

Rostraver Township

Comprehensive, Recreation, Park, & Open Space Plan



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DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER 1: COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

This section provides a brief review of Rostraver Township land use, population, and transportation as they relate to recreation. A full community background can be found in the Township's Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER 2: INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

This chapter provides an inventory and assessment of the recreation opportunities, parks, and open spaces in Rostraver Township and surrounding areas.

CHAPTER 3: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public input was a key component in the development of this Plan. This chapter describes the public participation process and summarizes the results of each venue of participation.

CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides specific recommendations based on the inventory, analysis, and public input.

CHAPTER 5: POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Chapter 5 provides a listing of multiple opportunities for funding parks and recreation development and programs.

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CHAPTER I: COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

Rostraver Township is located in the developing rural hills of southwest Westmoreland County, surrounded by Allegheny, Washington, and Fayette Counties. Its east and west boundaries are flanked by the banks of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers respectively.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Rostraver Township has been referenced as one of Pennsylvania’s most scenic and fastest growing townships. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Rostraver Township had a population of 11,634. Since 1960, Rostraver’s population increased by 17.5%, while Westmoreland County grew by 4.9% and the Commonwealth grew by 8.5%. The Township has varied land uses within its 36 square miles. While agriculture remains a staple tenant, regional commercial and industrial sites are also a growing crop within this Township on the move. The Township also incorporates a general aviation airport, a landfill, Cedar Creek County Park, Interstate I-70, and the major state highway, Route 51.

Demographics

Census 2000 for Rostraver Township

- 2000 population 11,634
- Population increase since 1960 17.5%
- Number of households 4,600
- Number of housing units 4,900
- Median household income \$39,538
- Median Age 40.6
- School District Belle Vernon

Though the Township has more than 300 businesses that contribute to Rostraver’s reputation as the finest and largest shopping area in the Mid Monongahela River Valley, it also has its share of ample recreational opportunities. Within 25 miles driving distance from the center of the township, there can be found: 15 Pennsylvania county parks, 6 state game land properties, a state owned park and forest, and a blending of 14 land and water trail ways.

As both population and the number of households change in the Township, plans must be put in place to accommodate the changing demands for parks and recreation. This Plan considers these changes in its analyses and recommendations.

The Population Density Map shows that the population is relatively equally distributed throughout the Township. Two more densely populated areas are located in the village of Pricedale and near Fellsburg and the Belle Vernon School Complex.

A Population Density Map can be found at the end of this chapter.

HISTORY

When Westmoreland County was organized on April 5, 1773, two years prior to the Declaration of Independence, Rostraver became one of its original Townships. Many of the early settlers have descendants still living in or around Rostraver. Some of Rostraver's settlers came directly from Europe. Among those who came from Europe were the Irish, including the McClains from County Down, Ireland. It is suggested by historians that "Fond memories of the tiny village of Rostraver in County Down is believed to have led these pioneers to give their growing community the name it carries today." In 1959 the township progressed from a third class to a first class township.

GOVERNMENT

Rostraver Township is governed by a five person Board of Commissioners including a Chairman and Vice Chairman. These elected representatives each serve for a four year term of office. The Township also provides a Solicitor, an Engineer, and planning agency. Rostraver Township has several operating boards that oversee various community functions, including:

- Civil Service Commission
- Library Board
- Recreation
- Sewage
- Zoning Hearing Board

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF PARKS & RECREATION FUNCTIONS

Parks and recreation is managed by the Recreation Commission, which consists of six members including a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Monthly public meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at the Rostraver Township Municipal Building at 7:00 P.M.

Recreational Facility Locations

- Clair Manor
- Collinsburg
- Fellsburg
- LaGrange
- Pricedale
- St. Anne's
- Van Meter
- Webster
- John DiVirgilio Sports Complex
- Cedar Creek County Park

Township recreation fields, courts, and facilities include: basketball, baseball, softball, tennis, batting cages, soccer/football combination, concession stands, walking track, and a tot lot.

The County Park recreation fields, courts, and facilities include: baseball, basketball, volleyball, softball, soccer, amphitheater, pavilions, volleyball, play ground, toboggan and sledding area, horseshoe courts, radio controlled air field, river front park, and group camping.

Organized Sports Programs

- Rostraver Youth Baseball Association
- Rostraver Township Cheerleading Association
- Rostraver Midget Football
- Rostraver Township Girl's (Slow-Pitch) Softball League
- Rostraver Township (Fast-Pitch) Girl's Softball League
- Belle Vernon Area Youth Soccer
- Belle Vernon Swim Club
- Belle Vernon Wrestling Boosters
- Belle Vernon Area School District Scholastic Sports
- LaGrange Eagles Football

LAND USE AND NATURAL FEATURES

Major transportation corridors in the Township include Interstate 70 and State Routes 51, 201, and 136. Interstate 70 runs east-west across the southern part of the Township. There are two interchanges between it and local roads. There are a limited number of local roads that allow access across the Interstate. State Route 51 travels south from the City of Pittsburgh entering the Township in the northwest and exiting to the southeast. State Route 201 creates an X with Route 51 as it travels from the southeast border of the Township to the northwest border. State Route 136 cuts across the northwest quadrant from Elizabeth Township to West Newton.

The natural characteristics of the region provide unique opportunities for both passive and active recreation, as well as for the conservation of natural resources. Land conservation can be accomplished through specific land use strategies and proper planning of parks, recreation facilities, open space, and trail systems.

The following information was gathered from the 2008 Rostraver Comprehensive Plan Update.

In Rostraver Township, 5,592 acres, or 29% of the land located on 750 parcels, is determined as open/wooded/vacant land. This undeveloped land represents the largest land use in area.

Agriculture is the second largest land use in area. There are 145 parcels remaining, accounting for 4,902 acres, or 26% of the Township's land. Of the 4,902 acres, only 774 acres are considered "Prime Farmland" soil – representing only 4% of the land area of Rostraver Township. Prime Farmlands have slopes of 8% or less; only 30% of the Rostraver lands have a slope of 8% or less. Agriculture and open/wooded/vacant land is patch-worked throughout the various residential parcels in much of the Township, excluding the Monessen-Belle Vernon peninsula. Some of the largest tracts of remaining unfragmented agricultural land are located south of Route 70, while some of the most continuous tracts of open and wooded land are in the northern tier of the township.

In Rostraver Township, 11,323 acres of land have a slope of 15% or more. In western Pennsylvania slopes of 15% or more have limited development potential, with runoff and instability being its major concern.

Rostraver also has twelve parcels being utilized for parks and recreation purposes. These comprise 847 acres, with the three largest recreational land use areas being the County Park, Willowbrook Golf Course, and Cedarbrook Golf Course. Mining is still in operation in the Township and accounts for almost 410 acres.

Wetlands are small and scattered throughout the Township. They encompass a total of 467 acres, with only 1 acre not being along the rivers. There are 1,468 acres of 100-year floodplains, and several streams have Non-Attaining status.

Approximately half of the Township area has already been developed. The total residential development land - which includes single family, multi family, and mobile homes - accounts for 75% of all parcels, 5,045 acres, or 26.5% of the land. Commercial development is located mainly along Routes 51 and 201, with the industrial development along the rivers, at the airport, and near Belle Vernon and Monessen.¹

Related mapping can be found in the Rostraver Township Comprehensive Plan Update.

¹ Rostraver Township Comprehensive Plan Update 2008

Insert - Population Density Map

CHAPTER 2: INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING PARKS

There are ten parks and a trail located in Rostraver Township. The Township's main park, DiVirgilio Sports Complex, is its largest locally owned park. It is located adjacent to the Municipal Building. Seven smaller parks are primarily sports oriented and are distributed throughout the Township in villages, on school properties, in housing developments, and on private property. Westmoreland County's Cedar Creek Park, comprised of nearly 500 acres, is located almost adjacent to the Township's DiVirgilio Sports Complex. The Youghiogheny River Trail travels for approximately 9.5 miles along the Township's eastern boundary.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities in Rostraver Township

**Clair Manor Ballfield
Collinsburg Park
Fellsburg Park
LaGrange Ballfields
Pricedale Playground
St. Anne's Ballfield
Van Meter Ballfields
Webster Ballfield
John DiVirgilio Sports Complex
Cedar Creek County Park
Youghiogheny River Trail**

HIERARCHY OF PARKS

The recommendations of this Study, with regard to parks, are based on the premise that in order to provide the optimal level of service to area residents, recreation providers must understand and take into consideration the different ways in which people use recreation facilities. The function or use of a park depends on its size, location, and available facilities.

Parks can be organized into a "hierarchy" which defines their functions and the types of activities they should be expected to accommodate. The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) defines a hierarchy in its "Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines". The classifications are described in the following tables.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASSIFICATIONS	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	LOCATION CRITERIA	SITE CRITERIA
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational focus of the neighborhood	1/4 mile to 1/2 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers	5 acres is considered minimum size; 5 to 10 acres is optimal
School Park	Depending on the circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as Neighborhood or Community	Determined by location of school district property	Variable; depends on function
Community Park	Serves a broader purpose than Neighborhood Park; focus is on meeting community based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces	Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 1/2 to 3 miles distance	As needed to accommodate desired uses; usually a minimum of 30 acres
Large Urban Park	Serves a broader purpose than Community Parks and is used when Community and Neighborhood are not adequate to serve the needs of the community	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site; usually serves entire community	As needed to accommodate desired uses; usually a minimum of 50 acres
Natural Resource Areas	Land set aside for the preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual/aesthetics/buffering	Resource availability and opportunity	Variable
Greenways	Effectively tie park systems together to form a continuous park environment	Resource availability and opportunity	Variable
Special Use	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs	Variable; dependent on specific use	Variable

TRAIL CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASSIFICATIONS	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	LOCATION CRITERIA
Park Trail	Multi-purpose trails located within greenways, parks, and natural areas; focus is on recreational value and harmony with the natural environment	<u>Type I:</u> Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and in-line skaters <u>Type II:</u> Multi-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, and in-line skaters <u>Type III:</u> Nature trails for pedestrians; may be hard- or soft-surfaced
Connector Trails	Multi-purpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community; focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation	<u>Type I:</u> Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or in-line skaters located in independent right-of-way (r-o-w) <u>Type II:</u> Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trail for pedestrians, bicyclists, or in-line skaters; typically located within road r-o-w.
On-street Bikeways	Paved segments of roadway that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic	<u>Bike Route:</u> Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists <u>Bike Lane:</u> Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders
All-terrain Bike Trail	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes	Single-purpose use trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas
Cross-country Ski Trail	Trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas
Equestrian Trail	Trails developed for horseback riding	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas

LOCAL RECREATION FACILITIES

One of the basic needs of any community is for adequate recreational facilities that are appropriately located for citizen use. Facilities are often provided by municipalities, school districts, counties, states, private businesses, and non-profit organizations.

This section of this chapter identifies outdoor recreation facilities in great detail, noting the number, type, and condition of existing facilities. It includes a map showing the locations of each recreation facility.

The region's parks system is very typical of many Pennsylvania municipalities. Many of the municipalities have their own community park that is supplemented by smaller playgrounds or parks as well as school facilities. Local schools extend the parks system by providing additional playground and sports facilities.

Regional parks, such as those in Westmoreland, Fayette, Washington, and Allegheny Counties, as well as the Pennsylvania State Park's and State Forests, complement the local system by providing a variety of facilities and activities not otherwise available. They serve a much broader area than just Rostraver Township. Area trails, such as the Five Star Trail, the Youghiogheny River Trail, and other developed and proposed trails all provide part of a trail system for the entire region, thereby, bringing recreational opportunities to area residents.

Local residents also make use of a number of public and private recreation facilities available to the Township residents.

