teams of 12 players + 2 coaches per team + 12 parents per team + 3 fans per team = 58 persons	2.5	23	14	
Trailhead		1.5	10	6	
Ice Rink	4 teams of 12 players + 2 coaches per team + 12 parents per team + 5 fans per team = 124 persons	2.5	50	30	
Ice Rink	Open Skate=300	2.5	120	72	
Total					-56
NOTE: The possible expansion of the Ice Rink would eliminate some of the existing parking.					

Table 2. Existing Conditions Analysis - Hess Sport Complex at Pearson Park

Existing Conditions Analysis Hess Sport Complex at Pearson Park				
Facility	Description/Comments	No.	Condition	ADA
Baseball Field #1	Used by NAA Pony teams, lip needs to be removed, dug outs are good, batting cages needs replaced	1	Good	No
Rectangular Field	Used by Little league Football for practice, some discussion to construct hockey rink through Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation	1	Good	No
Trailhead	Signage needs to be installed with trail map, trail head parking is no existing, connection between the ice rink and the park should be established.	1	Fair	No
Ice Rink	Utilized by 9 youth teams plus 2 Kennedy Catholic Teams, Free Skate is available on Saturdays. Ice is 15' short, seating for 40 spectators (should be 200), locker rooms are virtually non-existence, a trailer outside of the facility is being used as a locker room.	1	Good	Yes



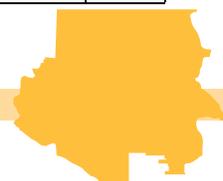
Table 3. Existing Conditions Parking Analysis - Pearson Park

Existing Conditions Parking Analysis Pearson Park					
Facility	Description of Peak Use	Persons/ Vehicle	Peak Use # of Spaces	Daily Use 60% of Peak	Surplus/ Deficiency
Baseball Field #1	4 teams of 12 players + 2 coaches per team + 12 parents per team + 5 fans per team = 124 persons	2.5	50	30	
Field #2	2 teams of 12 players + 2 coaches per team + 12 parents per team + 3 fans per team = 58 persons	2.5	24	14	
Basketball Court	10 (2 teams of 5 players each)	1.5	7	4	
Tennis Courts (6)	2 teams of 2 players = 4 persons per court	1.5	16	10	
Playground	30 children + 1 parent for every 2 children = 45 persons	2.5	18	11	
Medium Shelters (5)	72 person capacity per shelter	3	120	72	
Small Shelter	20 person capacity per shelter	3	7	4	
Community Center	150 person capacity	3	50	30	
Pool	540 Capacity	2.5	300	180	
TOTAL	Not including pool				-109
Total	Including pool				-289

NOTE: The undefined parking areas near the pool and below the existing ballfields were not taken in the existing number of parking spots.

Table 4. Existing Conditions Analysis - Pearson Park

Existing Conditions Analysis Pearson Park				
Facility	Description/Comments	No.	Condition	ADA
Baseball Field #1	Oriented Southwest, batting cage removed and replaced with orange cones. No sidewalks or paths for access,	1	Fair	No
Concession Stand	Not easily accessible	1	Fair	No
Field #2	Oriented Southwest, fence damaged by falling tree, No sidewalks or ADA access	1	Fair	No
Basketball Court	No fencing, Hoods are 11'7" and should be 10'	1	Good	No
Tennis Courts (6)	Two court area in good shape. Four court area has some patches and pickle ball lines, no latch on left side of gate.	6	Good	Yes
Large Playground	Safe surfacing is separtain. Bull dozer rocking componetnt needs to be re-fastened. Rolling apparatus should be removed. Glider does not glide.	1	Good	Yes
Animal Kingdom	Edging needs to be moved out two feet on each side to atleast 18"	1	Good	No
Small Playground	Swings are broken or not compliant and should be removed. Purple monkey bar area needs safety zone reestablished and remulched	1	Fair	No
Pavilion #1	8 tables, grills are too high no water is available, only 1 ADA spot for pavilion 1, 2 & playgrounds	1	Good	Yes
Pavilion #2	8 table, no water	1	Good	Yes
Pavilion #3	2 tables, has grill, should have connection to existing trail	1	Good	No
Pavilion #4	6 tables, grill, no water	1	Good	No
Pavilion #5	8 tables, ADA access, has water, grill needs to be replaced	1	Good	Yes
Pavilion #6	8 tables, nice location near trail	1	Good	Yes
Restrooms	Papertowels and front door not ADA, need renovated	4	Fair	No
Gazebo	Underside of roof should be repaired/painted, not ADA compliant, no seating for concerts	1	Good	No
Community Center	150 person capacity, Built in 1974, kitchen restrooms and rental area should be updated	1	Good	Yes



Facility Analysis

National recreation standards would suggest the need for a tennis court and volleyball courts. The need was not reinforced through the public input collected through this planning process. Due to the topography and urban locations of the parks, there is no need to address the lack of these facilities.

Pedestrian Circulation

There are few pedestrian walkways within Pearson Park that meet ADA requirements. There are concrete sidewalks to the bathrooms, Community Center, tennis courts, and Pavilion 5. A forested trail with a compact surface transverses through the wooded area in the Northeast part of the park. There is a trail connecting the Hess Sports Complex to the main park. However, a trailhead, signage and visibility is not sufficient. Construction of a perimeter trail with access to the bordering neighborhoods should be considered to provide additional pedestrian connectivity. Recommendation for upgrading these connections is proposed in this Master Site Plan.

Vehicle Circulation and Parking

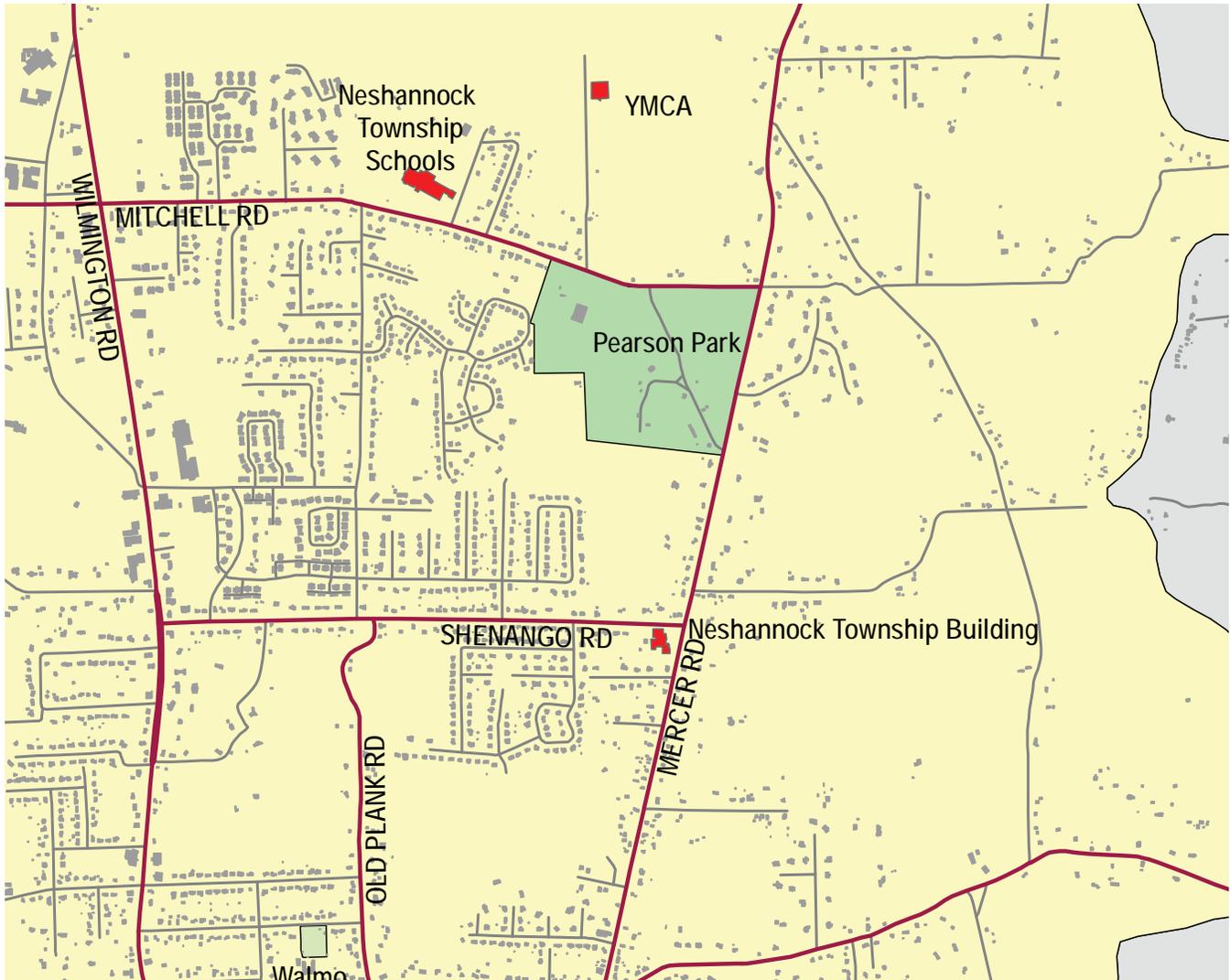
There are three entrances to the park. Two of the entrances serve the main portion of the park, one from the North and one at the Southeast corner. There is one entrance from the North providing exclusive access to the Hess Sports Complex in Pearson Park.

A parking analysis was conducted. The two parking tables located on pages 8 and 9 provide a breakdown of parking deficiencies within Pearson Park. Additional parking should be considered in the main park as well as at Hess Sports Complex. The additional parking areas will provide safe and convenient parking to the existing park amenities such as the ballfields, gazebo, pavilions, swimming pool and playground. The recommended design would eliminate on street and pull in parking. Parking construction could be accomplished by phasing the recommendations over the next five years.

The majority of the Park's features are in fair to good condition. There is a general need for additional parking and improved pedestrian circulation.



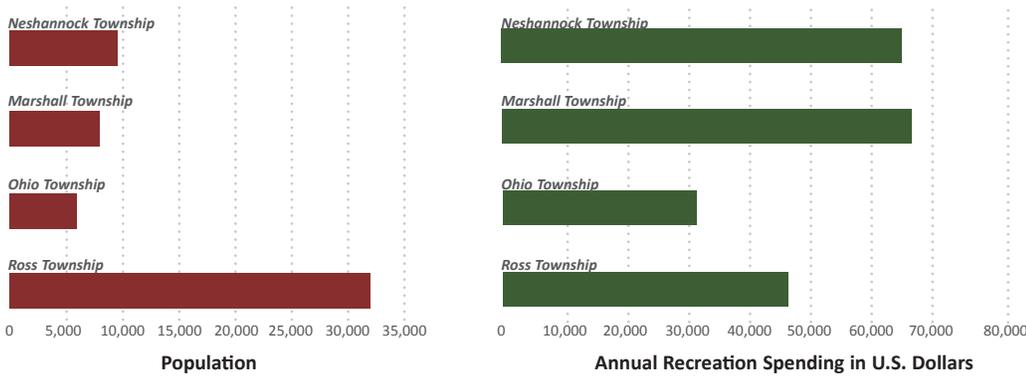
Figure 3. Pearson Park Vicinity Map



Finances

Neshannock Township Parks and Recreation annual budget for 2018 is approximately \$65,000. The budget includes salaries, maintenance, capital improvements and capital purchases. In 2017 the Township passed a Recreation Tax (1 mil) to provide additional funding for future improvements. It is recommended that this tax revenue be ear marked towards providing funding for yearly maintenance of existing conditions. Future capital expenditures should be funded through leveraging grant money, private funding or issuing a bond issues for the larger projects.