The following pages provide an inventory of local outdoor recreation facilities.

John DiVirgilio Sports Complex

Size: 26.67 acres

Park Type: Sports Complex

Ownership: Rostraver Township

Use and Maintenance: The fields are used by local sports organizations and the Belle Vernon Area School District. Rostraver Recreation Commission is responsible for maintenance of the park. The Rostraver Road Department assists the Commission on larger projects. Local sports organizations share in the maintenance and upkeep of the park.

Comments:

- High quality facilities
- Complex is in overall well maintained condition

Facilities are evaluated based on the following criteria

Good: Equipment given this ranking was installed or upgraded during the last 1-3 years. The equipment shows no signs of significant disrepair and no immediately visible safety hazards.

Fair: Equipment given this ranking appears to be several years old. The equipment shows some signs of aging and may present minor safety concerns.

Poor: Equipment given this ranking is in extreme disrepair and is in need of immediate upgrading or replacement.

- There is good cooperation with the local sports organizations for its upkeep and use
- Upper baseball field enhancements are very well planned, and the fields are nicely maintained
- Concession stand is not centralized for equal use to the entire complex
- Facilities do not meet standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Fields are sometimes overused
- Does not meet all sports needs; additional sports fields are needed
- Two of the ball fields are oriented so the batter faces southwest; these do not meet safety standards, which recommend the batter be facing north, northeast, or east. However, the only field orientation that DCNR will not fund is Northwest.

Recommendations:

- Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities, as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use
- Improve the parking lots by paving, painting lines, placing wheel stops, and ADA compliant parking spaces; additional parking spaces are also needed
- Install a playground
- Do not develop other unused space

Future Use:

This park will be the cornerstone of the Township’s park system for the future. The Township should try to acquire fifteen to fifty acres adjacent to the existing park. The additional property would be used to develop additional rectangular sports fields, diamond sports fields, picnic shelters, playground areas, trails, and other community recreation facilities.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Baseball Field #1 Southwest Orientation	1	Bleachers, dugouts, lighting, warning track, concession stand, full fencing, electronic scoreboard, announcement booth, restrooms	Good	RF-195' LF-197' Base path-60'	Yes
Baseball Field #2 Northeast Orientation	1	Bleachers, dugouts, lighting, warning track, concession stand, full fencing, restrooms	Good	RF-308' LF-315' Base path-90'	Yes
Batting Cages	2		Good		No
Baseball Field #3 Northeast Orientation	1	Dugouts, bleachers, full-fencing	Good	RF-300' LF-300' Basepath-80'	No
Baseball Field #4 Southwest Orientation	1		Good	RF-200' LF-200" Basepath-80'	No

Football/Soccer Field Northeast to Southwest Orientation	1	Football goal posts, soccer goals	Good	175'x360'	No
Picnic Shelter	1	21 tables, water supply, electric plugs, lights	Good	22'x65'	Yes
Concession/Restroom	1		Good	24'x30'	No
Walking Track	1		Fair	10' wide	Yes
Parking Lot #1	1	Insufficient number of parking spaces; needs to be paved	Fair	48 parking spots, No ADA spots	No
Parking Lot #2	1	Insufficient number of parking spaces; needs to be paved	Fair	80 parking spots 4-ADA spots	Yes

St. Anne's Church Ball Field

Size: approximately 2 acres

Park Type: Special Use

Ownership: St. Anne's Church

Use and Maintenance: St. Anne's makes the field available for use by local sports organizations. Girl's softball is the primary use. The Rostraver Recreation Commission mows the field and does basic maintenance.

Comments:

- Nice field that meets local needs
- Good cooperation with St. Anne's Church
- Church has been very generous in allowing use of the field for local sports
- Field has some maintenance issues that need addressed
- Tree over-hanging the backstop needs trimmed back
- Fencing is rusted, broken, and needs replaced on the backstop
- Baseline fencing is broken and needs repaired

Recommendations:

- Trim branches from the tree that overhangs the backstop
- Replace the backstop
- Repair foul line fences; replace as necessary
- Designate two ADA compliant parking spaces; provide ADA compliant access and spectator seating

Future Use:

This field will continue in its current use.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Ball field Northeast Orientation	1	Baseline fencing, backstop, player benches	Fair	RF-200' LF-200'+ Basepath-60'	Yes
Basketball Hoop	1		Good		Yes

Collinsburg Park

Size: 6.4 acres

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Ownership: Collinsburg Community Organization

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains the park, which is used primarily for adult softball and youth t-ball.

Comments:

- Ball field is in decent condition
- Facilities do not meet ADA standards: accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities need to be developed
- Tennis court fence is rusted
- The baseball field is oriented so the batter is facing the northwest; this does not meet safety standards which recommend the batter be facing north, northeast, or east

Recommendations:

- Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards. This should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use.

Future Use:

This park will continue to serve as a community park for this area of the Township.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Ball field Northwest Orientation	1	Backstop, full-fencing, player benches	Good	RF-312' LF-330' Basepath-90'	No
Tennis Court Northwest-Southeast Orientation	1		Fair	Regulation	No

Basketball Court Northwest-Southeast Orientation	1		Fair	46'x92'	No
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Fellsburg Park

Size: 1.7 acres

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Ownership: Rostraver Township

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains the park. It is used for primarily for girl’s softball.

Comments:

- Good location in a population center within the Township
- Well cared for
- Facilities fit very tightly on the property
- Overall facilities are in good condition except for weed growth and some fencing issues
- Designated parking needs to be developed
- Vegetation growth is extreme and needs removed from all fencing
- Backstop needs replaced on ball field
- Foul line fence needs replaced
- The right field line is very close to the road creating a hazardous condition where foul balls could hit passing traffic
- Trees around the basketball and tennis courts need trimmed and/or removed
- Facilities do not meet ADA standards.
- An additional 1.28 acre parcel of Township-owned property is located across the street from the Park.

Recommendations:

- Improve maintenance to control unwanted vegetation
- Develop and/or identify additional ADA designated parking spaces
- Install proper signage to warn drivers of the park
- Replace the backstop and foul line fences; the right field foul line fence should be at least ten feet high
- Trim or remove trees that overhang the tennis court
- Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use
- Consider creating parking spaces, a playground, or skate park in the additional Township-owned 1¼ acre parcel

Future Use:

This park will continue to be used as a neighborhood park within the Rostraver Township park system.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Tennis Court Northeast-Southwest Orientation	1		Good	Regulation	No
Basketball Court Southeast-Northwest Orientation	1		Good	42'x87'	No
Batting Cage	1		Good		No
Ball field Northeast Orientation	1	Backstop, full-fencing, player benches	Good	RF-175' LF-160' Basepath-60'	No

Webster Park

Size: 3.58 acres

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Ownership: Rostraver Township

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains the park. It is used by Rostraver Youth Baseball and for girls' softball practices.

Comments:

- The adjacent active railroad tracks create an imminent danger to players and spectators
- Well maintained
- Both vehicular and pedestrian access to the park is very difficult
- Parking is very limited
- Baseball field is oriented with the batter facing to the west; this does not meet safety standards, which recommend the batter be facing north, northeast, or east
- Parking area is predisposed to foul ball damage
- All fencing needs replaced, except backstop and left field base line fence
- Fencing needs weed removal
- Basketball court back boards need replaced
- Facilities do not meet ADA standards

Recommendations:

- The railroad tracks that are immediately adjacent to this park make it a very dangerous facility. Steps should be taken immediately to protect all park users from the railroad tracks or the park should be closed. If the park is to continue to be used, the ballfield should be re-aligned so that the outfield fence, rather than the backstop and first base line, is adjacent to the railroad tracks. The field should be set up so that the direction from home plate to second base is facing northeast. This would dramatically improve the safety of the park. Additionally, a fence should be installed between the tracks and the park.
- Develop a designated parking area that is protected from foul balls
- Improve maintenance to control unwanted vegetation

- Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use

Future Use:

The safety issues, difficult access to the park, and poor parking facilities make this a low priority park. It should be closed and held by the Township as open space until such time as the Township is ready to invest in the recommended changes. The Township’s Comprehensive Plan Update recommends that the Village of Webster be revitalized at some point in the future; this would be the appropriate time to consider new options for the park and fit it in with the revitalization efforts.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Ball field West Orientation	1	Foul line fence, backstop, partial outfield fence fencing, player benches	Fair	RF-250' LF-210' Basepath-60'	No
Basketball Court North-South Orientation	1	Asphalt play surface	Fair	46'x90'	No

LaGrange Park and Basketball Court

Size: 3 acres (estimated)

Park Type: Sports Complex

Ownership: Belle Vernon Area School District

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains these fields. The fields are used by the LaGrange Eagles football team and for Rostraver Baseball t-ball.

Comments:

- Very poor and dangerous entrance to the park with limited visibility; this creates a serious safety hazard for visitors to these fields
- Both ball field backstops and fencing are in poor condition
- Outfields overlap causing potential playing hazard
- Facilities do not meet ADA standards
- The basketball court is located behind the bus garage separate from the main park

Recommendations

- Discontinue use of this field, turning it back to the Belle Vernon Area School District
- If it is to continue to be used as a public recreation area, the following improvements should be made:

- Improve the accessibility to the park at the main entrance. The poor visibility and difficult access and egress create an extremely unsafe condition. These improvements should be a priority. The park should not be used until these changes are made
- Replace all backstops and fencing
- Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use

Future Use:

While this park serves a purpose in providing recreational facilities for the football and baseball programs, it should not be the responsibility of Rostraver Township to upgrade and maintain it. It creates an undue safety liability for the Township. The leagues that use the fields should work together with the Belle Vernon Area School District, which owns the property, to improve the park and provide maintenance. If such an agreement cannot be made, the teams that use the fields should look elsewhere to play.

The Recreation Commission should continue to maintain and operate the basketball court.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Basketball Court East-West Orientation	1	Full fencing	Good	50'x80'	No
Ball field #1 Northeast Orientation	1	Backstop, foul-line fencing, player benches	Fair	RF-200' LF-200' Baseline-60'	No
Ball field #2 Northwest Orientation	1	Small backstop, player benches, fencing	Fair	RF-130' LF-150' Basepath-45'	No
Rectangular Football Field East-West Orientation	1		Fair	131'x208'	No
Basketball Court	1	Full fencing, limited parking	Good		No

Pricedale Playground

Size: 1/4 acre

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Ownership: Rostraver Township

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains the park. It is used by local residents for unstructured activity.

Facilities: Playground equipment

Comments:

- The playground has very limited use
- Playground equipment is in very poor condition and creates a serious safety hazard to users of the park

Recommendations:

- Remove all playground equipment
- Continue to mow and maintain the parcel as an open lot

Future Use:

The Township should maintain ownership of this lot with the intention of using it for passive recreation opportunities as Pricedale’s revitalization program develops. There may be the opportunity to provide other such small passive areas in the future as the community is revitalized.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Playground	1	None	See Safety Audit		No

Van Meter Fields

Size: 4.5 acres

Park Type: Sports Complex/Neighborhood Park

Ownership: Privately owned but leased by Rostraver Township

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains this park. Its current use is limited to occasional softball, baseball, and soccer practices.

Comments:

- Ball field backstop fencing is in unsafe condition and should be removed
- Ball field perimeter fencing is in unsafe condition and should be removed
- Dugouts need cleaned and painted
- Dugout roof needs replaced
- Infield does not drain well and needs maintenance
- Fields need better spectator seating
- One ball field is oriented so the batter faces southwest; this does not meet safety standards, which recommend the batter be facing north, northeast, or east.
- Facilities do not meet ADA standards
- The fields are used very little
- The basketball and tennis court are located several blocks from the main part of the park

Recommendations:

- Demolish and remove all above ground infrastructure at the ballfields and discontinue use of the main park
- Continue to use and maintain the basketball and tennis courts

Future Use:

As a sports facility, the ballfield portion of this park provides little value. It is located away from the major population areas of the Township; it receives little use; vandalism is a significant problem; the fields do not drain well; and it is unsafe. On the other hand, it is a large parcel of property that could be very usable for other purposes. It is close to the Youghiogheny Trail. It is close to other large parcels of unused open space.

The park is part of a 245 acre parcel owned by National Mines Corporation. The lease on the park portion of the property continues on a year-to-year basis as long as the park is used for recreational purposes. The lease gives the Township permission to use “approximately 4 ½ acres of land.”

Future possibilities for the parcel would be to maintain it as preserved open space; maintain it as a passive park with limited maintenance; keep it for future use as a park; maintain it as a facility for motorized off road recreational vehicles; or offer it to the soccer or football associations for development as a rectangular field sports complex. If the amount of property included in the lease were extended to include frontage on the Youghiogheny River, it would enhance its future recreational and conservation use.

For the immediate future, the Township should remove the existing above ground infrastructure and provide only limited maintenance of the park. The tennis and basketball courts should continue to be maintained as recreation facilities for the local residents.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Ball field #1 - Softball Northeast Orientation	1	Dugouts-fair Spectator benches - fair Full fencing	Poor	RF-195' LF-197' Basepath-60'	No
Ball field #2 - Baseball Southwest Orientation	1	Dugouts-fair Backstop-fair Baseline fence-poor Outfield fence-poor	Fair-Poor	RF-260' LF-296' Basepath-60'	No
Yough River Trail		Access but no trail head			Yes
Tennis Court (A few blocks away) North-South Orientation	1		Fair	Regulation	No
Basketball Court (A few blocks away) North-South Orientation	1		Fair	44'x61'	No

Clair Manor Ball Field

Size: 0.8 acres (2 parcels)

Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Ownership: Rostraver Township

Use and Maintenance: The Rostraver Recreation Commission maintains the park. It is used primarily for girls’ softball and unstructured activity.

Comments:

- Well maintained
- Park is tucked into a back corner lot of a residential development; there is difficult vehicular access to the field, and it is only easily available to residents of the residential development
- Ball field and backstop fencing are in poor condition
- Basketball backboard is in poor condition
- No designated parking is available
- Facilities do not meet ADA standards

Recommendations:

- Replace the backstop and fencing
- Replace the basketball backboard
- Develop parking that is sufficient for the use of the field
- Enlarge the basketball surface to 30’X40’
- Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use
- Survey the property to identify its boundaries

Future Use:

This park should continue to be used as a limited-use facility. It will primarily serve the neighborhood residents but could also have limited scheduled programming on the ball field.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size	ADA
Ball Field North Orientation	1	Full fencing, player benches	Good	RF-195' LF-175' Basepath-60'	No
Basketball Hoop	1		Fair		No

Cedar Creek County Park

Size: 464 acres

Park Type: Large Urban Park

Ownership: Westmoreland County

Use and Ownership: The Park is maintained by the Westmoreland County Parks Department. It is used by a wide variety of groups and organizations for both structured and unstructured activity. The Rostraver Football Association leases three fields for practices in the fall of each year.

Comments:

- Park offers many uses for area residents and visitors
- Serves as a regional park, meeting the needs of many county residents, while also meeting many of the community park needs of Rostraver Township residents; these include picnic pavilions, sports fields, trails, amphitheater, volleyball and basketball courts, and much more.
- A pleasing diversity of open space, woodlands, and river front accessibility
- Rostraver Township has best County resident access
- In other County Parks, the County allows near exclusive use of certain sports facilities to local organizations in exchange for mowing and maintenance of the facilities

Recommendation:

Negotiate with Westmoreland County Parks Department for exclusive use of certain ballfields in exchange for the Township mowing and maintaining those areas.

Future Use:

The County Park will continue to play a critical role in providing park facilities for residents of Rostraver Township.

Note: Not all facilities at the County Park were analyzed for condition, size, and for ADA compliance.

Facility	No.	Enhancements and Utilities	Condition	Size
Amphitheater	1	Capacity for 2,500 persons		
Pavilions	19			
Ball Field #1 South Orientation	1	Player benches, bleachers, in-field fencing	Fair	RF'-190' LF-190' Basepath-60'
Ball Field #2 South/Southwest Orientation	1	Player benches, bleachers, in-field fencing	Good	RF'-300' LF-300' Basepath-90'
Ball Field #3 South Orientation	1	Player benches, bleachers, partial fencing, drinking fountain	Good	RF'-325' LF-325' Basepath-90'

Ball Field #4 North Orientation	1	Player benches, fencing	Fair	RF-200' LF-200' Basepath-60'
Ball Field #5 South Orientation	1	Player benches, partial fencing, drinking fountain	Fair	RF-275' LF-275' Basepath-90'
Ball Field #6 South/Southwest Orientation	1	Backstop, outfield fences, player benches, bleachers	Fair	RF-250' LF-250' Basepath-60'
Volleyball East-West Orientation	1		Fair	32' Wide
Volleyball North-South Orientation	1		Fair	32' Wide
Volleyball Southwest-Northeast Orientation	1	Sand surface	Fair	25'x60'
Basketball Northeast-Southwest Orientation	1	Asphalt surface	Fair	65'x45'
Soccer	1		Fair	200'x300'
Play grounds			Not Inspected	
Horseshoe Courts				
Toboggan area				
Sledding area				
Radio Controlled Air Field				
Restrooms				
Monarch Center				
Manderino River Front Park		Boat launch, picnic areas, Yough River front,		
Cedar Creek Station		Bicycle rentals, food concession		
Trails				
Group Camping				

School Facilities

Belle Vernon School Complex located in the heart of Rostraver Township provides sports and recreation facilities for students and residents.

- Football field with artificial grass surface; also available for soccer use
- Practice football field with grass surface behind the high school
- Gymnasium in each school building
- Athletic/weight room at high school
- Playground at elementary school building
- Public access when facilities are open and not being used for school athletic purposes; available through Facilities Coordinator, upon approval of use-purpose and agreement to terms
- Public access to playgrounds
- Weight room available to students

ROSTRAVER TRAILS

Youghiogheny River Trail

Flowing from the Youghiogheny Dam outlet just south of Confluence, PA and heading north to McKeesport, the Youghiogheny River and its paralleling trail-corridor cover 70 miles. The Youghiogheny River Trail [YRT] is part of the Great Allegheny Passage, a 150-mile system of biking and hiking trails connecting Cumberland, MD and Pittsburgh, PA. The YRT is divided into two sections, the YRT north, and the YRT south. The 43-mile North section is owned and operated by the Regional Trail Corporation. The 27-mile south section is owned and operated by the Commonwealth of PA, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of State Parks.

Approximately 9.5 miles of the YRT is located within Rostraver Township. This section of the trail can be used for biking, hiking, and walking and is routed through scenic areas along the river corridor. The trail is accessible at many points throughout the township, including a large portion of Cedar Creek County Park.

From the northern to the southern border of Rostraver Township, the YRT can be divided into traveling points of reference, based on the mileage from town to town along its course. To its north from Buena Vista to Blythedale: 2 miles; Blythedale to West Newton: 5 miles; West Newton to Cedar Creek Park: 3.5 miles; Cedar Creek Park to Smithton: 2.5 miles; and from Smithton to Whitsett: 4 miles.

The YRT north section is a limestone surfaced trail built along the "railbanked" right-of-way of the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad. The south section of the YRT was built by PA DCNR, Bureau of State Parks on the old Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way. The trail parallels the west side of the Youghiogheny River and connects many small towns and rural open spaces along the entire river valley. The trail is designed as a non-motorized, shared-use, recreational trail for bicycling, walking, fishing and canoe access, hiking, nature study, historic appreciation, cross country skiing, picnicking, and horseback riding.

There are 9 main access areas for the YRT north section, located in the following counties: McKeesport, Boston, and Sutersville in Allegheny County; West Newton, Cedar Creek, and Smithton in Westmoreland County; and Whitsett and Connellsville in Fayette County.

In Rostraver Township access can be gained at Cedar Creek Park which is the mid-point of the Trail. The Park is located in the southwestern corner of Westmoreland County off Route 51, 1/4 mile north of I-70. To the north is the West Newton access which is located on the west side of the Route 136 bridge across the Youghiogheny River. To the south is the Smithton Beach Access Area. From Smithton turn right onto 981. Turn right at first stop sign on Main Street, still following 981. Cross the bridge across the Yough River, and immediately turn right into access area.

Sources: The Youghiogheny River Trail at Youghrivertrail.org; the Allegheny Trail Alliance at atatrail.org; the Rostraver Township Comprehensive Plan-2000; the PA Dept. of Transportation at dot.state.pa.us.

Sudan Trail

- On or along a RR right of way
- Was in DCNR trail data – from Rt. #88 to SR # 837

- Close to Montour Trail which runs to Rt. #88
- Hierarchy: Local trail

Big Sewickley Trail

- On or along RR right of way
- Proposed along SR #3039 to Little Sewickley Creek Trail
- Hierarchy: Regional trail

Proposed trail

- Not yet named
- Links trails in State Game Lands #296 to Yough River Trail to link Coal and Coke Trail, to link 5-Star Trail, to link the Pittsburgh to Washington, DC Trail
- Identified in DCNR trail data
- Hierarchy: Regional trail

SPORTS FIELD ANALYSIS

As part of the analysis of individual parks, it is important to understand whether or not the current number of sports fields in the Township is sufficient to meet the current and future demand. The analysis shows that there are some deficiencies in the number of fields currently available. That deficiency will only increase as the Township’s population grows.

The following charts show the current uses and deficiencies for each field type.

CURRENT SPORTS FIELDS AND THEIR USES

Sports League Information	Fields Available
DiVirgilio Sports Complex Rostraver Youth Baseball – American Legion, Colt League, Pony League, Little League Girl’s Slow Pitch Softball Girl’s Fast Pitch Softball (games) Rostraver Soccer BV Varsity and JV Baseball	Colt Baseball Field Pony Baseball Little League Baseball Softball Soccer
Webster Park Rostraver Youth Baseball Girl’s Slow Pitch Softball (Practice only)	Baseball/Softball Field
Fellsburg Park Girl’s Slow Pitch Softball – 2 teams Girl’s Fast Pitch Softball (Practice)	Softball Field
Claire Manor Girl’s Slow Pitch Softball – 1 team	Small Softball/Baseball Field
Van Meter Rostraver Youth Baseball Very limited use	Baseball Field Softball Field
St. Anne’s Girl’s Slow Pitch Softball – 2 teams	Softball Field
Collinsburg Rostraver Youth Baseball Adult baseball and softball	Baseball Field
Lagrange Rostraver Youth Baseball LaGrange Eagles Football	Baseball/Softball Fields (2) Football Field
Cedar Creek County Park Rostraver Youth Baseball Rostraver Midget Football	Multiple Baseball Fields Baseball Fields used for football practices (2)

ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP SPORTS FIELD DEMAND

Sport	Fields Needed	Viable Fields Available*	Field Deficit
Baseball			
T-ball and Instructional	2-3	0	2-3
Little League	3-4	2	1-2
Pony League	1	1	0
Colt/Legion/Adult	1	2	0
Softball			
Slow Pitch	2.5	2.5	0
Fast Pitch	1.5	.5	1
Soccer			
Short Fields	3	2	1
Full Field	2	1	1
Football			
All Divisions Practice	3	2	1
All Divisions Games	1	1	0

*Viable fields are those that can meet the needs of regulation play for one or more sports league; are able to be adequately maintained; are of appropriate size; meet current safety and liability guidelines; and are located in usable areas of the Township. They include those available at the DiVirgilio Sports Complex, Fellsburg Park, Collinsburg, Park, St Anne's Church, and the football fields at Cedar Creek County Park.