Table 5. Township Population and Recreation Spending Comparison



Maintenance Staffing

A full analysis of the Township was completed as part of this Plan. The current Public Works/Parks staff should be sufficient to maintain the parks to an appropriate standard of care. A park maintenance plan should be implemented based on the “Park Maintenance Standards” published by the National Recreation and Parks Association. This publication assists in determining the appropriate level of maintenance of park facilities, based on size and usage, and provides productivity standards which are useful in determining the efficiency of park maintenance staff. This publication is also a valuable tool for estimating maintenance requirements of proposed projects and, with current cost estimating guides, can assist one in establishing park maintenance budgets. A set of sample maintenance standards is in the appendices.

Safety, Risk, and Vandalism Management

Safety, risk, and vandalism are components which go hand in hand. During the public input of this plan, concerns were raised regarding safety in the parks. Some did not feel safe in the parks, even during daylight hours.

To ensure an appropriate standard of care, the Township should develop a Park Maintenance and Risk Management Plan that establishes maintenance standards for all parks. Maintaining to these standards will keep recreation facilities attractive, useable and safe. It will also reduce liability risks and plan for prevention of accidents. All facilities should be scheduled for regular inspection and assessment. A written inspection form should be completed and minor repairs should be made immediately. Routine equipment maintenance and servicing must be scheduled and performed on a regular basis. A fund should be established to provide for new maintenance equipment and a regular replacement program. Maintenance staff should be trained in play equipment safety assessment. A Certified Playground Safety Inspector should be contracted to conduct a playground safety audit whenever playground equipment is changed or damaged.

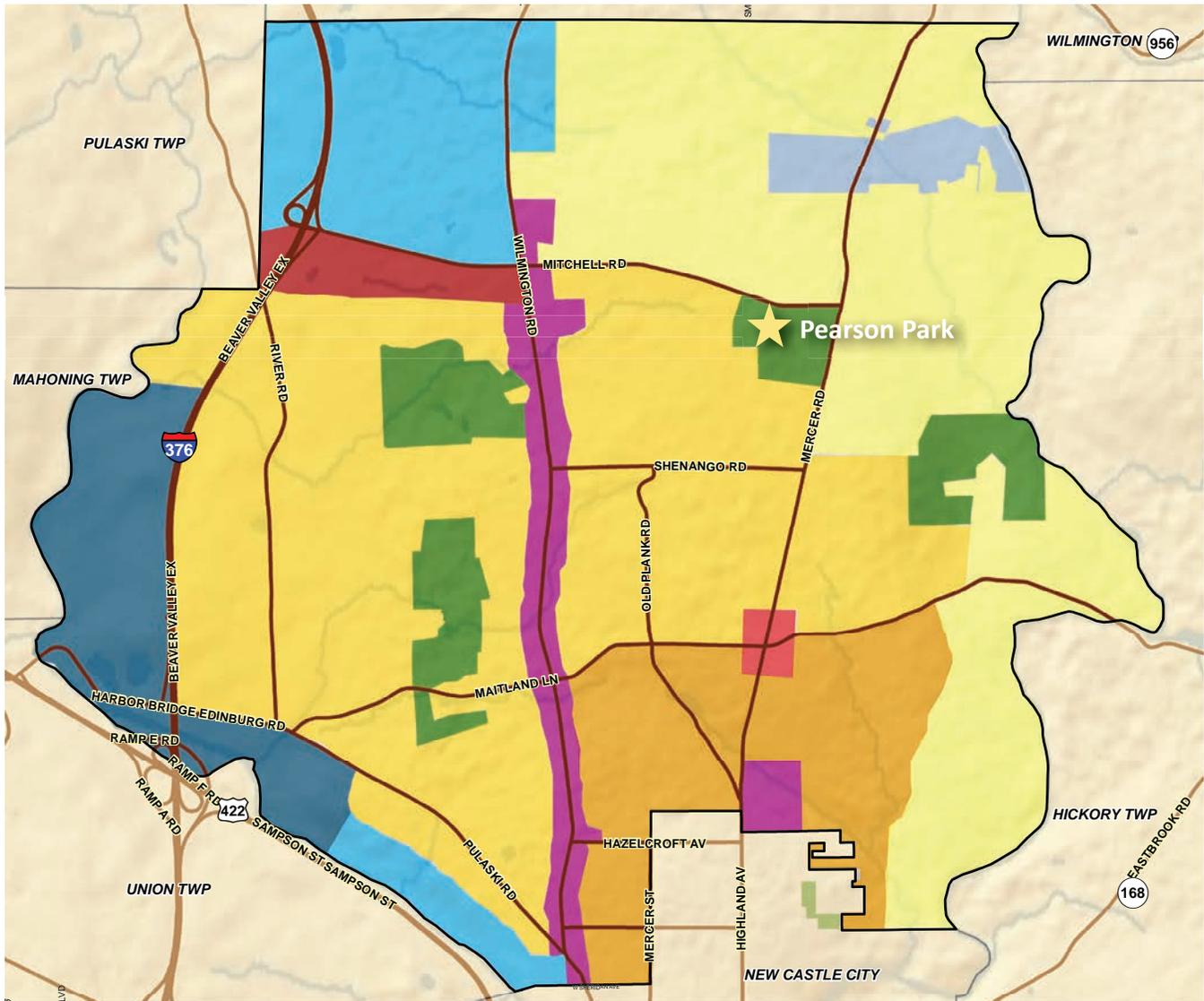
ADA Compliance

ADA compliance standards have continued to change over time. The 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act have been implemented to specifically address park and recreation facilities. These guidelines can be found at www.access-board.gov. A thorough ADA analysis of each park was completed as part of this plan. This analysis found that most of the Pearson Park facilities need to be brought into compliance with the ADA guidelines.



Surrounding Land Use

Figure 4. Our Community's Future Land Use Plan



Legend

- Privately-Owned Conservancy Land
- Industrial
- Light Industrial/Business Park
- Regional Commercial
- Local Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Medium - High Density Residential
- Public/Semi-Public Open Space

Land Use Acreage

Privately-Owned Conservancy Land	206 acres
Industrial	771 acres
Light Industrial/Business Park	1,078 acres
Regional Commercial	200 acres
Local Commercial	496 acres
Neighborhood Commercial	49 acre
Low Density Residential	2,869 acres
Medium Density Residential	3,834 acres
Medium-High Density Residential	1,072 acres
Public/Semi-Public Open Space	622 acres

The Township's recently adopted Comprehensive Plan includes a Future Land Use Plan that will guide future land use and development in Our Community. Pearson Park is ideally located to serve the growing residential development areas of the Township.

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



Bicycle Circulation

The Bicycle PA Route V, a 355-mile trail that traverses Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Union and several other counties. The trail runs through Neshannock Township offering unique transportation, and recreation opportunities. A complete street design should be reviewed during new development and road improvement projects to enhance and expand the trail network.

Figure 5. Existing Trail Network

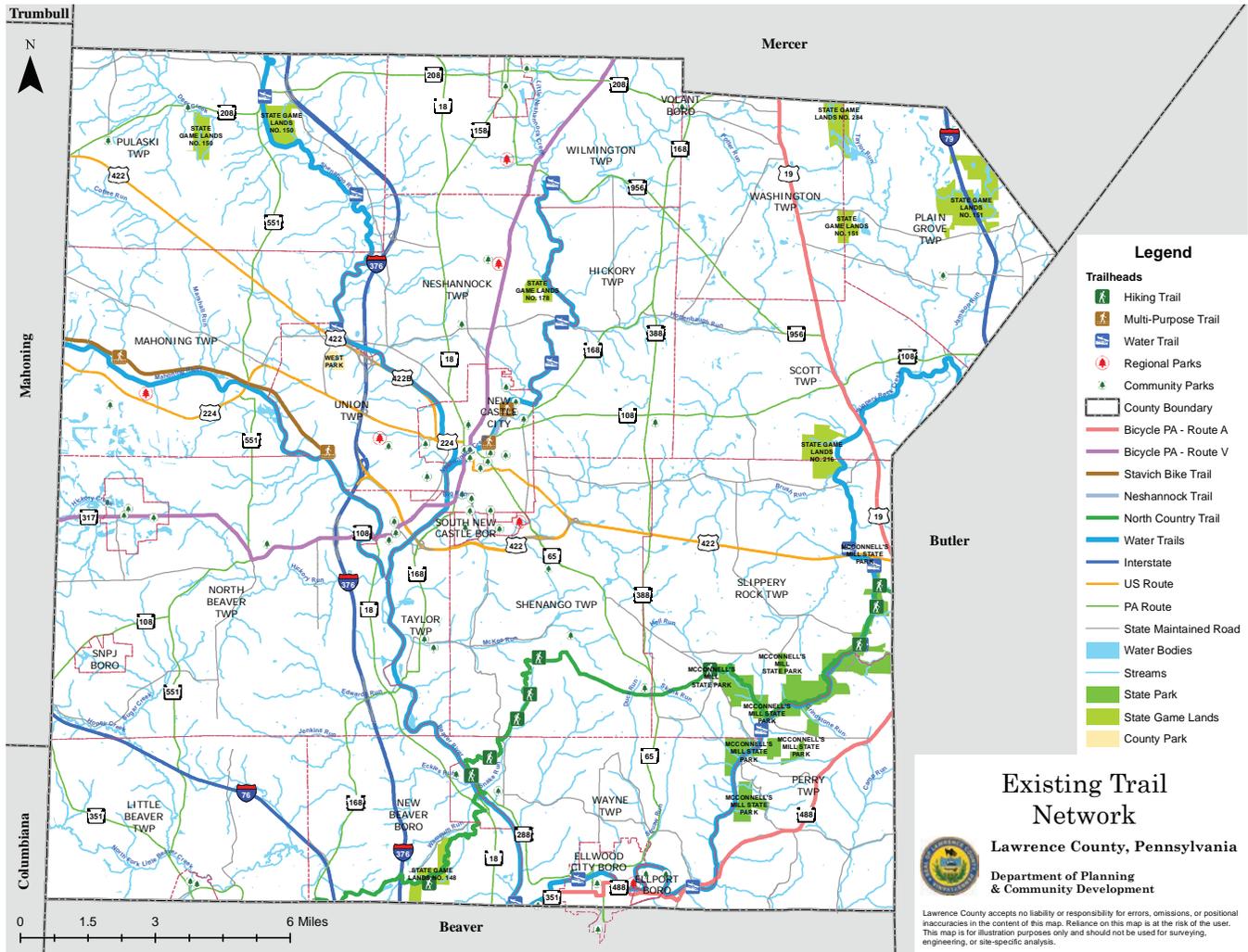
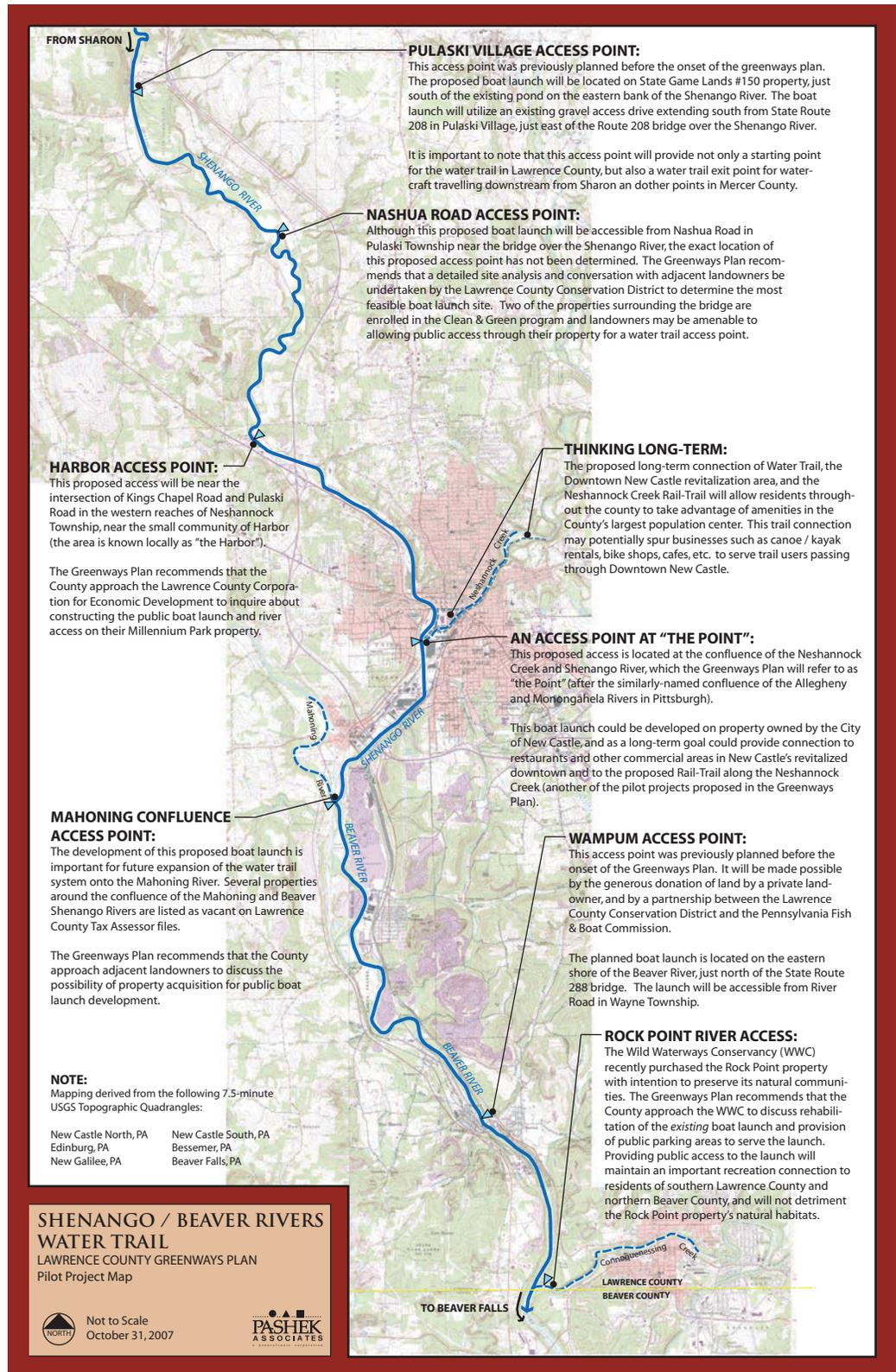