Other locations evaluated include BVA School Complex, LaGrange, Webster, Clair Manor, and Van Meter. Travel distance, field condition or availability makes these sites less than adequate.

INSERT LOCAL RECREATION MAP

REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES

Regional recreation facilities are those parks and trails located both inside and outside Rostraver Township that serve the entire region for recreational purposes. They are primarily resource based but also may include facilities for community based recreation, such as ball fields and swimming pools.

Regional parks related to Rostraver Township include: one Pennsylvania State Park and one State Forest; six Westmoreland County parks; and County parks in Washington, Allegheny, and Fayette Counties. Also considered as regional recreation facilities are numerous trails and State Game Lands.

These facilities provide a good balance of recreational opportunities for Rostraver Township residents and adequately meet the Township's "Regional" park needs. Each is identified on the following pages and displayed on a map at the end of this section.

REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks can include state owned parks and forests, and county owned parks which have a particular draw and attraction to populations from 25 miles out from the study site.

Pennsylvania State Parks

- Ohiopyle State Park

Pennsylvania State Forests

- Forbes State Forest

Westmoreland County Parks

- Cedar Creek Park
- Mammoth Park
- Twin Lakes Park
- Old Hanna's Town Park
- Chestnut Ridge Park (also extends into Fayette County)
- Bridgeport Dam Park (also extends into Fayette County)

Allegheny County Parks

- Roundhill Park
- White Oak Park
- South Park
- Boyce Park
- Settlers Cabin

Washington County Parks

- Mingo Creek Park

Fayette County Parks

- Mason-German Park
- Dunlap Creek Park
- Jacob's Creek Park
- Chestnut Ridge Park (also extends into Westmoreland County)
- Bridgeport Dam Park (also extends into Westmoreland County)

REGIONAL TRAILS

Regional trails attract a more specific population interested in biking, hiking, horseback riding, and ATV riding (where designated). Also included are river and waterway trails which are traveled by water craft.

Westmoreland County Trails

- Westmoreland Heritage Trail
- Little Crab Creek Trail
- Big Sewickley Creek Trail
- Five Star Trail
- Coal & Coke Trail (also extends along Fayette County border)
- Indian Creek Trail (also extends into Fayette County)
- Youghiogheny River Trail (also extends into Allegheny and Fayette Counties)

Allegheny County Trails

- Three Rivers Heritage Trail
- Steel Valley Trail
- Montour Trail (also extends into Washington County)
- Youghiogheny River Trail (also extends into Westmoreland and Fayette Counties)

Washington County Trails

- Sudan Trail
- Montour Trail (also extends into Allegheny County)

Fayette County Trails

- Sheepskin Trail
- Browns Run Trail
- Indian Creek Trail (also extends into Westmoreland County)
- Green River Trail (also extends along Greene and Washington County borders)
- Youghiogheny River Trail (also extends into Westmoreland and Allegheny Counties)

STATE GAME LANDS

The Pennsylvania Game Commission owns and manages, for wildlife and people, more than 1.4 million acres of State Game Lands [SGL] throughout the Commonwealth. There are 5 State Game Land parcels within 25 miles of Rostraver offering hunting, photography, personal nature investigation, and open space for walking.

- Westmoreland County SGL # 296 (also extends into Fayette County)
- Fayette County SGL #'s 51, 138, 238, 296 (also extends into Westmoreland County)
- Washington County SGL # 297
- Greene County SGL # 223

PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES IN ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP

A number of private recreation facilities are located in Rostraver Township. They serve the recreational needs that are typical of the private sector. These facilities and their programs are all provided based on a fee for services or use. They include:

Private Recreational Facilities in the Rostraver Area

- Belle Vernon Public Library, 503 Speer Street
- Rostraver Ice Garden, State Route 51
- Charleroi YMCA, Chamber Plaza, Charleroi
- Jack's Total Fitness, 750 Rostraver Road
- Center For Fitness and Health, 800 Plaza Drive
- Chon's Korean Karate, 1115 Fayette Avenue
- Curves For Women, 950 Rostraver Road
- Olympus Gym, 780 Rostraver Road
- Brunswick 51 Bowling Lanes, State Route 51
- Lynnwood Lanes, 813 Fayette Avenue
- Shirley Dean Dance Studio, 800 Fayette Avenue
- Rostraver Dance Academy & Center For the Arts 929-6276
- Bonnie's Dance Studio, 303 Broad Avenue
- Attitudes In Motion Dance Studio and Center For the Performing Arts, 406 Broad Avenue
- Bill's Golfland and Dek Hockey, State Route 51
- Willowbrook Golf Course, 1833 Rostraver Road
- Cedarbrook Golf Club, 215 State Route 981
- Brick House Skate Park, Perryopolis
- Washington Township ball fields
- West Newton Swimming Pool
- Fayette City Swimming Pool
- Paintball Facility

RECREATION PROGRAM PROVIDERS

All information and comments provided in this section are the result of consultant interviews with league or organization officials.

Rostraver Youth Baseball Association

Service Area:

Rostraver – 90%, Belle Vernon – 10%

Season:

- April – June 15; Little League has 12-15 games
- Other leagues have up to 20 games; up to 3 weekday games and on the weekends

Fields Used:

DiVirgilio, Colt league Field, Pony League Field, Van Meter, Webster, LaGrange, Cedar Creek Park

Rostraver Youth Baseball Association Statistics

League	Ages	# of Teams	# of Participants
Little League	5 to 12	20	200
Pony League	13 to 14	1-2	Approx. 30
Colt	15 to 16	1	Approx. 15-20
Legion	16 to 19	1	Approx. 15-20

Comments:

- Program attendance has steadily gained
- DiVirgilio Complex is in good condition, all others are in inadequate condition, no crown, safety issues with fencing, old backstops, etc.
- Webster has the RR tracks safety issue and Rt. 906 parking & traffic safety issues
- LaGrange has parking safety issues
- Van Meter has the most untapped-potential space, but is challenged by ATV riding in the field of play, it would need to be made more secure with fencing
- Overall – not enough quality fields
- Could use the space between the municipal building to construct 2-60’ Little League practice fields
- Move Pony League field up to the soccer field and move the soccer field down to the lower field
- Monroeville Park is a good example to visit for ideas

Belle Vernon Swim Club

Service Area:

Club accepts anyone from any area community; the School District accepts only school district students

Season:

- Club meets through the summer season – May through August
- Winter season meets September through April.

Facilities Used:

Belle Vernon High School

Belle Vernon Swim Club Statistics

Group	Age/Grades	# of Participants
Club	Ages - 5 to 12	60
High School	Grades - 9 to 12	25 to 30

Comments:

- The Belle Vernon High School Pool is the facility of primary use
- School District has been very cooperative
- The challenging part of it is that the High School charges the Club to have a janitor on site
- Sometimes the pool heater goes out; if this happens on a Friday after the school closes for the weekend, on Monday when it gets fixed, it takes up to 3 days for the water to heat up; this happens monthly
- An outdoor pool with a 25-yard competitive length with 6 lanes is needed, which could also serve as the recreational community pool

Rostraver Township Girls' (slow-pitch) Softball League

Service Area:

Rostraver – 99%; a couple of players are from Belle Vernon and Washington Twp.

Season:

- Practice begins 3rd week of March
- Games beginning the end of April – into July

Facilities Used:

DiVirgilio – 2 teams, Fellsburg – 2 teams, Claire Manor – 1 team, St. Anne's – 2 teams, Webster – practice field

Rostraver Township Girls' (slow-pitch) Softball League Statistics

Group	Ages	# of Participants
10 & Under	7, 8, 9	45
12 & Under	11, 13 (some 13)	30
18 & Under	13 - 18	36

Comments:

- The fields that are utilized are spread out considerably; this makes it difficult to correspond with the teams and to run a concession when only 1 or 2 teams utilize a field for one hour, once or twice a week
- DiVirgilio has the optimum fields but it is configured oddly
- It would be of great benefit to purchase new property adjacent to DiVirgilio and build a central concession, thereby having much of the community in one location instead of spread out over many different remote locations
- Continue to build until there is a Complex for all sports

Rostraver Township Girls' (fast-pitch) Softball League

Service Area:

Rostraver, Monessen, Perryopolis, Brownsville

Season:

- September 9 to November
- Double-headers every Sunday afternoon
- Practices 1-2 times per week
- 18 game season

Facilities Used:

- DiVirgilio for games
- Fellsburg for practices

Rostraver Township Girls' (fast-pitch) Softball League Statistics

Grade	# Teams	# of Participants
4, 5, 6	1	13

7, 8	0 in 2007	0
9 -12	1	12

Comments:

- Growing due to the success of the Belle Vernon Girls' Softball winning the WPIAL's
- Present teams play only on Sundays due to school and other activities
- Play in the Mon-Yough League with Elizabeth, McKeesport, Washington Twp., Belle Vernon, Jefferson Twp., and Monessen

Rostraver Township Cheerleading Association

Service Area:

Rostraver Township

Season:

- Try-outs in March; practices July to August
- Games: August to mid November (main season)
- Season includes 8 games, 4 away & 4 home

Facilities Used:

- Cedar Creek for practices
- Games at High School field

Rostraver Township Cheerleading Association Statistics

Squad	Grade	# of Participants
Flag	K, 1, 2	30
Termite	3, 4	20
Mity-Mite	5, 6	20
Midget	7, 8	12, but up to 20

Comments:

- One of the greatest challenges is getting a school for indoor practices
- A more local facility for practices/games would be good
- Cedar Creek is nice, but it is not that close
- DiVirgilio Complex needs a field for the Midget Football program

Rostraver Midget Football

Service Area:

97% - Rostraver, within the School District; Fayette City and Belle Vernon send a few.

Season:

July through November

Facilities Used:

- Practices are at rented fields in Cedar Creek Park
- Games at the High School

Rostraver Midget Football Statistics

Team	Ages	# of Participants
Flag	5 - 7	*
Termite	7 - 9	*
Mity-Mite	10-11	*
Midget	12 - 13	*136 boys total in all divisions

Comments:

- Need 2 new practice fields at 53'x120', fenced-in, with their primary purpose being football from July to November, before and after that anyone could use them
- 1 field for Midgets and 1 for Mity Mites.

Belle Vernon Area Wrestling Boosters

Service Area:

Belle Vernon area and Rostraver

Season:

This is a Recreational Program, and includes:

- Summer wrestling program - April through July
- Fall-winter wrestling program - 3rd week of November through 3rd week of March.

Facilities Used:

Belle Vernon Area High School wrestling room.