Figure 6. Shenango/Beaver Rivers Water Trail

The Harbor Access Point along the Shenango River presents an ideal opportunity to create a recreation destination point in Our Community.



Recreation Programming

Recreation programming is critical to the health and vitality of a community. Recreation programs promote wellness, active lifestyles, mind enrichment, personal growth, and relationship building among residents. Great communities offer great recreational programs to their residents.

Hess Ice Rink is home to nine youth teams plus two Kennedy Catholic Teams. Additional programs include Learn to Skate, private lessons, figure skating and free skate programs. Hess ballfield is utilized heavily by NAA Pony Teams. Other events include a music concert series, Community Day, Independence Day Celebration and programs such as yoga, fitness, and tennis lessons. Below is a sample of recreation program opportunities offered at Hess Ice Rink.

Figure 7. Hess Academy Pamphlet

HESS SKATING SCHOOL 2017/2018
Welcome to the Hess Skating School, our new Learn to Skate program @ Hess Ice Rink. We now offer superior instruction using the Learn to Skate USA program. Our highly qualified and competent staff will teach in the most rewarding and FUN way, guaranteeing the most enjoyable experience for everyone. The school is offered for all ages and levels. So if you're dreaming of Olympic gold, NHL fame or just recreational skating, this is the place to be!

SIGN UP TODAY

HESS ACADEMY
The Academy is our new extension program to Learn to Skate. Group instruction will provide figure skaters the opportunity to spin, jump and dance through skating, while hockey players will have the chance to "learn to play" the game.

PRIVATE LESSONS
Private instruction is available during any of our Academy Freestyle Sessions. Lessons will be offered by our Head Instructors, Sarah Cammarata and Melissa Magglio. Please contact them for more details.
Sarah: (330) 565-3388
Melissa: (724) 714-5920
USFSA & ISI testing & competition will be offered to all that register

(SATURDAY MORNINGS)
Session 1: Sept. 9, 16, 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, 21
Session 2: Nov. 4, 11, 18, 25, Dec. 2, 9, 16
Session 3: Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27, Feb. 3, 10, 17
Session 4: Mar. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14

SESSION TIMES
9:00-9:30am: Tots - Snowplow Sam 1-3
9:00-10:00am: Basic 1,2,3,4, Hockey & Adults

TOTS & SNOWPLOW SAM - \$60
BASIC 1-4, HOCKEY & ADULTS - \$100
(12 hr instruction & 1 hr supervised practice)

HESS ACADEMY
10:15-11:00am (\$12)

FEEES CAN BE PRO - RATED
START ANYTIME

REGISTER ONLINE AT:
www.hessicerink.com

LEARN TO SKATE USA REGISTRATION
All participants are encouraged to register with Learn to Skate USA. The membership fee for participants is \$16 per year and includes a welcome email, a welcome packet with their member card and number, skater record book, parent handbook, Learn to Skate USA magazine, sports accident insurance and information about ice skating. Learn to Skate USA offers an easy way to register at www.LearnToSkateUSA.com.

OUR MISSION
Our mission is to create and provide a positive and FUN environment for all skaters to learn, experience and enjoy the art of skating. The foundation of the program is based on a safe and solid skill progression that provides all skaters the necessary tools to reach their goal, be it recreational or competitive.

PLEASE DRESS WARM! GLOVES ARE A MUST. HELMETS ARE REQUIRED FOR THOSE 7 & UNDER. LOOSE LAYERS! THIN SOCKS WORK BEST FOR PROPER SKATE FIT.

HEAD INSTRUCTORS
Sarah Cammarata: has been skating for 25 years and teaching for 13 years. She has competed successfully at the Sr. level and traveled worldwide with "holiday on ice". Sarah teaches all levels & is a technical specialist in singles. She also trains hockey players and has been the power skating coach of the Youngstown Phantoms Hockey team.
Melissa Magglio: has been skating for 33 years & teaching for 18 years. She has skated on tour professionally and has been trained in the US & Canada. Melissa is a quadruple gold skater. She teaches all levels including USFSA, ISI and power skating.

The YMCA and Y-Zone provide a wide variety of programs including summer day camps, preschool programs, youth sports, adult sports and aquatics, swimming lessons, personal and small group training, childcare, senior programs (Silver Sneakers).

Points of Consideration

Our Community is rich in recreational resources, providing opportunities for residents to gather, socialize, participate, exercise, and play. Pearson Park remains a key focus recreational area and takes on a primary role in these planning efforts. The Township's population continues to grow, and an increase in demand for recreational programming and facilities should be expected. Significant capital improvements are needed to existing facilities, which will address safety, ADA accessibility issues, and increases in facility use and/or availability, further allowing for the expansion of programming opportunities.



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Chapter 2: Public Input





Public input is critical to create spaces that meet the needs of the community.

Public Input

Public participation was a key component to the development of Neshannock Township’s Parks and Recreation and Pearson Park Master Plan.

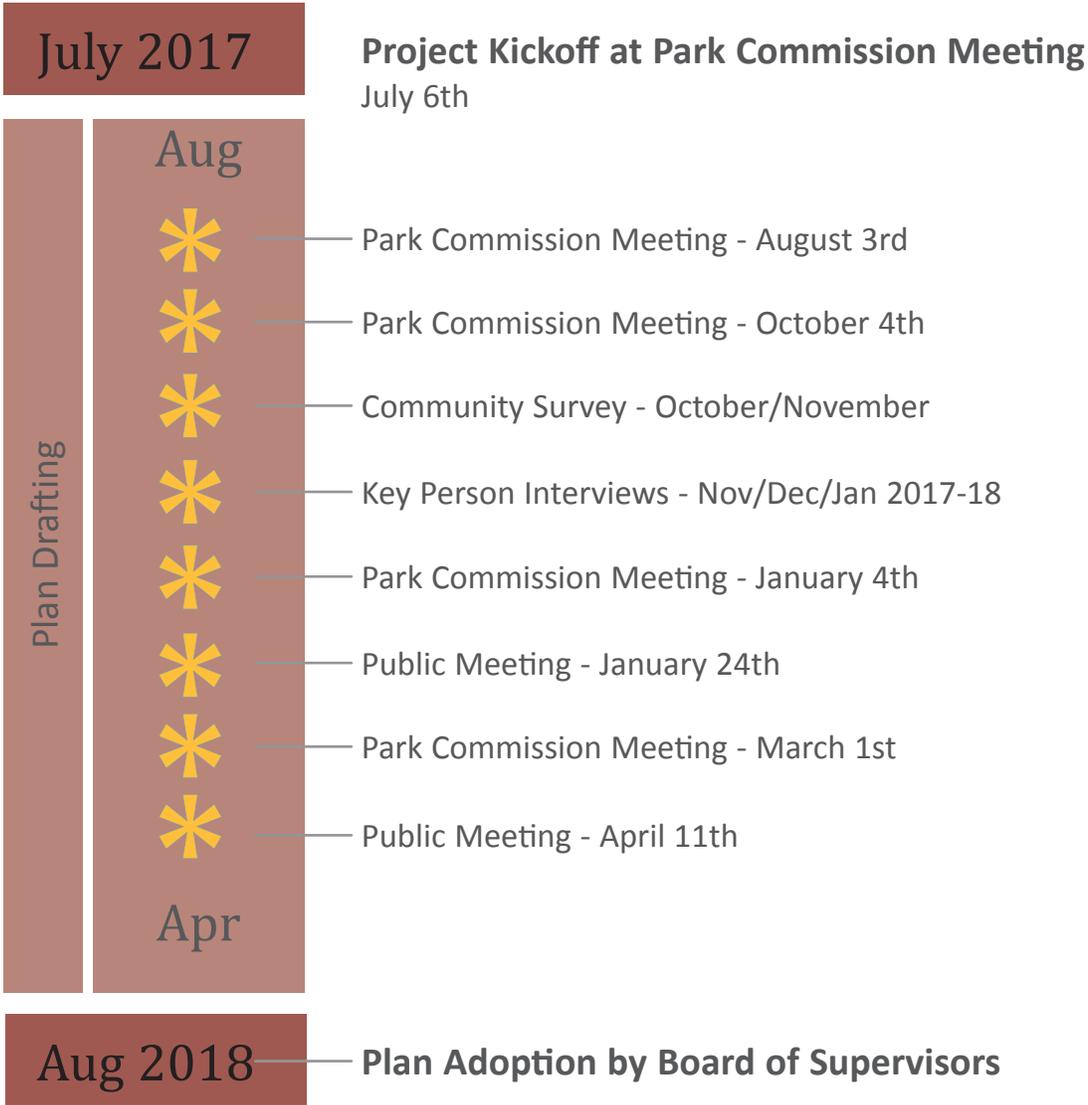
- The Neshannock Park Commission gathered seven times throughout the process to represent the community in meetings with the Consultant
- Two public meetings were held
- A digital recreation questionnaire was used to collect information concerning residents’ recreational interests
- Interviews were conducted with several individuals who represented a variety of interests in recreational opportunities and operations

Each public participation opportunity helped to understand the needs, desires, concerns and issues of Neshannock residents. This process sets up the final analysis and recommendations of the plans to be responsive to community needs. This chapter describes the public participation process and results. Additional details are provided in the Appendix.



Neshannock Park Commission

The ten-member Neshannock Park Commission met seven times throughout the planning process assisting the Consultant to understand community characteristics and to provide community interaction at each step of the Plan. The Commission was comprised of residents from the township, representing Neshannock Township School District, sports organizations, YMCA, Township Supervisors and staff. The varied interests of the Commission provided a balanced outlook at recreation, parks, and open space in Township.



Commission members' functions included:

- Acting as a sounding board for ideas as the plan was developed
- Representing the community throughout the process
- Assisting in the development of the public input forums
- Providing feedback as existing recreation facilities and programs were inventoried
- Identifying issues and concerns about parks and recreation
- Guiding the development of vision, goals, and strategies for implementation of the Plan

The Commission went through a two-step, group participation process to describe what it perceives as the key issues, opportunities, and concerns. The first step was to ascertain what the Commission thought was important to accomplish from the Plan. The second was to identify strengths, opportunities, concerns, and needs recreation in general and Pearson Park in particular. The following is a compilation of these comments, suggestions, and recommendations.

Sample Brainstorming Session Items...

- New baseball fields (at least two).
- Upgrade and expand ice rink (locker rooms, seating, mechanicals)
- Senior programming; growing senior population.
- Bike trail on park property.
- ADA upgrades to park facilities.
- Signage

Goals for the Plan...

- Serve as a partner Plan to the Township's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2017
- Gauge citizen desires and needs for recreational facilities and programs
- Tie it to a capital improvements plan so it becomes implementable
- Consider the balance between active and passive recreation opportunities
- Understand the current usage of facilities and evaluate the need for future facilities
- Include a financial component for implementation and operation



Top Ten Issues Identified (votes)

At a public meeting, attendees reviewed the recreation-related input and recommendations from the Township's 2017 Comprehensive Plan. The group also reviewed the purpose of the Recreation Plan and a brainstorming session provided residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions and identify key issues. Once the key issues were recorded, attendees prioritized them through a ranking process.

1. Hess Ice Rink Improvements - Built in 1991 (18)
 - Expansion
 - Locker Rooms
 - Seating
 - Mechanics
2. Connectivity (11)
 - Trails
 - Bike Lanes
 - Overall Township Connectivity
 - Connection to Ice Rink
3. Sport Facility Upgrades (10)
 - Tennis
 - Baseball
4. Additional Sports Facilities (9)
 - Mini Golf
 - Driving Range
 - Pickleball
 - Bocci
 - Horseshoes
 - Frisbee Golf
5. Renovation of Hutchinson Community Center - Built in 1974 (8)
6. Overall Upgrades and Modernization of Existing Facilities (5)
 - Restrooms
 - Pavilions
 - Address Mine Subsidence Between the Park and Ice Rink
 - ADA Upgrades
7. Community Events in the Park (3)
 - Festival of Lights
 - Holiday Events
8. Playground Renovations (2)
 - Nature Play
 - Splash Pad
9. Programs (1)
 - Seniors
 - Teens
 - Children
 - Art in the Park
 - Nature Programs
10. Partnerships
 - Neshannock Athletic Association
 - Garden Club
 - Lawrence County Lighting
 - Hess Skating Club
 - Rappit Tappetts
 - Prime Timmers
 - Neshannock School District
 - YMCA
 - Cray Youth and Family Services



Figure 8. Master Plan Alternative

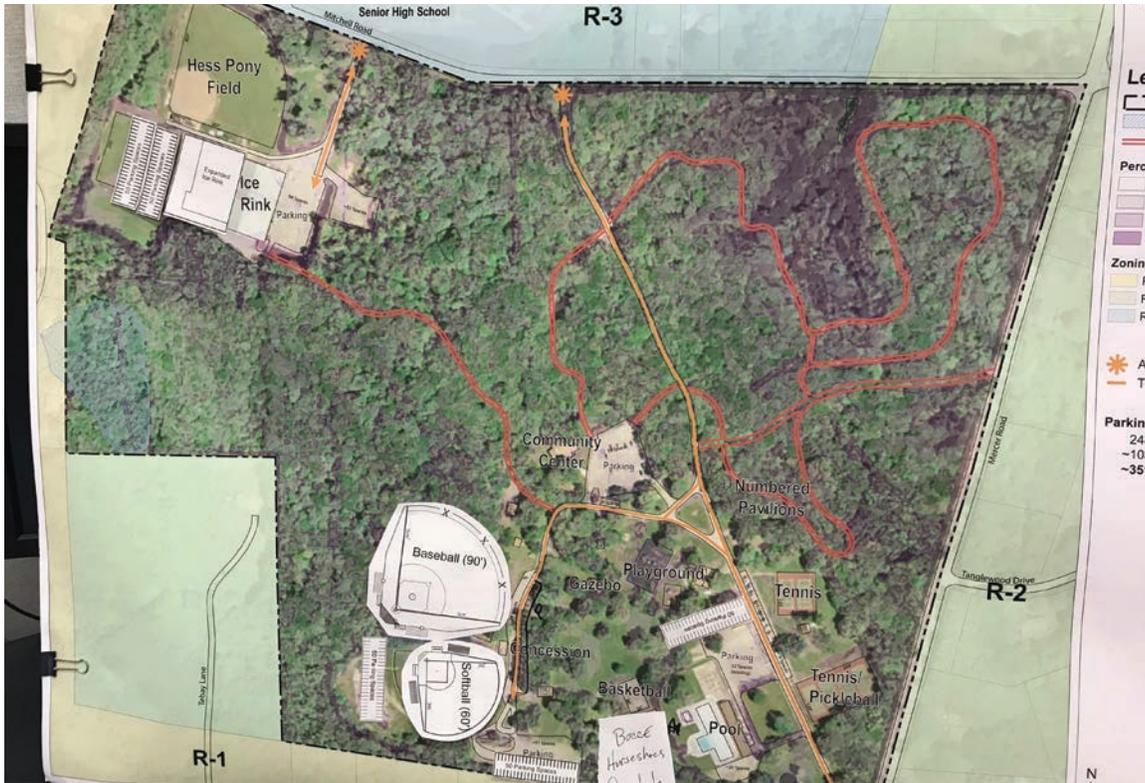


Figure 9. Master Plan Alternative



Questionnaire Results

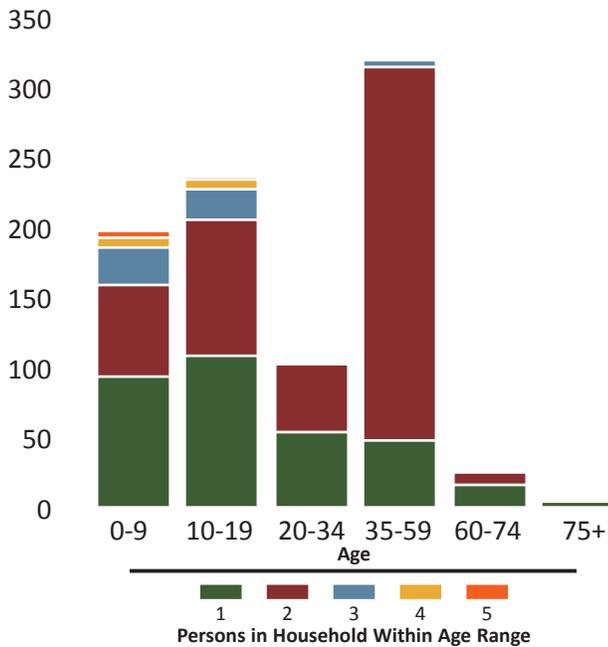
The questionnaire respondents were demographically comparable with the make-up of the Township. The 379 responses represented about 25% of the Neshannock Township residents. The following is a summary of the results -

The school district in which the respondents resided were: Neshannock School District (64%), New Castle School District (4.8%), and Wilmington School District (4.8%).

Others include 26 other School Districts including Hermitage (12), Grove City (6), Mercer (3). All others were represented by 1 or 2 responses. (Penn Trafford, Poland, OH; Moniteau, Moon, Keystone, Austintown, Boardman, Beaver Falls, Sharpsville, Canfield, Hampton, North Allegheny, Seneca, West Mifflin, Brookfield, Riverside, Slippery Rock, Howland, West Middlesex, Franklin, Liberty, and Canfield).

Families are the main patrons of Pearson Park and Hess Ice Rink. The Park has consistently high activity levels from spring to fall with the majority of users visiting the Park multiple times a week.

Table 6. Respondents' Age and Household Size



The majority of the respondents reported having two people in the age range of 35-59. The majority of the households had one to two people between 0-19 years of age. A minimal number of households had three or more persons within the age range of 0-19.

Respondents visit Pearson Park multiple times a week during the the Spring, Summer, and Fall while

fewer visit during the Winter. However, even during the winter the majority of respondents visit the park at least once a month. These responses indicate that the Park supports users throughout the year.