Belle Vernon Area Wrestling Boosters (Recreational Program)

Grade	# of Participants
1 st to 7 th	55 to 60

Comments:

- Not enough facilities for practices; there need to be more options for mat space
- The younger kids are required to be out later due to the accepted schedule
- High School wrestling gets the wrestling room from 3:00-5:15 pm, Jr. High from 5:15 to 6:45 pm, and the Recreational Program from 7-8 pm
- The program is very competitive and growing; they won the Keystone League in the 2006-2007 season

Belle Vernon Area School District School Sports

Service Area:

Rostraver, Washington Twp., North Belle Vernon, Belle Vernon, Fayette City Borough

Season:

August through June

Facilities Used:

Five school buildings plus grounds

Belle Vernon Area High School – Scholastic Sports

Ages	Sports
Ages from 5 through 18	Football, Baseball, Basketball, Softball, Track, Wrestling

Comments:

- Need a home track; possibly purchase the farmland adjacent to the football field
- Depend on the community for baseball facilities

Rostraver Soccer League

Service Area:

Rostraver Twp., Washington Twp., Belle Vernon, St. Sebastian, Belle Vernon Area School District

Season:

- In-House Season: September (8) to October (20) for in-house kids – U5 to U9
- Spring Season: April- June, with 2 weeks in-house before Easter, lasting 7 weeks.
- Clinics: 1 in spring, 1 in the fall with Pitt Coach Dr. Luxenbarger

Facilities Used:

Outfield of girls’ softball field, outfield of pony league field, football field at DiVirgilio

Rostraver Soccer League In-House Statistics

Age/Division	# Teams	# of Participants
U5	1	210 total - U5 to U12
U6	1	
U7	1	
U8-U9 mixed	1	
U10 girls	1	
U11 boys	1	
U12 co-ed	1	

Rostraver Soccer League Spring Statistics

Age/Division	# Teams	# of Participants
U11	2	384 total U11 to U19
U12	2	
U14	1	
U17	2	
U19	1	

Comments:

- Soccer has its own concession stand with water but no sewage, yet
- The District would like to move the girls’ softball field and replace it with a soccer field
- Need another full-sized soccer field

Rostraver Boy Scout Troops #1560 & #1548

Service Area:

Rostraver Twp., Belle Vernon Area School District, North Belle Vernon

Season:

Year-round; 1 meeting per week plus camping outings

Facilities Used:

Rehoboth Presbyterian Church, St. Sebastian

Boy Scout Statistics

Troop#	# of Participants
1560	15
1548	15

Comments:

- Suggests the Township needs a multi-purpose facility for meetings and indoor recreation large enough for 300 people, with a kitchen facility
- Could be rented out for gatherings
- Could house a before and after school program
- Scouts need a place to house their annual Pinewood Derby since they have outgrown the church facility for this program

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCING OF TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION

General Administration and Staffing

On August 7, 1972, the Rostraver Township Board of Commissioners passed Resolution #252 creating the Rostraver Recreation Commission. According to the Resolution, the Commission “shall have the authority to supervise, maintain, and regulate recreation areas and facilities and to conduct recreation programs and to advise the Board of Commissioners on all matters pertaining to recreation”. The Commission continues in this role today. According to the Resolution, it is to be composed of nine members, each serving a six-year term. There are six members currently serving.

In September 2002, the Board of Commissioners resolved to create the position of Director/Coordinator of Recreation. At the same meeting, the Board appointed John DiVirgilio to fill the newly created position. He continues in that position in 2008. The only compensation for this position is the use of a Township-owned vehicle. While there is no formal job description for the position, the Director/Coordinator is generally expected to oversee the operations of the Township’s parks and recreation.

The Township’s recreation programs and facilities have increased dramatically in the thirty-five years of the Commission. While the Recreation Commission continues to work well with the Board of Commissioners, there are areas of uncertainty concerning the role of each group. The broad definition of authority given in the Resolution creating the Recreation Commission leaves room for this uncertainty. Whose role is it to manage contractual services for the parks; who is to oversee staff; who manages or sets

the safety standards for the parks; and who deals with liability issues? These are some of the outstanding questions that need to be clarified.

As it stands now, the Recreation Commission oversees the general operation of the parks with the assistance from some of the Township staff. The Commission does not have any staff of its own. However, in some years, the Township has hired seasonal park maintenance staff to assist with park mowing and general upkeep. While these persons are employees of the Township, they are mostly managed by the Director/Coordinator of Recreation.

The Recreation Commission also coordinates the use of the Township's park facilities by local youth sports organizations. Additionally, they annually allocate Township funding to support these programs. The sports organizations assist with park maintenance and upkeep on the fields they use.

The Recreation Commission provides field use for some Belle Vernon Area School District sports. It also has cooperated with the District for the use of the LaGrange Fields and basketball court for community use.

In the past, the Township has cooperated with Westmoreland County for the use of Cedar Creek Park sports fields but is no longer doing so.

Maintenance

The Commission is generally responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of all recreation facilities owned or leased by the Township; this includes nine parks and playgrounds scattered throughout the Township. There is currently no risk management or maintenance plan for the parks. The Commission owns several pieces of maintenance equipment including mowers, tractors, turf equipment, and a truck but currently contracts out all mowing services and does not use most of the equipment it owns.

The level of maintenance varies greatly from park to park. DiVirgilio Sports Complex, the Township's newest park, is very well maintained. On the other hand parks like Pricedale playground, Van Meter Park, and LaGrange Ballfields are in very poor condition. Maintenance at other parks fall somewhere in between. Maintenance problems fall into three general categories: general maintenance and upkeep; vandalism; deferred maintenance and capital improvements.

General Maintenance and Upkeep

Day-to-day maintenance suffers greatly due to a lack of adequate staff and financial allocations. Generally, the grass is mowed on a regular basis and is well cared for during the peak seasons, although, over the years there have been some problems with having the grass cut often enough. In recent years the Recreation Commission has contracted the grass cutting to a lawn care business but still sometimes experiences periods of high grass. Other general maintenance and repairs for fencing, parking areas, restrooms, courts, nets, litter, asphalt, bleachers, benches, dugouts, and much more are significantly lacking. This lack of proper on-going, day-to-day maintenance has created safety hazards, limited the usefulness of facilities, produced unsightly parks and play areas, and discouraged residents from using the Township's parks.

The Township can take three corrective actions to improve the maintenance of the parks: 1) develop a maintenance plan that sets standards for how maintenance is to occur for each facility; 2) reduce the number of parks being maintained by the Township; 3) allocate sufficient funding and staffing to adequately conduct the appropriate level of maintenance at all parks.

Vandalism

While all parks are vandalized to some degree, some parks are more susceptible to vandalism than others. Remote parks like Pricedale, Van Meter, and LaGrange Fields seem to suffer the greatest amount of damage from vandals. There are several methods of deterring vandalism. Experience in other communities shows that one of the best defenses against vandalism is to keep the park well maintained. Vandals tend to be attracted to parks in poor condition and find them easy target for their misdeeds. Remote parks are also greater targets for vandals. These parks also tend not to be well maintained and are less frequently patrolled by police. Regular patrols and law enforcement are a necessity in discouraging vandals. Vandals need to know that they are being watched and will be prosecuted for illegal acts of vandalism. Managing loitering in parks can also help to deter vandalism. Dealing with loitering is a very difficult issue in parks. After all, parks are intended to be places where people come to linger. For many people, recreation involves being in a park just relaxing. However, regular security patrols can help to distinguish between those who are lawfully relaxing and those who are likely to be involved in unwanted activities due to boredom, discontent, restlessness, and corrupt intentions.

Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvements

Deferred maintenance and lack of ongoing capital improvements are difficult and expensive to overcome. Many of the Township's park facilities are outdated, dysfunctional, or in poor condition. This is most often the result of not being upgraded and replaced as needed and maintenance being deferred due to a lack of funding or staff. These deficiencies include: broken and worn fencing and backstops; unsafe playground equipment; lack of turf maintenance; vandalism; inadequate parking and court surface maintenance; lack of vegetation maintenance (tree trimming, weed control, encroachment, etc.); and broken and worn dugouts, benches, basketball standards, etc.

The only real answer to address this problem is to begin an adequate and ongoing maintenance program at each park and schedule replacement and/or repair of major facility deficiencies. Other sections of this report provide a detailed, park-by-park listing of needed upgrades and repairs.

Finances

The Township annually allocates funds to support the maintenance and upkeep of parks and recreation facilities and to support general recreation programming offered through youth sports organizations. The following chart depicts the Township's annual recreation expenses for 2003 through 2006.

ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP					
General Fund Expenses for Recreation and Culture 2003 through 2006					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	Average Annual Expense
Expense	\$94,850	\$10,374	\$92,583	\$97,991	\$8,950
Capital Expense	\$75	\$6,295	\$26,537	\$11,144	\$11,013

Source: Rostraver Township Year-end Financial Audits 2003-2006

A portion of these annual funds were provided, through the Recreation Commission, as financial support for local youth recreation organizations, administration, maintenance, and investment in the DiVirgilio Sports Complex. The following chart displays the budget figures for 2004 through 2007. From the records provided by the Township, it is difficult to reconcile the figures to know whether the amount budgeted was actually expended, but the budget figures are considered to be reasonably accurate. However, although the parking lot paving budget remained the same each year, the project was not completed.

The figures show that there has been little change in expenditures over the four-year period. The Commission has worked hard to encourage each recreation organization to increase their funding from other sources so that the Commission's contribution has remained stable.

The \$30,000 annual allotment for park maintenance is insufficient to maintain the parks to the necessary standards. And no funds have been allocated for park improvements except in the DiVirgilio Sports Complex. In order to meet both of these needs, the budget will need to be increased. The maintenance budget should increase to provide funding for a maintenance manager and at least one additional seasonal employee. The park upgrade budget will need to increase according the recommendations for each park.

ROSTRAVER RECREATION COMMISSION OPERATING BUDGET				
	2004	2005	2006	2007
Recreational Activities	\$29,550	\$30,400	\$32,400	\$31,900
Midget Football	\$6,750	\$6,750	\$6,750	\$6,750
Youth Baseball	\$7,000	\$7,500	\$7,300	\$7,000
Girls' Softball	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$7,200	\$7,000
Boy Scouts	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Swim Club	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Youth Wrestling	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$1,100
Soccer	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Instructional Basketball	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$500
Fishing Contest	\$500	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000
Dance Team	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,800	\$1,800
Cheerleaders	\$1,500	\$1,800	\$250	\$250
Other	\$200	\$250		
Administrative Expenses	\$41,950	\$41,950	\$41,950	\$41,950
Portable Toilets	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$3,750	\$3,750
Equipment	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Maintenance	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$36,000
Administrative Exp.	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
DiVirgilio Sports Complex	\$27,500	\$27,500	\$25,000	\$25,000
Parking Lot Paving	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Bleachers	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Scoreboard	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$99,000	\$99,850	\$99,350	\$98,850

Source: Rostraver Recreation Commission

The only sources of revenue for the Township's parks and recreation operations is tax receipts. Revenue for park improvement and expansion comes from the Township's "Land Dedication or Fees-in-lieu-of" ordinance and state grants.

COMPARISON OF ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP RECREATION TO NRPA GUIDELINES

Determining the appropriate acreage, type, and number of recreation facilities for a community is a function of analyzing a variety of data. There are many factors unique to Rostraver Township that the Consultant considered: extensive natural resources, existing land use, existing parks and their current

uses, recreation trends in the region, the role of the Township, and the input received through the public participation process.

Prior to 1995, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provided guidelines for determining the number, type, and acreage of facilities a typical community should have to meet residents’ recreation needs. These guidelines identified a recommended number of certain facilities or park types per a given population. In 1995, the NRPA published “Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines”, which recommends a more sophisticated means of determining the number of facilities needed for individual communities by determining an appropriate level of service through analyses and public input.

This Plan combines both methods in identifying the number and types of facilities needed for Rostraver Township. Charts depict the general number of facilities needed for the size of the community to serve as a starting point. From there, the level of service method is used to analyze and project needs for certain facilities in the region.

The following chart compares facilities currently available to Rostraver Township residents with NRPA standards.

FACILITY COMPARISONS TO NRPA STANDARDS						
Rostraver Township 2005 Population – 12,000			Estimated 2030 Population – 14,398			
	1 facility per X people	Existing	2007 need	2007 surplus (deficit)	2020 need	2020 surplus (deficit)
Basketball Courts	5,000	5	2	3	3	2
Tennis Courts*	5,000	3	2	1	3	0
Volleyball Courts	5,000	0	2	(2)	3	(3)
Baseball Fields+	2,500	4	5	(1)	6	(2)
Softball Fields*+	2,500	3	5	(2)	6	(3)
Soccer Fields*	2,500	1	5	(4)	6	(5)
Swimming Pools	20,000	0	1	(1)	0	-
Picnic Shelters	2,000	1	6	(5)	7	(6)
Football	5,000	0	2	(2)	3	(3)

*adjusted to reflect current trends

+ other fields are located at parks that are recommended to be closed

As suggested in the NRPA’s publication, crucial to this process is the public participation/demand component of this study. The recreation needs of residents are important in customizing national standards to fit their community. The Consultant utilized NRPA’s guidelines to begin an evaluation of and make recommendations for the region’s recreation, park, and open space system.