Table 7. Frequency of Park Visits

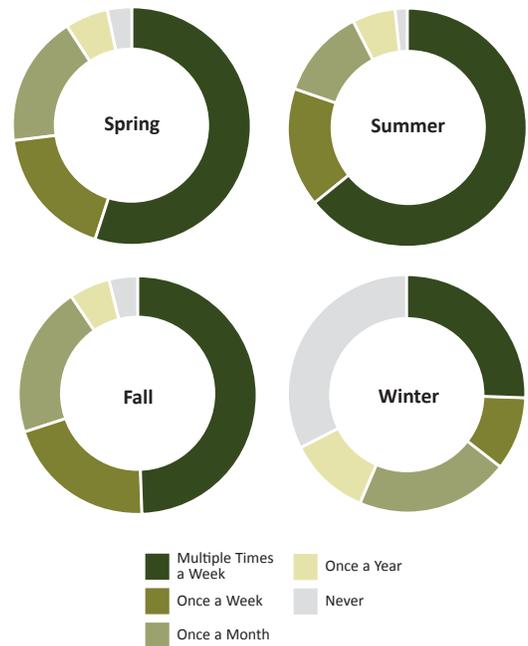
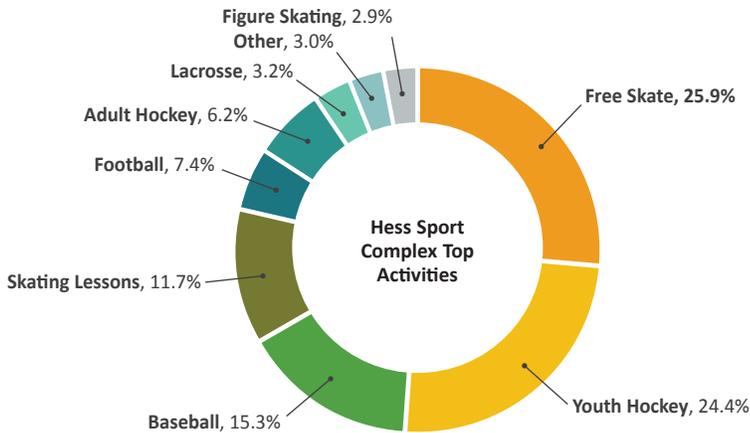


Table 8. Hess Sport Complex Top Activities



The respondents overwhelmingly support improvements to Pearson Park and Hess Sport Complex, with 92% saying yes to improvements.

The responses were analyzed to identify the top activities at the Hess Sport Complex. Free skate and youth hockey activities generate approximately half of the activity at the Complex. Although these are popular activities at the Complex, support infrastructure such as improved seating, locker rooms, and an upgraded lobby/concession stand were ranked in this order as improvements that are needed at the Complex.

The top assets used at Pearson Park were identified as well. The results are similar to the Hess Sports Complex as highly used assets are also in need of improvements to maintain and support the park infrastructure. The following ranking of improvements across various areas of the Park and Complex are shown below and on the next page. The top five improvements for each category are listed in a bar graph according to the number of survey responses that were recorded in order of importance.

Table 9. Top Three Assets Used at Pearson Park and Hess Sports Complex

1	Walking Trail/PF Stations
2	Playground
Tied-3	Picnic Shelters
Tied-3	Swimming Pool
Other Major Uses	
	Baseball
	Events
	Ice Rink
	Tennis

Table 10. Hess Sports Complex Improvements

- 1. Seating (52)
- 2. Locker Rooms (45)
- 3. Upgraded Lobby/Concession Stand (34)
- 4. New Scoreboard (28)
- 5. Expansion of Ice (16)

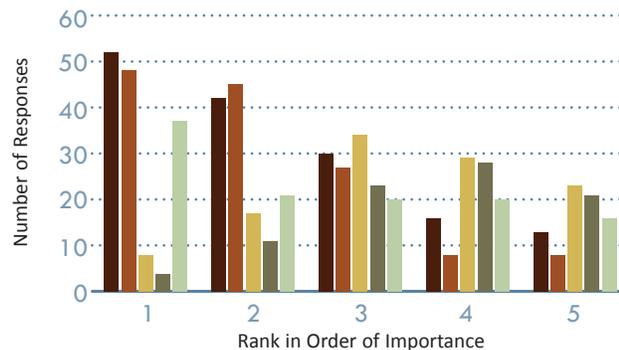


Table 11. General Improvements

- 1. Restroom Upgrade (118)
- 2. Playground Expansion (38)
- 3. Additional Trails (29)
- 4. Amitheater (22)
- 5. Additional Picnic Shelter (16)

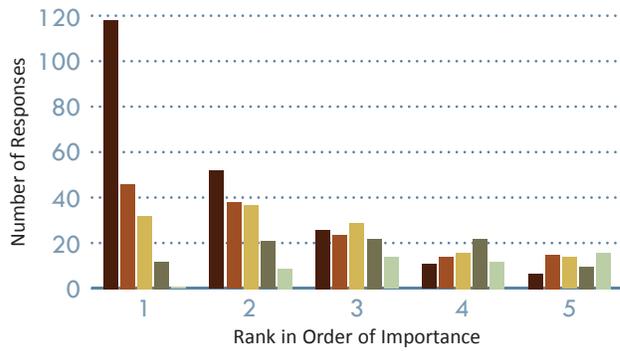


Table 12. Trail Improvements

- 1. Repair Existing Walking Trail (77)
- 2. New Hiking Trails (53)
- 3. New Nature Trails (52)
- 4. Additional Fitness Equipment (23)
- 5. New Bicycle Path/Trail (22)

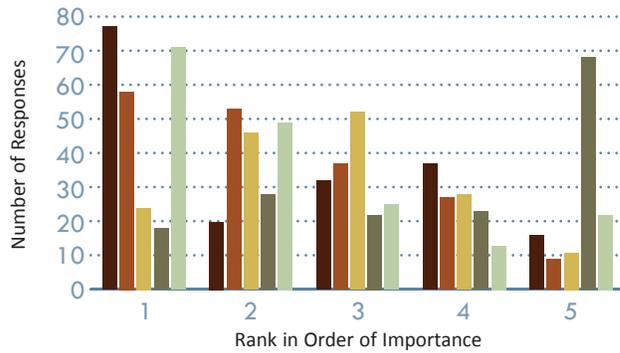


Table 13. Recreation Improvements

- 1. Updated Baseball/Softball Fields (65)
- 2. Additional Baseball/Softball Fields (51)
- 3. Additional Multipurpose Fields (47)
- 4. Mini Golf/Golfing Range (27)
- 5. Sand Volleyball (17)

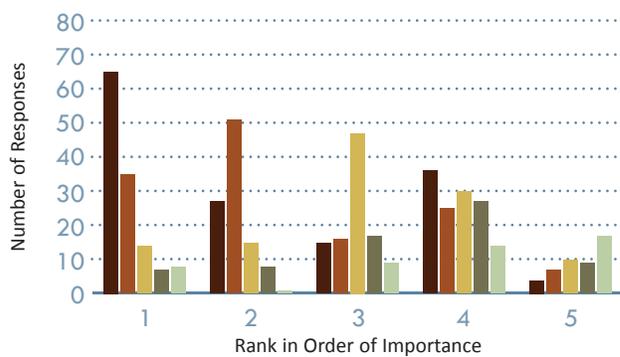
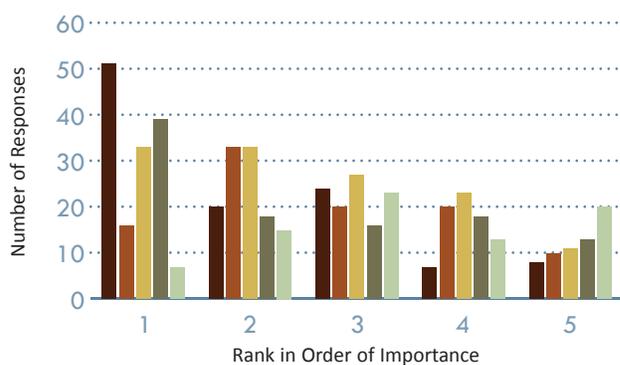


Table 14. Baseball Field Improvements

- 1. Addressing Field Drainage Issues (51)
- T-2 New Batting Cages (33)
- T-2 Playing Field Lights (33)
- 4. Bleachers
- 5. Repair/Replace Fencing



Key Person Interviews

Key Person Interviews were conducted with individuals who could provide valuable input regarding parks and recreation issues. Each person was questioned related to his/her interest or expertise in Neshannock Township parks, recreation, and open space. Interviews were conducted in one of four ways: in person, via telephone, via email, Township, and the Consultant.



Pearson Park has great trails, consistent programming “in season”, options for recreation, baseball, basketball, tennis, pool), and rental facilities for large and small gatherings with convenient access to water and electric. With exception of rentals, access to recreation is free or low cost.



Lawrence County Lightning Hockey-Lawrence County Lightening Hockey utilizes Hess Ice Rink six/seven days a week for many hours at a time. Additional locker rooms at Hess would have an immediate impact on attendance at the Rink. It will provide the ability to host tournaments.



The Township provides organized baseball and softball for the youth, the walking trail, free recreation with tennis and basketball courts, inexpensive summer programs, free summer concert series, July 4th and Community Day activities.



Facilities that are in place are top notch, well maintained, and well organized.



Evaluate the financial impacts of ongoing maintenance and needed upgrades to the ice rink. Should the management of the facility be outsourced?



Common Themes

- Enhance the Township’s budget allocation for regular park facility maintenance.
- Capital upgrades to Pearson Park facilities are top priority.
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and trails within the park (and ultimately throughout the Township).
- Continue recreation program expansion for all ages.

These common themes were used as the basis to develop the vision, goals, and strategies which are detailed in this Plan's recommendations.



Chapter 3: Recommendations





Future investment into Our Community begins with a vision and goals.

Recommendations

This plan for the future of our parks is focused on successful implementation of high-priority needs at Pearson Park.

The success of this plan is based on the process of **fulfilling the vision** of the Neshannock Township for its parks, recreation, and open space, by **meeting specific goals** for each of the identified key issues, and **implementing the detailed strategies** for each goal. Every step plays a significant role in ensuring this plan becomes a useful tool in moving the Township towards meeting the current and future recreational needs of the residents.

Pearson Park, including Hess Ice Rink, provides a variety of recreation opportunities for Township residents. The wide variety of facilities and size of the Park allows it to successfully accommodate current needs. There are opportunities to accommodate Our Community's growing population through upgrading existing facilities and adding new facilities to the Park. Because Pearson Park is the current and future focus of parks and recreation in Our Community, it is the main focus of the recommendations of this Plan.



Vision for the Future

- Recognized as Neshannock Township Parks and Recreation, having a recognizable identity
- Dedicated funding for future park maintenance and development
- Provide and promote recreation programs for all ages and abilities
- Provide a quality park system that is well maintained and safe for all participants
- Promote health and wellness through active recreation programs and facilities
- Connecting residents to the riverfront
- Cooperatively create connections throughout the Township and County
- Provide a safe place to play, celebrate, and gather

Benefits

Good parks, open space and program services contribute to economic development by fostering economic benefits and promoting tourism. Environmentally, they provide green infrastructure and help manage climate change. Socially, they revitalize communities, create safer neighborhoods, help children learn and grow, improve public and environmental health, and support smart growth. Culturally, open space and program services can nurture a sense of place in the community, and provide opportunities to engage the public.

Greenways and Natural Resources

Efforts should be taken to guide growth, development, and redevelopment in a manner which:

- Maintains and enhances the storm water capacity
- Maintains and enhances water quality filtration functions
- Maintains and enhances groundwater recharge
- Reduces flooding
- Maintains and increases streamside vegetative buffers
- Protects steep slopes from erosion
- Creates a Greenway Master Plan to connect points of interest, including schools, parks, the YMCA, the Route 18 corridor, and river access points

These objectives can be obtained in multiple ways. Non-profit organizations within the region can assist with education, awareness, and implementation efforts related to the conservation of natural systems greenway corridors within Neshannock Township. These include:

- Center for Healthy Environments & Communities, University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, www.chec.pitt.edu
- Foundation for Pennsylvania's Watersheds, www.pennsylvaniawatersheds.org
- Pennsylvania Environmental Council, www.pecpa.org/region/southwest
- Pennsylvania Resources Council, www.prc.org
- Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, www.pawatersheds.org



River Access

- Construct the Harbor access point near the intersection of Kings Chapel Road and Pulaski Road in the western reaches of Neshannock Township near the small community of Harbor.
- Work with the County and Lawrence County Corporation for Economic Development to inquire about increasing the visibility of the public boat launch and river access on their Millennium Park property.
- Connect the Neshannock Creek Rail-Trial with the water trail and the downtown New Castle Revitalization Area to potentially spur businesses such as canoe/kayak rentals, bike shops, cafes etc.