Utilizing the public input, along with the consultant’s analysis, to balance with the NRPA guidelines, the following recreational facilities are needed for current and future use:

Current Needs

- 2-3 fields T-ball and instructional baseball
- 1-2 fields Little League Baseball
- 1 girls’ softball field
- 1 short and 1 full soccer field
- 1 practice and one game football field

- 1 volleyball court
- 2 picnic shelters

Future Needs (in addition to those recommended above)

- 2 girls' softball fields
- 2-3 soccer fields
- 2 volleyball courts
- 2-3 picnic shelters

PARK LAND ACREAGE COMPARISON TO NRPA STANDARDS							
Rostraver Township 2005 Population – 11,926				Estimated 2030 Population – 14,398			
Park Type	Acres/1000	Existing Acres	2005 needed acres	2005 Surplus (Deficit)	2030 needed acreage	2030 surplus (Deficit)	Location
Community Park	8	27	95.408	-68.408	115.184	88.184	DiVirgilio Sports Complex
Neighborhood Parks	2	23.73	23.852	-0.122	28.796	5.066	Collinsburg Park 6.4 acres Fellsburg Park 1.7 acres Pricedale Playground .25 acres LaGrange Fields 3 acres Webster 3.5 acres Van Meter 4.5 acres Webster Park 3.58 acres Clair Manor .8 acres

In considering park land, the standards would suggest that the Township is deficient in land available in the Community Park (68 acres) and Neighborhood Park (.1 acres) classifications. The deficiency for the neighborhood parks is negligible. In projecting for the future, the deficiencies become greater in each classification: 88 acres of community parks and 5 acres of neighborhood parks.

Due to the nature of the Township and the results of the public input, neighborhood parks are not a priority. The Township should focus on acquisition of land to expand DiVirgilio Park to allow it to accommodate the community park needs of the Township residents.

Comparative Analysis Conclusion

The deficiencies do not account for either the land or the individual facilities at Cedar Creek County Park. The Township will need to determine how much of these needs can or are being met by the County Park.

As residential development grows within Rostraver Township there may be an increasing demand for neighborhood facilities within residential developments. However, homeowners are more frequently building recreation facilities, including playgrounds, swimming pools, trampolines, and tennis courts on their own properties. This tends to diminish the need for neighborhood parks in rural townships like Rostraver. This Plan recommends that the decision concerning neighborhood parks be the responsibility

of the residential developer or homeowner associations. Rostraver Township should not be responsible for planning, developing, or maintaining neighborhood parks. The Township should focus its efforts on acquisition, development, and expansion of the community park, and, specified, existing neighborhood parks.

CHAPTER 3: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public input was a key component to the development of this Comprehensive Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. This chapter describes the public participation processes that were utilized to collect input and provides the details of each venue of participation.

Four venues were used to gather public input.

1. The 2000 Rostraver Township Comprehensive Plan
2. The Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan Steering Committee
3. Key person interviews
4. A Public Meeting Open House
5. A recreation interest survey

The following describes each.

ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC INPUT FROM 1999

As part of the Township Comprehensive Plan completed in 2000, public input was gathered. The following describes the comments related to parks and recreation that were received as part of that Plan.

Community Input Meeting February 23, 1999

- Increase opportunities (recreational, cultural, employment) for all township citizens of all ages
- Provide additional recreational spaces for citizens of all ages (community center)
- There should be playgrounds in a lot of the neighborhoods
- Utilize the rivers for recreation, especially the Monongahela; provide more access to the Mon River
- The County should expand its facilities (recreation for young adults and youth) and industrial parks
- The Township needs a swimming pool
- Would like to see additional space for youth and senior citizens to gather
- Would like to see a community center for kids to go to after school (arts, sports, computers, etc.)
- Need to include more open space between houses
- Need small parks/parklets (ballfield, walking areas, swings)
- Would like to see a community pool
- Need more access to the river
- Need a movie theater in the Township

Local Government and Parks and Recreation Focus Group Meeting March 2, 1999

- Need to find a way to fund the maintenance and upkeep of the Township's recreation areas
- Rostraver Township has an excellent recreation program

STEERING COMMITTEE INPUT

Rostraver Township's steering committee for this project was comprised of the Township's Recreation Committee and other residents. From the beginning of the planning process, through to the final

recommendations, the steering committee played an important role in the development of this Plan. The steering committee:

- Served as a sounding board for ideas as this Plan was developed
- Expressed their thoughts about key parks and recreation issues that the Township faces
- Assisted with the public input process
- Gathered pertinent inventory information about recreation facilities
- Provided feedback concerning inventory, analysis, public comment, and recommendations
- Reviewed and commented on the draft report

The Committee identified the following eight issues they thought needed to be addressed by this Plan:

1. Funding park maintenance, development, and upgrades
2. Handling of recreation facilities maintenance
3. Understanding the role of the Recreation Commission
4. Determining if the Recreation Commission can be self-sufficient
5. Deciding if there is currently sufficient field space
6. Determining whether or not there is a need for additional recreation facilities or parks
7. Understanding if liability insurance is an issue
8. Defining the role of individual parks owned or managed by the Commission

They also developed the following list of additional recreation facilities that may be needed:

- Tennis courts
- Basketball courts
- Bocce courts
- Horseshoe pits
- Baseball fields
- Soccer fields
- Football fields
- Senior recreation
- Indoor recreation
- Winter activities
- Non-sports activities
- Summer youth recreation programs (i.e. arts and crafts)

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

To gather public input on parks and recreation resources and needs, the Consultant conducted eleven (11) interviews with area business people, sports oriented program providers, retirees, and various community residents. The interviewees were:

1. John Dolfi – Rostraver Gathering
2. John Stawovy – Golf Courses
3. Bill Ruoizzi – Golf Land/Deck Hockey
4. Clint Manown – Developer
5. Rev. John Derrico – Christian Center
6. Virginia Barella – PTA
7. Jeri Drake – Retired Realtor

8. Alexis Faust – Performing Arts
9. Stacey Fioravanti –Area Resident
10. Adam Martin – Businessman
11. Jesse Cramer – District Judge

Each person interviewed was asked the same questions, and their personal responses were recorded for each question asked. The questions that were asked appear as follows:

1. When you think of Parks and Recreation in Rostraver Township, what comes to mind?
2. What are the strengths of Parks and Recreation in Rostraver Township?
3. What are the weaknesses of Parks and Recreation in Rostraver Township?
4. What are the greatest recreational needs in Rostraver Township, for facilities and for recreation programs?
5. What group of people is least served or should be targeted with recreational programs or facilities?
6. Should Rostraver Township be cooperating with surrounding communities in providing Parks and Recreation? If yes, what municipalities and how? If no, why not?
7. Are there other issues of importance that need to be considered?

Responses for each question are shown as follows. Duplicate answers are indicated by a number following the response.

1. When you think of Parks and Recreation in Rostraver Township, what comes to mind?

- Cedar Creek Park (8)
- DiVirgilio Sports Complex (4)
- The river trail(2)
- Parks, trees, and open space
- The need for a neighborhood-type park, not just a sports complex
- Competitive sports
- Emphasis on park usage has changed from Cedar Creek Park to DiVirgilio Park

2. What are the strengths of Parks and Recreation in Rostraver Township?

- DiVirgilio is in a good-central location (2)
- DiVirgilio is in good condition (2)
- When you locate them where all residents have the best access to them
- Ball fields and sports fields
- Good soccer and baseball programs
- Musical entertainment in Cedar Creek
- Rails to Trails
- Greenspace – many people in new housing developments find greenspace important
- Cedar Creek is beautiful with its park atmosphere
- Cedar Creek is easy to get into and out of, and to get back into traffic
- Cedar Creek feels like a safe environment
- The ability to have team practices and games on a few nice facilities, some communities do not have as nice a facilities

3. What are the weaknesses of Parks and Recreation in Rostraver Township?

- Do not put future park development in the wrong locations, put them where families are more dense – “location is everything” (2)

- Traditional park atmosphere is missing like in other older communities - too much present emphasis on “sports-type parks” - blend them
- Need adult programs like biking and softball for over ages 30, 40, and 50
- Need better restroom facilities at the little ball parks
- Not enough sites for basic play and gathering
- Not enough sports fields for the future growth of this family-oriented community
- If you do not get use-space on DiVirgilio, you wind up on the other junky fields
- Lights for soccer fields, too, in order to be able to use them later into the evening
- “Bad-elements” congregate during the fair-type events (like the August Fun Fest), it attracts them from out-of-the-area locations
- Not enough special-events, like Pumpkin Festival
- Some of the “established” people in charge of the youth competitive sports, and in particular some of the coaches, seem to carry a lot of influence within their own realm, and newer coaches, etc., do not get the good practice times, or equipment, nor does their opinion seem to be taken into regard
- A good vision when developing the future of Parks and Recreation

4. What are the greatest recreational needs in Rostraver Township?

Facility needs:

- Indoor recreation facility other than the school - a recreation or community center (4)
- ATV users need a place so they are not on private property or sports fields (2)
- A skate/bike-type park for the kids, to keep them off the streets (2)
- Key areas in the township need smaller parks with neighborhood playgrounds (2)
- More nice restrooms (2)
- There is no facility for gathering in a park atmosphere, with a water fountain, picnic pavilions, nature trails, and nice green space
- A walking trail/track
- Too much is geared toward competitive sports and not for the performing arts; need a nice stage and seating, other than at Cedar Creek
- There are a lot of baseball fields, but not enough true soccer fields
- More parking at DiVirgilio.

Recreation Programs:

- Programs other than competitive sports; we need traditional types of parks and recreation programs for a larger variety of users (4)
- Senior citizen programming, such as nature hikes and senior bike hikes (3)
- More special events to draw the community together (2)
- Programs for crafting, computer, and social skill development
- After school programming for kids in a “not-so-much” competitive environment
- Indoor recreational basketball programming for youth and a baseball league for those who get cut or who are not that competitive, so they can have fun and feel good, too
- Lacrosse
- It seems the township is geared all towards sports, we need programs, too, like Shakespeare in the Park, movies in the park, and activities that are not so competitive
- Adults in sports need more training clinics to teach them to better understand the sports, the kids need more training, too
- Programs like line dancing, card games, lunchtime gathering – like the “Center in the Woods.”

5. What group of people is least served or should be targeted with recreational programs or facilities?

- Senior Programming (6)
- Youth Programming (6)
- Children need more diversity in recreational and leisure programming prior to receiving their driving license and heading out to other communities to seek out recreation and cultural activities that our community should have; that will help keep them here longer
- 4 to 14 year-olds, when they are young and interested in knowing and developing in different selections of sports and programming
- Programming for the non-athlete, they need to fit into something else for their social and recreational needs
- Age groups 5-35, we need to keep them in some type of non-competitive program, too
- Middleclass programming for those who are the average citizens; there are programs for the disadvantaged, and programs for those who can afford programming, but not for the average family wage earner
- Everywhere but Cedar Creek
- Low income people – because all of the sports are expensive, some more than others
- Need varied family programming for all the people that will be moving into the Township
- Young people who are into motor sports

6. Should Rostraver Township be cooperating with surrounding communities in providing Parks and Recreation? If yes, what municipalities and how? If no, why not?