Neshannock Township Potential Programs

Recreational programming plays an important role in the overall health and vitality of a community. Programming options in Our Community could be enhanced and strengthened by exploring national trends, technological advancements, changing public interests, and input from residents. The following programs are potential additional offerings -

- Summer Camps
- Nature Camps
- Schools Out Programs
- Craft Fair
- Earth Day Event
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Household Hazardous Waste Event
- Movies in the Park
- Trunk Sale
- Babysitting Training
- Family Campout
- Master Gardener Classes
- CPR/First Aid
- Engineering for Kids
- Cooking Classes
- Preschool Programs - Dance, Art, Sports, etc.
- Special Needs Programs
- Puppy/Dog Obedience
- Dino Dig
- Nature Hikes
- Snapolog/Legos
- Senior Programs - Luncheons, Cards, Bingo, Fitness
- Junior Golf Programs
- Learn to Canoe
- Learn to Fish



Pearson Park Master Plan

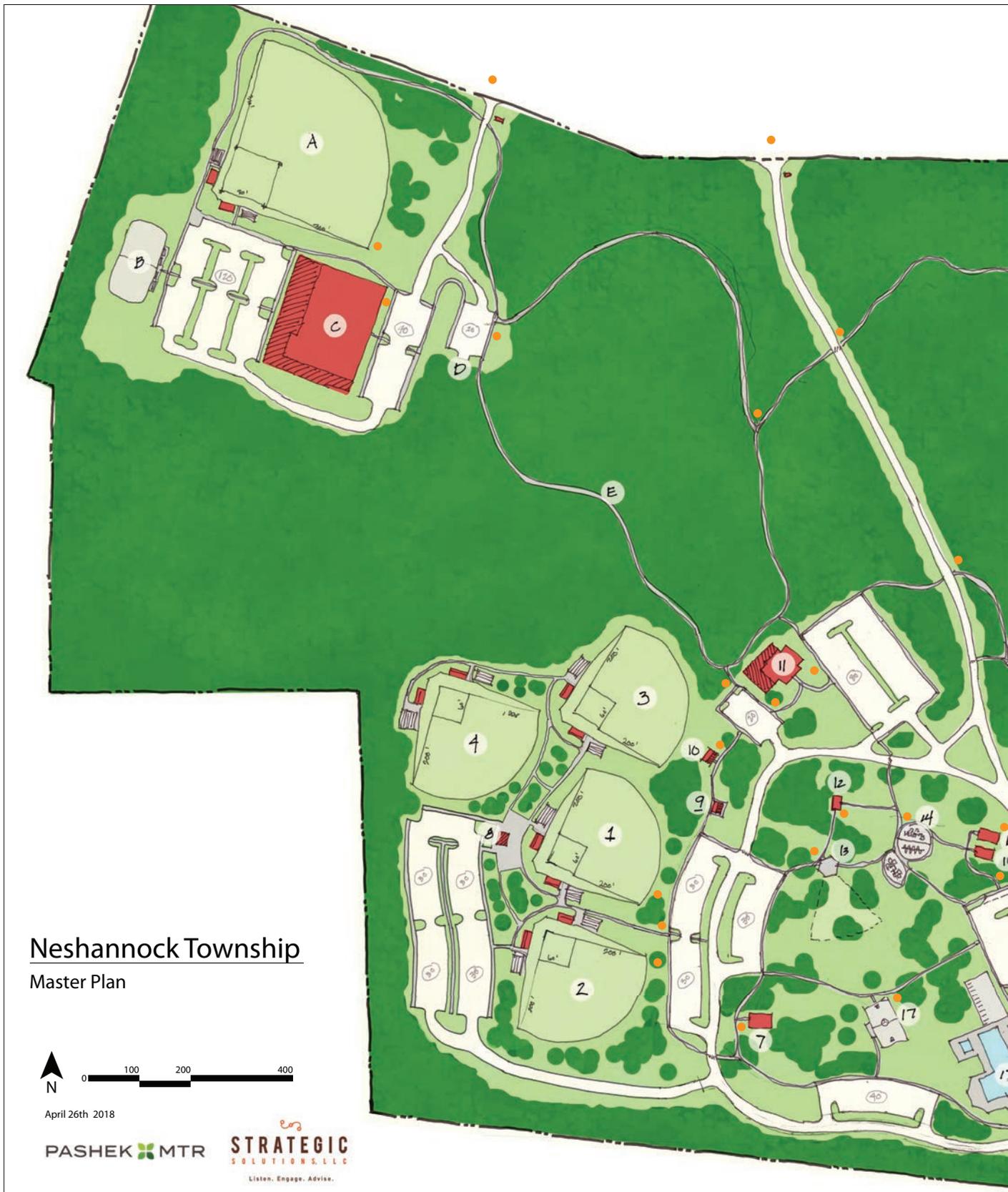
The Pearson Park Master Plan, as illustrated on the following pages and described in detail by the projects listed below, represents Our Community’s plan for full upgrade and build-out of the Park and its facilities to accommodate current and future residents of the Township. The projects described below represents significant investment in the primary recreation opportunities in Our Community. Upgrading the facilities in Pearson Park will allow for accommodation of both additional programs and events, as well as additional residents as Our Community’s population grows. The primary focus of recreation-related investment for the foreseeable future will be Pearson Park. Maintaining this focus through multi-year capital investment and regular annual maintenance upgrades will ensure that Pearson Park continues to be the recreation jewel of Our Community.

Table 15. Pearson Park Master Plan Project List and Cost Estimates

	Description	Cost Estimate Breakdown	Cost Estimate
1	Expansion of Hess Ice Rink including new locker rooms, additional parking, and trail connection to main park	60' x 200' = 12,000 SF x \$150/SF = \$1,800,000 Parking, signage, and trail connection = \$400,000	\$2,200,000
2	Playground upgrades including safety improvements, access, and new parking	Playground upgrades = \$350,000 Parking and access = \$175,000	\$525,000
3	Hutchinson Community Center expansion, parking, and addition of park office	Expansion of 2,800 SF x \$150/SF = \$420,000 20 parking spaces = \$150,000	\$570,000
4	Restroom upgrades and parking	Two restrooms at \$100,000 = \$200,000 40 parking spaces and walkways = \$300,000	\$500,000
5	New gazebo including ADA access and parking	Gazebo = \$75,000 Walkways and parking = \$25,000	\$100,000
6	Upgrade trail network including wayfinding and trailhead parking	Trail improvements and wayfinding = \$75,000 20 parking spaces = \$150,000	\$225,000
7	Reorient Field 1 and 2, construct a new concession building, and construct 40 parking spaces	Field reconstruction = \$250,000 Concession building = \$75,000 40 parking spaces = \$300,000	\$875,000
8	Construction of maintenance building including parking, fencing, and gate	30' x 35' building at \$100/SF = \$100,000 Parking, fencing, and gates = \$50,000	\$150,000
9	Upgrade three picnic shelters including ADA parking and walkways	3 picnic picnic shelters at \$100/SF = \$300,000 Walkways and 20 parking spaces = \$150,000	\$450,000
10	Upgrade three picnic shelters including ADA parking and walkways	3 picnic picnic shelters at \$100/SF = \$300,000 Walkways and 20 parking spaces = \$150,000	\$450,000
11	Construction of road connection and parking along southern border	Road construction = \$150,000 20 parking spaces = \$150,000	\$300,000
12	Upgrade Hess Ballfield including repairs, 30 parking spaces, and field lighting	Ballfield repairs = \$50,000 30 parking spaces = \$300,000 Field lighting = \$200,000	\$550,000
13	Upgrade tennis courts including resurfacing, lighting, and parking	Resurface 4 tennis courts at \$30,000 each = \$120,000 Lighting = \$50,000 20 parking spaces = \$150,000	\$320,000
Total Master Plan Cost Estimate			\$7,215,000
Additional Projects:			
	Construction of a deck hockey rink with funds from the Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation Project Power Play	Construction of the rink should occur when outside funding becomes available	n/a
	Addition of an air supported cover over two tennis courts as well as additional upgrades stated in Goal 4	Construction should occur when outside funding becomes available	\$375,000



Figure 10. Pearson Park Master Plan





LEGEND

● Wayfinding Signage

1. Diamond Shaped Field 1 (200') - Upgrade
 2. Diamond Shaped Field 2 (200') - Upgrade
 3. Diamond Shaped Field 2 (200') - New
 4. Diamond Shaped Field 2 (200') - New
 5. Maintenance Storage/Stockpiles - New
 6. Maintenance Building (35' x 35') - New
 7. Shelter (25' x 45') - Upgrade
 8. Concessions Stand and Restrooms - New
 9. Restrooms - New
 10. Shelter - Upgrade
 11. Community Center/Park Office - Expanded
 12. Shelter (20' x 25') - Upgrade
 13. Gazebo - New
 14. Playground - Upgrade
 15. Shelter (25' x 40') - Upgrade
 16. Shelter (20' x 40') - Upgrade
 17. Basketball Court - Existing
 18. Pool Complex - Existing
 19. Water Tower - Existing
 20. Tennis/Pickleball Courts (4) - Upgrade
 21. Restrooms - New
 22. Park/Tennis Office - Upgrade
 23. Tennis Courts with air supported dome (2) - New
 24. Shelter (15' x 20') - Upgrade
 25. Trails - Upgrade
-
- A. Hess Ball Field (300') - Upgrade
 - B. Penguins Deck Hockey Court - New
 - C. Ice Rink - Expanded
 - D. Trailhead/Ice Rink Overflow Parking - New
 - E. Trail connection between Ice Complex and remaining park - Upgrade with minor realignment and expansion