- Yes - 5
 - Monessen, Smithton, Yough - for programming
 - River frontage areas for canoeing and kayaking
 - Use the Cedar Creek for more participation from the Mon Valley residents
 - Washington, Ringgold, Perryopolis, Charleroi, Elizabeth Forward – for programming
 - Municipalities working together will strengthen our area
 - Incorporate what other townships are doing and to not duplicate their efforts

If no, why not?

- No - 5
 - We are big enough that we need to be inclusive and take care of our own residents (2)
 - We need to maintain our own identity, too many communities have already started to gain our assets such as the Rostraver Business Scholarship – who started to give a percent to outside communities, and less goes to who it was originated to go to, it goes to the Mon Valley Consortium
 - There are a lot of barriers that separate the varied communities, we need to deal with improvements in our own community first
 - I do not see other communities who have the common goals we have, they have no new development or growth.

7. Are there other issues of importance that need to be considered?

- Find places for kids to skate board and bike other than in the parking lots; not that they are bad kids, but that they are kids who need a place to do their sport.
- We need a science and technology-type facility for people to hang out at who do not get involved in competitive sports.
- The library is nice, but it is just for reading and reference; we need a newer social place to gather that has a library where you can get coffee, a soft drink, and talk and use the wireless Internet service.
- If kids do not do sports, they almost always have to go outside of Rostraver to be involved in singing lessons, acting lessons, ballet, music lessons, and cultural training.
- To have the Commissioners, Zoning/Planning, and Chamber work better together, and get along better with each other
- Get a gazebo or amphitheater in a park atmosphere; there is the church environment out there that can have a hand in improving recreational programming and after school programming, too.
- A designated traditional type of Community Park that is expandable
- Keep up on field maintenance; keep what we have in good shape
- In the area of expansion, we need to be careful not to be turned into a Pleasant Hills environment; we need to maintain our identity

In addition to these eleven (11) Key Person interviews, the Consultant conducted ten (10) Key Organization interviews with area youth program providers:

1. Rostraver Youth Baseball Association – Scott Callaway, past President and now Board Member
2. Belle Vernon Swim Club – Susan Naylor, Treasurer, Board of Director for BV Swim Team
3. Belle Vernon Area School District – Jesse Cramer, AD
4. Belle Vernon Boy Scouts – Fred Reeb, Past Scout Master
5. Rostraver Township Girls’ (slow-pitch) Softball League – Bucky Walkush, President
6. Rostraver Township Girls’ (fast-pitch) Softball League – Bucky Walkush, President
7. Rostraver Township Cheerleading Association – Staci Tedrow, President
8. Rostraver Midget Football – Kim Dongilli, President
9. Belle Vernon Area Wrestling Boosters – Don Tasser, President
10. Belle Vernon Youth Soccer – Joe Shrader, President and John Pesi, Board Member

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

On October 2, 2007 Pashek Associates, Rostraver Township Commissioners, the Rostraver Township Recreation and Park Board Study Committee, and the Rostraver Township Planning Department held a Public Open House meeting from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Rostraver Township Municipal Building. The purpose of this Open House meeting was to answer community questions and to make a recreational survey available to the visitors in order to gather information to better understand the parks and recreational needs of Rostraver Township residents.

The open house consisted of the following four activities for attendees:

1. Representatives from Pashek Associates or Township Recreation Commission representatives described to each attendee the Recreation Plan and reviewed the recreational inventory mapping that was on display.

2. Attendees were given the opportunity to offer comments about Rostraver Township's parks and recreation to the Consultants.
3. Each attendee was asked to complete a one-page parks and recreation survey. Twenty of the twenty-seven attendees did so.
4. Attendees placed colored dots on a recreational opportunity map, indicating where they felt new parks and facilities should be located within the Township.

Comments from Attendees

The following comments were offered throughout the course of the Open House event:

- There is an interest in senior programming. It was suggested that the community members attending want senior programming. It was mentioned that on the Questionnaire Senior Programming had 14 votes [the highest for programming] and that Recreation/Community Center had 12 votes [the highest for facilities], and that maybe an option would be a multi-purpose community center to offer meeting and programming space for year-round programming.
- Several people mentioned that the 1991 site plan (specifically, the ball field layout) for the DiVirgilio Sports Complex was changed in 2001 to the present configuration.
- There was interest in putting a riverfront park at Webster.
- The possibility of offering fun and interesting community "mystery" bus trips to undisclosed area sites was discussed.
- Some attendees spoke of how the soccer field really does not need to be moved to the lower baseball fields because there were not the numbers of soccer kids to warrant it; it would be too much trouble and expense to tear up the drainage. A question arose, "where would soccer get the money to assist in developing these changes?"
- Some people questioned why "Outdoor Sports Complex" was listed on the Questionnaire when the Township already had a Complex.
- Some discussed the need for new soccer fields and questioned why Township officials have not listened to the soccer group's request in the past. It was suggested that the Township's thinking does not take soccer seriously, and that there is an age-old mentality from the older generation that sports means baseball and football. It was mentioned that the Recreation Commission should look around Pennsylvania and see that soccer is the premiere growing sport that incorporates all kids' ages and abilities, and that it has the most adaptable and lengthy season. It was pointed out that the soccer fields are utilized longer each year than baseball, softball, or football.
- Some attendees supported the expansion of DiVirgilio Park, increasing the recreation fees (fees-in-lieu-of), and planning long-term for 2-3 regional parks as opposed to developing many neighborhood parks, though they are nice to have.
- There is a need for a skate park, but no particular site has been identified.
- One attendee commented on the intensity of the DiVirgilio ball field lights glaring into area homes, and that they need to be turned down or a shield of some type be added behind the lights.
- There was discussion of the need for a tennis court for public use, and the need to post a monthly schedule of use for the park facilities.
- There was discussion that a historic museum needs to be developed and that it should be built across from the Township building by the gazebo. There was further suggestion that there is a standing promise that this will happen.

Suggested Locations for New Parks and Facilities

Attendees attached 15 dots to the map at various locations, indicating various wants and needs, and these are listed below: (A number listed beside a component indicates the number of repeated requests.)

Belle Vernon School Complex

- Neighborhood park
- Biking and rollerblade trail
- Outdoor recreation

John DiVirgilio Sports Complex

- Community Park (2) (more than just a sports complex)
- Walking Trail with lights (2)
- Indoor recreation
- Horse Riding Trail
- Senior Center

Fellsburg Park

- Skate Park (2)

Finley Road (just east of Allens Crossroads)

- Senior Center

Valley View Drive area

- Neighborhood Park

Markle Drive/Weddell Drive area

- ATV Trails

RECREATION QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The questionnaire/survey asked 6 questions. Each is presented below with its findings. (Numbers indicated beside each question represent the number of residents that felt that this area was of most interest or importance to them.)

1. Are you a Rostraver Township resident?

Yes - 20

No - 0

Note: All people attending the open house and who filled out the survey were from the Township. [Ages ranged from those in their 30's to over 70 years of age.]

2. Please check the appropriate box below for each statement.

	Yes	No
Parks and recreation are important to me and my family.	19	1
There are sufficient parks in Rostraver Township.	11	8
There are sufficient recreational programs available to Rostraver Township residents.	6	12
I can easily find information about parks and programs available in the area.	10	6

Note: It was found that that 99% of the respondents believe that recreational opportunities are important to them. It was also found that 50% more respondents believed that there were NOT sufficient recreational programs available to them.

3. We have been told that Rostraver Township needs additional park space. Should any of the following types of parks be developed in Rostraver Township? Select those that apply.

- **Neighborhood Parks** (smaller parks located in individual neighborhoods with facilities intended for residents who live close by) - 9
- **Community Park** (a large park with pavilions, trails, ball fields, sports courts, a large playground, and other recreational facilities) - 7
- **Sports Complex** (a facility primarily designed to provide additional sports facilities) - 2

If yes, in which area of the Township should a community park be located? Comments?

- Fellsburg High School area
- Neighborhood parks are needed

Note: It was found that the majority of respondents believed that the development of additional sports park-type facilities was not the avenue for the Township to pursue; however, that a blending of more localized traditional types of parks with playgrounds, trees, and picnic pavilions was of far greater importance.

4. What recreational facilities should be acquired or developed in Rostraver Township?

- Playgrounds - 12
- Recreation/Community Center - 12
- Walking/Jogging Trails - 10
- Skate Park - 10
- Tennis Courts - 10
- Outdoor Swimming Pool - 9
- Outdoor Basketball Courts - 7
- Biking/Rollerblading Trails - 7
- Picnic Shelters - 5
- Soccer Fields - 5
- Open Space - 4
- Baseball Fields - 3
- Indoor Basketball Courts - 2
- Softball Fields - 2

- Outdoor Sports Complex - 2
- Other - 4 (Senior Center; Equestrian Trails; Indoor Recreation Facility; Skateboarding)

Note: The respondents determined that playgrounds and an indoor recreation or community center is of primary importance over that of other league-competitive outdoor recreational or leisure facilities. It was also found that non-team oriented and family and child oriented facilities were of greater value, such as walking/jogging trails, a skate park, tennis courts, and an outdoor swimming pool.

5. What recreation programs should be provided?

- Senior Citizen Programs - 14
- Arts, Music, Drama - 11
- Special Events - 10
- Summer Playground Program - 9
- Indoor Youth Sports - 9
- Swimming - 8
- Teen/Youth Programs - 8
- Fitness - 8
- Environmental/Nature - 8
- Indoor Adult Sports - 8
- Outdoor Adult Sports - 7
- Outdoor Youth Sports - 5
- Sports Camps - 5
- Educational Programs - 5
- Other - 0

Note: The respondents made record to point out the high degree of importance of senior programming and performance and cultural arts/events programming. The second tier of concern was for the development of summer programming for children and youth, indoor programming, and recreational/leisure and fitness activities.

6. How should expanded recreation programs, park development, and greenways be supported?

- Combination of grants and local tax funds - 17
- Private/corporate donations - 16
- Volunteer time/donated materials - 14
- Program registration fees - 12
- User fees - 12
- Local tax funds - 5

Note: The respondents made personal recommendation that they were not opposed to local tax funds being utilized for recreation programs, park development, and greenways, as long as they were in conjunction with maximizing efforts to obtain grants and donations.

Additional Comments:

- Need volunteer maintenance
- Maintenance is our largest concern
- The kids need a skate and BMX bicycles park; they get into trouble doing their thing in parking lots, sidewalks, and streets. These activities are increasing among our youth.
- Support Rostraver Historical Museum

CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this Study, eight issues were identified for which a series of recommendations has been developed. These recommendations will assist Rostraver Township in meeting the recreational needs of its residents. An asterisk next to the recommendation indicates that additional descriptive information is located at the end of the chapter.

ISSUE 1 – ROSTRAVER TOWNSHIP RECREATION COMMISSION

Findings

The Township Resolution that creates the Recreation Commission identifies its authority in general terms. This allows for some uncertainty concerning who is responsible for what between the Township Commissioners and the Recreation Commission. The Resolution reads as follows:

“It (the Recreation Commission) shall have the authority to supervise, maintain, and regulate recreation areas and facilities and to conduct recreation programs and to advise the Board of Commissioners on all matters pertaining to recreation.”

There needs to be some clarification concerning the types of decisions that the Commission can make on its own and those that need to have Township Commission approval. This may or may not require a revision to the existing Ordinance.

Recommendations

There are two possible options for this.

Strategy		Anticipated Cost
Option #1	Identify the role, responsibility, and authority that are given to the Rostraver Recreation Commission. Approve it by resolution.* (See the Proposed Administrative Plan below) Responsible Party: Board of Commissioners and the Recreation Commission	\$0
Option #2	Refine the current Township ordinance to more clearly define the role of both the Recreation Commission and the Rostraver Township Board of Commissioners. Responsible Party: Board of Commissioners and the Recreation Commission	\$0

The following proposed Administrative Plan outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of both the Township Board of Commissioners and the Recreation Commission. The new resolution or changes to the existing ordinance should reflect these responsibilities. The Township Commissioners and the Recreation Commission should work together to refine this proposed plan and have it adopted.