Figure 11. Pearson Park Master Plan - Phasing Priorities



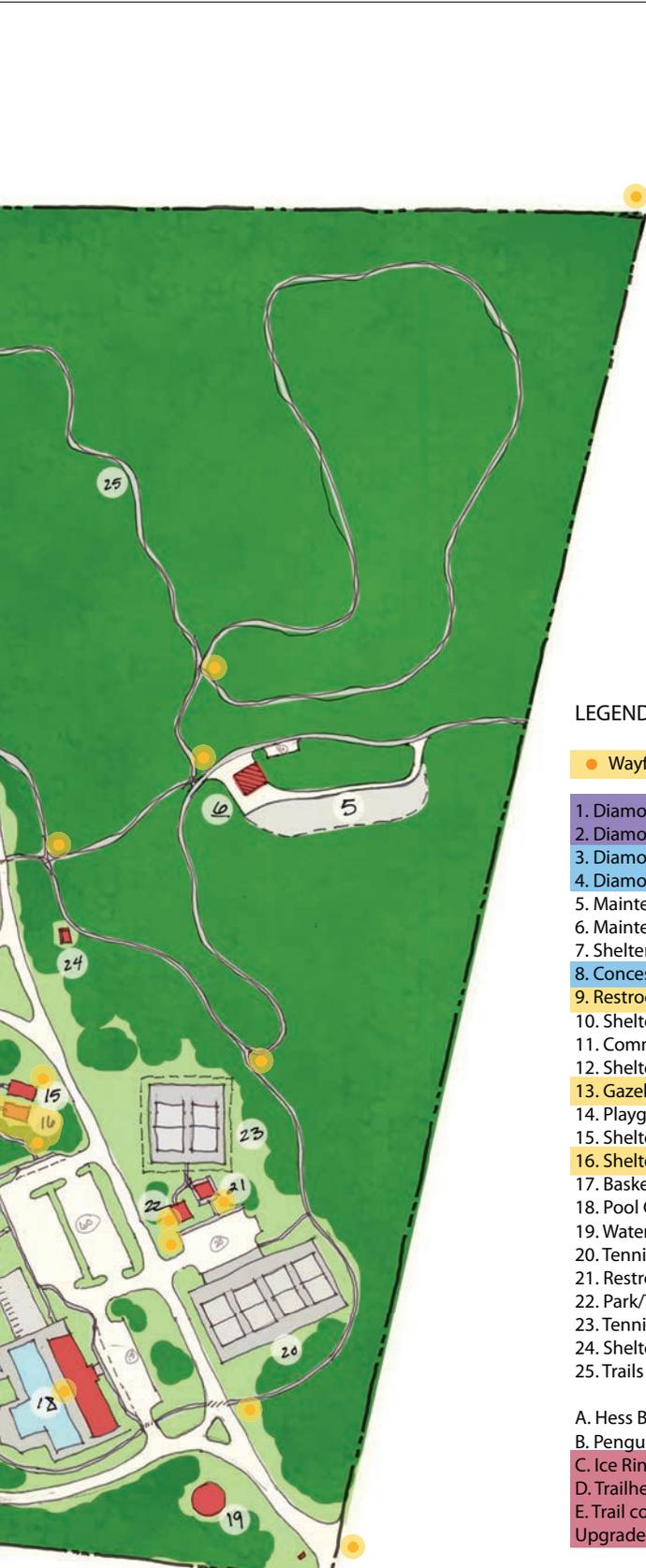
Neshannock Township
Master Plan



April 26th, 2018

PASHEK MTR

STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS LLC
Listen. Engage. Advise.



PHASING PRIORITIES

- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3
- Priority 4

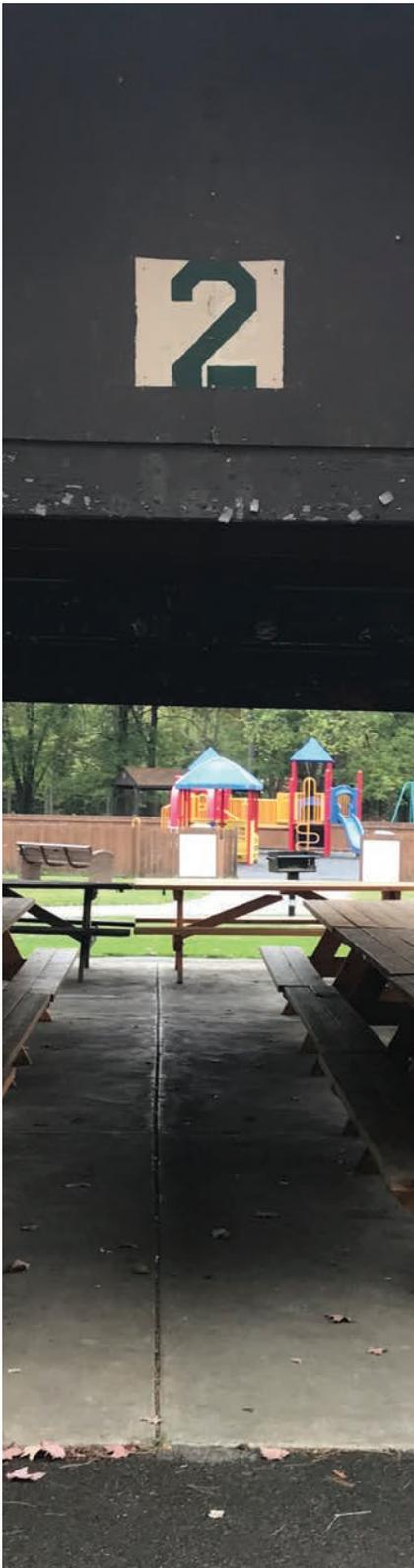
LEGEND

Wayfinding Signage

- 1. Diamond Shaped Field 1 (200') - Upgrade
- 2. Diamond Shaped Field 2 (200') - Upgrade
- 3. Diamond Shaped Field 2 (200') - New
- 4. Diamond Shaped Field 2 (200') - New
- 5. Maintenance Storage/Stockpiles - New
- 6. Maintenance Building (35' x 35') - New
- 7. Shelter (25' x 45') - Upgrade
- 8. Concessions Stand and Restrooms - New
- 9. Restrooms - New
- 10. Shelter - Upgrade
- 11. Community Center/Park Office - Expanded
- 12. Shelter (20' x 25') - Upgrade
- 13. Gazebo - New
- 14. Playground - Upgrade
- 15. Shelter (25' x 40') - Upgrade
- 16. Shelter (20' x 40') - Upgrade
- 17. Basketball Court - Existing
- 18. Pool Complex - Existing
- 19. Water Tower - Existing
- 20. Tennis/Pickleball Courts (4) - Upgrade
- 21. Restrooms - New
- 22. Park/Tennis Office - Upgrade
- 23. Tennis Courts with air supported dome (2) - New
- 24. Shelter (15' x 20') - Upgrade
- 25. Trails - Upgrade

- A. Hess Ball Field (300') - Upgrade
- B. Penguins Deck Hockey Court - New
- C. Ice Rink - Expanded
- D. Trailhead/Ice Rink Overflow Parking - New
- E. Trail connection between Ice Complex and remaining park - Upgrade with minor realignment and expansion





Project Details

Upgrade and Modernize Existing Facilities at Pearson Park

- Prepare an updated topographic survey of Pearson Park to allow for proper design and construction of future upgrades and new facilities
- Apply for a Community Conservation Grant through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in April 2018 for Priority #1 Projects
- Annually work with staff to identify annual maintenance projects
- 2018- Pearson playground: replace safe surfacing in fenced playground, remove or repair hazards as identified in the Playground Safety Audit
- Consider bond issue, to be funded in part through revenue generated by the recreation tax, that will fund the Hess Ice Rink, ballfield reorientation, installation of upgraded power supply, and installation of roadway lighting.

Pearson Park DCNR Grant Scope

Table 16. High Priority 1 Projects

	DCNR	Township
9. New restroom near gazebo, ballfields, trail, and playground. Includes ADA access, and 20 parking spaces which includes ADA accessible parking space	\$100,000	\$150,000
13. New gazebo including ADA access and parking	\$75,000	\$25,000
Upgrade shelter (#2 near ballfields) that will include ADA access and seven parking spaces	\$100,000	\$50,000
Throughout. Wayfinding signage to entrances, trails, facilities, roads, and river access	\$25,000	\$25,000
Neshannock Township in-kind services (includes survey)		\$50,000
Total	\$300,000	\$300,000

Table 17. High Priority 2 Projects

	DCNR	Township
3./4. Construct two new 200' ballfields (at \$250,000 each) including clearing/grading, and stormwater and accessibility improvements	-	\$500,000
8. Construct new concession/restroom facility	-	\$150,000
Associated with 3./4./8. Construct 120 parking spaces including ADA parking spaces	-	\$600,000
Total	-	\$1,250,000



Table 18. High Priority 3 Projects ■

	DCNR	Township
1./2. Upgrade Field 1 and 2*	-	\$500,000
Baseball Association committed funding	-	-\$75,000
Total	-	\$425,000

*Projects will be funded with a 2018 bond issue

Table 19. Moderate Priority: Pearson Park Improvements

	DCNR	Township
7./10./12./15./24. Upgrade remaining five picnic shelters, provide ADA access, and construct 30 parking spaces	-	\$300,000
14. Upgrade playground	-	\$525,000
Total	-	\$825,000

Update and Expand Hess Ice Rink

Expansion of Hess Ice Rink including new locker rooms, seating, additional parking and trail connection to main park. Other upgrades include:

- Construct locker room addition. The need for locker rooms is a priority at the ice rink. The expansion would allow the addition of locker rooms as well as renovation of concession stand, additional seating and lobby area.
- Increase seating capacity. Seating capacity is currently 40. An additional 200 seats are recommended to be added.
- Replace dehumidification system

The upgrades to the facility will allow for additional programs and leagues to use the ice. This would provide additional revenue for future improvements.

Potential Funding Sources

- CFA Grant February 1 - May 31; maximum funding is \$250,000 with a 15% match
- Pittsburgh Penguin Foundation, Operation Restore
- Explore funding through County oil and gas funding
- Township Bond issue

Table 20. High Priority 4 Projects ■

	Township
C. Expand facility by 60' x 200' 12,000 SF x \$150/SF	\$1,800,000
D./E. Construct parking, signage, and trail connections	\$400,000
Total	\$2,200,000





Expand Hutchinson Community Center

There is a desire by the residents to update and expand the Hutchinson Community Center. The capacity is currently 150. Expansion of an enclosed, heated patio in the rear of the center could expand the center to a capacity of 250, which would allow larger venues such as weddings. The patio could be designed to be able to open during the summer months by “garage doors”. Expanding the center into the rear would promote the beauty of the wooded area of the park and provide great photo opportunities. The renovation and expansion would also increase the revenue opportunities. During the design phase of the expansion, the incorporation of a park office should be discussed. The existing park office near the tennis courts could be converted to a tennis programming headquarters and/or additional storage.

Table 21. Moderate Priority: Expand Hutchison Community Center

	Township
11. Expand Hutchinson Community Center by 2,800 SF	\$420,000
Associated with 11. Construct 20 parking spaces	\$150,000
Total	\$570,000

Improve Hess Ball Field

Table 22. Moderate Priority: Improve Hess Ball Field

	Township
A. Upgrade/Repair Ballfield	\$50,000
Total	\$50,000

Pedestrian Connectivity

- Recording the developed sidewalk standards into the local ordinances and enforcing them
- Developing a standard for construction and maintenance of sidewalks, including repair of deteriorated sidewalks
- Connecting critical gaps in the existing sidewalk network
- Sidewalk connections to all schools and parks
- Proper pavement markings, signage, and signalized crossing are in place



Resurface Tennis Courts, Improve Lighting, and Expand Parking

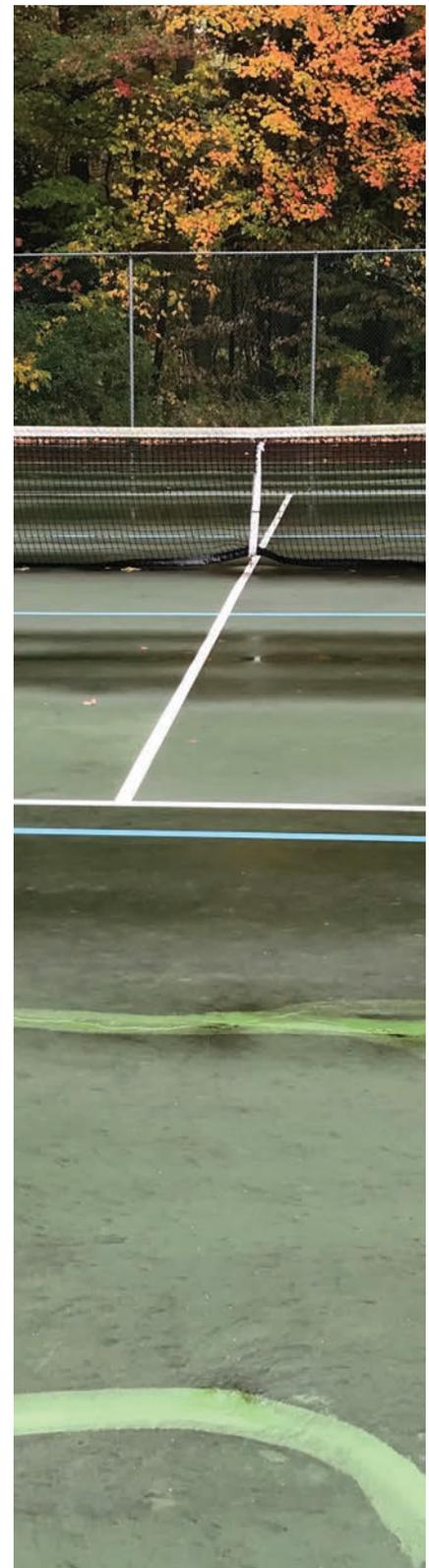
Table 23. Moderate Priority: Improve Tennis Courts

	Township
Resurface four tennis courts	\$120,000
Lighting	\$50,000
Construct 20 parking spaces	\$150,000
Total	\$320,000

Improve Maintenance Grounds

Table 24. Moderate Priority: Improve Maintenance Grounds

	Township
Construct 30' x 35' building	\$100,000
Construct parking, fencing, and gates	\$50,000
Total	\$150,000





Connectivity

Based on public input including, key person interviews and the on-line questionnaire, the most popular activity at Pearson Park is walking, hiking, jogging. The current trails are an excellent amenity for all ages.

Additional trails throughout the park should be designed with future community connections in mind. A clear connection from the ice rink to the park should be constructed so that pedestrians can access both facilities year-round. Way-finding signage should be placed in key areas including trailheads and park entrances. During the design phase, an additional half mile loop between the ice rink parking and the community center should be evaluated. This addition could also tie directly into the existing 1.5-mile trail network. Strategy: Create a Focus Group to Identify Potential Funding Sources

- Create an Ordinance to assure dedicated bike lanes, trails, and sidewalks are identified and developed throughout the Township
- Create a partnership with Lawrence County Planning Department to create connections with other communities
- Improve trail connection on both sides of Pearson Park (Hess Sports Complex and main park area)
- Implement consistent wayfinding throughout the Township and Pearson Park
- Construct additional trails
- Construct bike lane additions in conjunction with road paving schedules
- Improve overall Township connectivity. Focus on connecting destinations along Mitchell Road, Mercer Road, Maitland Lane, and Wilmington Road Update Tennis Courts



Additional facilities discussed for Pearson Park but have not been identified as current priorities:

- Miniature golf
 - One to two acres would be needed for an average size course
 - Cost of construction would be \$100,000-\$200,000
 - A concession area or the park office would need to serve as a concession to provide balls, clubs, scorecards, and execute payment
- Deck hockey rink
 - Potential funding could come from the Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation Project Power Play
- Air supported cover over two tennis courts as well as proposed upgrades stated in Goal 4
 - Construction should occur when outside funding becomes available
 - Cost of construction would be \$375,000
- Disc golf course
- Bocci, horseshoe pits, and cornhole
 - Should be located near the pavilions for use by the renters
- Splash pad
 - Analysis and discussion regarding a feasibility study should take place if and when the pool is scheduled for upgrades or ownership changes
- Dog park
 - Two acres minimum



Appendix



Comprehensive Plan Parks and Recreation Needs Brainstorming Session

August 4, 2016

- New baseball fields (at least two)
- Upgrade and expand ice rink
 - Locker rooms, seating, and mechanicals
- Mine subsidence issue between the park and ice rink
- Senior programming for a growing senior population
- Mini-golf
- Driving range
- Bike trail on park property
- Bike lanes on roads or paved shoulders
- Crosswalks and sidewalks
- Splash pads
- ADA upgrades to park facilities
- Signage
 - Identify parts of the parks and facilities
 - Welcome
 - Directional
- Connection to ice rink from park
 - Clearer, year-round connection
- Timbering/woods clean-up
- Plant and animal interpretation signs
- Upgrade and modernize existing facilities is an overarching goal
- Opportunities for all ages within the park
- Regionalization and coordination
 - Pooling of resources
 - Township, school district, non-profits, YMCA
- Opportunities for community fundraising in parks
- Educational components
 - Kids learning opportunities
 - Classes
- Picnic shelters
- Renovation of Hutchinson Community Center (built in 1974)



- Related organizations
 - Neshannock Athletic Association
 - Garden Club
 - Lawrence County Lightning (hockey)
 - Greater Youngstown Figure Skatin
 - School district
 - Cray Youth and Family Services
 - Lions Club
 - YMCA
 - Rappit Tappetts
 - Neshannock Pool Association
 - Pool is a separate entity
 - Owned by the Association
 - Prime Timers
 - Challenges / Catholic Charities
 - Options in Aging
- Court sports needed
 - Pickleball
 - Bocci
 - Horsehoes
 - Frisbee golf
- Festival of lights event / holiday events in the parks

Park Budget

per year

Table 25. Park Budget

Description	Budget
Salaries, etc	\$115,000
Pearson Park	\$177,000
Hess Ice Rink	\$287,000
Total	+/- \$580,000*

*Approximately \$100,000 of total is spent on annual capital improvements



Neshannock Park Commission Meeting

January 8, 2018

Hutchinson Community Center

In attendance: **Joe Gurlach**, *Neshannock Township Supervisor*
Leslie Bucci, *Neshannock Township Supervisor*
Don Kemerer, *Neshannock Park Commission*
Mark Daugherty, *Neshannock Park Commission*
Mark Bucci, *Neshannock Parks and Recreation Director*
Chris Naurra, *Neshannock Parks and Recreation*
Jim Pashek, *Pashek+MTR*
William Cosgrove, *Neshannock School Board*
Todd Chamberlain, *Lawrence County Lightning Hockey*
Nancy Lowry, *New Castle News*

Meeting Outline

- Introductions
- What have we learned about the park site?
- Site Analysis/Assessment
 - **Park Ownership** - Township owned
 - **Size and Location** - The 88 acre park is located at the intersection of Mercer Road and Mitchell Road in the northeastern portion of the community
 - **Zoning and Adjacent Land Use** - Residential (three types)
 - **Natural Features**
 - Watershed - Shenango River or Neshannock Creek ultimately leading to the Ohio River
 - Wetlands - See map
 - Soils - The majority of the soils in the community is silty loam
 - Topography - Relatively flat
 - Vegetation - Mostly wooded
 - Wildlife - PNDI
 - **Existing Recreational Facilities** - See table
 - **Pedestrian Circulation** - Lack of connection between the Hess Sports Complex and Pearson Park
 - **Bicycle Transportation** - The Bicycle PA Route V, a 355 mile trail that traverses Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Union, and several other counties. The trail runs through Neshannock Township and offers unique transportation and recreation opportunities.
 - **Vehicle Circulation** - See parking table. Lack of proper signage for each entrance
- Park Planning 101 - Things you should consider when planning a park
- Small group discussions with plans and facility cutouts to scale
- Presentation of the plans by each group
- Common Themes - What should we take with us as we develop a master plan?



Township Supervisors/Public Meeting

January 24, 2018

Meeting Notes

1. General Public Comments on Recreation
 - A. How will projects be funded; don't raise taxes (again) for recreation.
 - B. Explore the possibility of acquisition of properties adjacent to Pearson to provide opportunities for future park expansion and/or buffering.
2. Priority Projects - After review of the draft Pearson Park Master Plan, the following projects were identified as priorities. The priority projects were then grouped into larger projects based upon the similarity of project types and possible funding strategies (e.g. the Hess Ice Rink Upgrades is a high price project that may require multiple funding sources; it is a high priority project but can proceed on a parallel track with other high priority projects).
 - A. Group A
 - i. Hess Ice Rink Upgrades (including ADA)
 - B. Group B - General Upgrades
 - i. Restrooms Upgrades (including ADA)
 - ii. Trail Upgrades
 - iii. Additional Parking
 - iv. Road Repaving
 - v. Shelter Upgrades (including ADA)
 - C. Group C
 - i. Baseball Upgrades (Hess/Pearson)
 - D. Group D
 - i. Playground Upgrades
 - E. Group E
 - i. Hutchinson Community Center Upgrades/Expansion
3. Priority Groupings. The priority project groupings were then prioritized as follows:
 - A. #1 - Upgrades to trails, shelters, roads, restrooms, gazebos
 - B. #1 - Hess Ice Rink
 - C. #2 - Pearson Ballfields 1 and 2 Upgrades (reorient)
 - D. #3 - Playgrounds
 - E. #4 - Hutchinson Community Center
 - F. #5 - Hess Ballfield Upgrades



National Recreation and Park Association Standards

Table 26. National Recreation and Park Association Standards

Type of Facility	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres per 1,000 Population	Desirable Characteristics
Neighborhood Park	Area for intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area and picnicking serving a concentrated population.	¼ to ½ mile	1 to 15 acres	1 to 2 acres	Suitable for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population, geographically centered with safe walking and bike access.
Community Park	Areas of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities such as athletic complexes, swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for passive recreation, or a combination of both types of recreation.	1 to 3 miles	25+ acres	5 to 8 acres	May include natural features such as bodies of water and areas suitable for intense development. Easily accessible.
Regional/ Metropolitan Park	Area of natural or ornamental quality, for outdoor recreation such as picnicking, fishing, trail uses, swimming, camping; may include play areas.	40 to 50 miles	200+ acres	5 to 10 acres	Contiguous to or encompassing natural resources.
Regional Park Reserve	Area of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation and nature study, swimming, picnicking, hiking, boating, camping. 80% of land reserved for conservation and natural resource management, less than 20% for recreation development.	40 to 50 miles	1,000+ acres	Variable	Diverse or unique natural resources, such as lakes, streams, marshes, flora & fauna, and topography.
Special Use	Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities, such as golf courses, nature centers, marinas, zoos, conservatories, arboreta, display gardens, arenas, outdoor theaters, gun ranges, or downhill ski areas, or areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings, sites, and objects of archeological significance. Also plazas or squares in or near commercial centers, boulevards, parkways.	No applicable standard	Variable	Variable	Within communities.
Greenways	There are two types of greenways -- "natural greenways" and "man-made greenways." Natural greenways follow suitable natural resource areas such as stream corridors and wildlife habitat areas. Man-made greenways include developed areas, revitalized riverfronts, abandoned railroad beds, old industrial sites, and powerline rights-of-way. Modes of travel along greenways include hiking, walking, jogging, bicycling, and skating.	Variable	Variable	Variable	Tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment. They emphasize harmony with the natural environment and allow for uninterrupted and safe pedestrian movement between parks throughout a community.