Proposed Rostraver Township Parks and Recreation Administrative Plan

Roles and Responsibilities for Administrative Bodies

Rostraver Township Commissioners

- Adopt this plan as the basis for maintaining a strong parks and recreation program within the Township.
- Maintain ultimate responsibility for all parks and recreation operations.
- Supervise the Parks and Recreation Commission and their functions.
- Establish a reasonable budget for parks and recreation.
- Adopt a clear definition of the duties, responsibilities, power, and authority of the Township Recreation Commission.
- Maintain the vision for parks and recreation that the Township residents have established through this Plan.

Recreation Commission

The Commission will focus on achieving the mission and vision set for parks and recreation in the Township as adopted by the Township Commissioners. Once the Rostraver Township Commissioners adopt this Comprehensive Recreation Park and Open Space Plan, it shall become the Township's vision for parks and recreation for the future.

The Recreation Commission shall:

1. Be responsible for maintenance of all parks.
2. Recommend and supervise contracts for park maintenance.
3. Coordinate scheduling of maintenance with recreation program schedules.
4. Provide all maintenance not under contract to an outside agency.
5. Play a lead role in keeping the Township's vision current and focused.
6. Help the Township Commissioners maintain a focus on implementation of this Plan.
7. Work with the Township Commissioners to adopt annual goals and strategies for implementation of the Plan.
8. Serve in an advisory role to the Township Commissioners. Commissioners may give specific rights and/or responsibilities in which the Commission may not need to make recommendations back to the Commissioners.
9. Assist the Township Commissioners in identifying and developing funding opportunities for improvements and development. Assure a cross-section of stakeholders is represented on the Commission.
10. Provide a well-balanced variety of recreational programming for Township residents.
11. Conduct an annual tour of all Township Park facilities each spring to ensure an understanding of each facility, its condition, and its needs. Present a report to the Township Commissioners detailing the findings of the tour.
12. Supervise all park and recreation staff as needed.
13. Coordinate recreation programming among local recreation providers.
14. Advise Township Commissioners on budgetary matters that pertain to parks and recreation.
15. Serve as a community advocate for parks and recreation.
16. Coordinate the use of park facilities.

17. Monitor park facilities and make recommendation to the Township Commissioners for maintenance and/or improvements.
18. Maintain an inventory of park and recreation facilities and recreation providers in the community.
19. Assist the Township Commissioners in the implementation of the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan.
20. Assist in the application for grants.

ISSUE 2 – EXISTING PARKS

Findings

Each park in the Township has specific needs that must be addressed. The following is a prioritized listing of most of those needs. To ensure a clear understanding of all needs of individual parks, the reader should review the complete park analysis found in Chapter 2.

Recommendations

Summary of Priority Recommendations for Township Parks

PRIORITY ONE

DiVirgilio Sports Complex	Cost (assumes a combination of volunteer labor, partial use of Township employees, and contracted labor when necessary)
Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities, as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use.	\$30,000- \$50,000
Improve the parking lots by paving, painting lines, placing wheel stops, and ADA compliant parking spaces; additional parking spaces are also needed.	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Cedar Creek County Park	
Negotiate an agreement with the County for extended use of the ballfields for local sports organizations.	No cost to the Township
St. Anne's Ball Field	
Trim branches from the tree that overhangs the backstop.	No cost to the Township
Designate two ADA compliant parking spaces; provide ADA compliant access and spectator seating.	\$2,000-\$5,000
Collinsburg Park	
Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards. This should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities, as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use.	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Fellsburg Park	

Improve maintenance to control unwanted vegetation.	No additional cost to the Township
Install proper signage to alert drivers to the park.	\$500
Replace the backstop and foul line fences; the right field foul line fence should be at least ten feet high.	\$15,000
Trim or remove trees that overhang the tennis court.	\$1,000
Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use.	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Webster Park	
Discontinue use until safety hazards associated with the railroad tracks have been addressed.	No cost to the Township
LaGrange Park	
Discontinue use of this field, turning it back to the Belle Vernon Area School District.	No cost to the Township
If it is to continue to be used as a public recreation area, the following improvements should be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve the accessibility to the park at the main entrance. The poor visibility and difficult access and egress create an extremely unsafe condition. These improvements should be a priority. The park should not be used until these changes are made. ▪ Replace all backstops and fencing. ▪ Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use. 	
Pricedale Playground	
Remove all playground equipment and continue to mow and maintain the parcel as an open lot.	\$500
Van Meter Fields	
Demolish and remove all above ground infrastructure at the ballfields and discontinue use of the main park.	\$2,000
Continue to use and maintain the basketball and tennis courts	No additional cost to the Township
Clair Manor Ballfield	
Replace the basketball backboard	\$250
Upgrade the entire park to meet ADA standards; this should include the development of accessible parking, seating, restrooms, and access routes to all facilities as well as making individual facilities accessible for their intended programmatic use.	\$5,000 - \$10,000
Priority One – Total Estimate of Probable Costs	\$56,250 - \$150,250

PRIORITY TWO

DiVirgilio Sports Complex	
Install a playground.	\$100,000
St. Anne's Ball Field	
Repair foul line fences; replace as necessary.	\$2,000
Clair Manor Ballfield	
Replace the backstop and fencing.	\$3,000
Priority Two – Total Estimate of Probable Costs	\$105,000

PRIORITY THREE

St. Anne's Ball Field	
Replace the backstop.	\$6,000
Fellsburg Park	
Develop and/or identify additional designated parking spaces.	Unknown
Consider creating parking spaces, a playground, or askate park in the additional Township-owned 1¼ acre parcel.	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Pricedale Playground	
The Township should maintain ownership of this lot with the intention of using it for passive recreation opportunities as Pricedale's revitalization program develops. There may be the opportunity to provide other such small passive areas in the future as the community is revitalized.	To be determined by the re- development plan
Clair Manor Ballfield	
Enlarge the basketball surface to 30' X40'.	\$5,000
Survey the property to identify its boundaries.	\$3,000
Priority Three – Total Estimate of Probable Costs	\$64,000 - \$114,000

ISSUE 3 - PARK MAINTENANCE

Findings

The frequency and quality of park maintenance is different in each park throughout the Rostraver Park system. There are insufficient funds allocated to the Recreation Commission to allow for the needed level of maintenance. There is a lack of accountability for the mowing contractor. A maintenance person is needed from mid March through mid November with additional seasonal assistance during the summer months.

Recommendations

	Strategy	Anticipated Cost
Recommendation #1	Develop and implement a Maintenance Management Plan to ensure that all parks are being adequately and safely maintained. Establish and adopt maintenance standards for all parks and facilities. Responsible Party: Recreation Commission	\$0
Recommendation #2	Develop and implement a Risk Management Plan for all parks and recreation facilities and programs. A description of the components can be found later in this chapter. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$0
Recommendation #3	Designate the Director of Recreation with the authority to manage the Township parks mowing contract or hire a full-time park maintenance manager. A sample plan can be found later in this chapter. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners	\$0
Recommendation #4	Hire a park maintenance person to work from March 15 th through November 15 th each year and a seasonal employee for the summer months. This could be done through the Road Department. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$10,000
Recommendation #5	Increase the Township park maintenance budget to meet the ongoing needs of the parks. Maintenance of the existing Rostraver Township parks and facilities should cost about \$80,000 per year. The current budget allots about \$36,000 annually. The increase to get to the total amount could be done incrementally. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners	Increase by \$10,000 per year until the needed amount is reached.

ISSUE 4 - FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT

Findings

Distribution of Parks

The distribution of parks throughout the Township is helpful in some ways but difficult in others. It allows for parks to be located in the various communities within the Township but creates a great difficulty in park maintenance. Most residents like having the parks distributed near where they live; however, the reality is that some of the parks are used very little. Travel distance and cost become issues when dealing with routine maintenance of these parks.

Sports Field Demand

There are insufficient fields for most existing sports. According to Pashek Associates’ analysis, the following fields are needed:

Current Needs

- 2-3 fields for T-ball and instructional baseball
- 1-2 fields for Little League Baseball
- 1 girls’ softball field
- 1 short and 1 full soccer field
- 1 practice and one game football field
- 1 volleyball court
- 2 picnic shelters

Future Needs (in addition to those recommended above)

- 2 girls’ softball fields
- 2-3 soccer fields
- 2 volleyball courts
- 2-3 picnic shelters

Recommendations

Summary of Future Park Uses

DiVirgilio Sports Complex
Becomes the Township’s main community park

Cedar Creek County Park
Expand the local use of it by entering into an agreement with the County for use by local sports organizations

Parks that will continue to serve as neighborhood or special use parks
St. Anne’s Ballfield
Collinsburg Park
Fellsburg Park
LaGrange Basketball Court
Clair Manor Ball Field

Parks recommended to be closed but considered for future recreational use
Webster Park
Pricedale Playground
Van Meter Fields

Park to be turned back over to the School District
LaGrange Park

Strategy		Anticipated Cost
Recommendation #1	Expand DiVirgilio Sports Complex to add baseball and softball fields. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$300,000 - \$1,000,000
Recommendation #2	Develop a partnership agreement with Westmoreland County Parks for the use of Cedar Creek County Park for additional football and soccer fields. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$5,000 annually
Recommendation #3	See other recommendations included in the “Local Recreation Facilities” analysis and Existing Parks recommendations (Issue #2). Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	See Existing Parks Recommendations under Issue #2

ISSUE 5 - RECREATION PROGRAMMING

Findings

There is little public recreation programming available in the Township aside from youth sports. The private sector meets some of the recreational program needs but certainly not all. Many municipalities

the size of Rostraver Township provide a variety of recreational programs to their residents. These programs include children’s recreational activities, special events, educational programs, arts classes, summer day camps and activities, exercise and fitness programs, senior citizen activities, and family events.

The public input suggested the Township should be providing some of these types of recreational activities.

Recommendations

Strategy		Anticipated Cost
Recommendation #1	Encourage local organizations to use Township and County Parks to provide recreational programming. Provide the facilities at little or no fee to the organizations. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$0
Recommendation #2	Invite new persons onto the Recreation Commission that have a specific interest in providing recreation programming. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners	\$0
Recommendation #3	Develop a Community Day Festival in Rostraver Township that has a specific focus. It could focus on art and theater; local culture; a season or holiday; or any other theme. Responsible Party: Recreation Commission	\$3,000 - \$5,000 annually
Recommendation #4	Support individuals and organizations who want to provide recreation programming in the parks such as walk-a-thons, special events, education programs, and others. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$0
Recommendation #5	Plan to begin providing recreation programming when a community room is built in the Township. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$2,000 - \$10,000

ISSUE 6 – FUNDING PARK UPGRADES AND DEVELOPMENT

Findings

The recommendations of this Plan will require a significant amount of development funding. The Township has a Recreation Fee that can be used for development of some of the facilities but will need assistance.

Recommendations

Strategy		Anticipated Cost
Recommendation #1	Utilize the baseline information from this Plan to have Grove City Consulting Associates determine a new Recreation Fee. Adopt the fee by ordinance. Develop size, dimension, and topographic standards for the land dedication ordinance to ensure all dedicated property is usable for recreational purposes that fit the Township’s needs. See appendix for additional information. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners	To be completed as part of an existing contract at no additional cost
Recommendation #2	Establish quality standards for park development through the land dedication ordinance. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners	To be completed as part of an existing contract at no additional cost
Recommendation #3	Pay for basic field and park upgrades from the Township General Fund. Pay for major park upgrades from the Recreation Fee. The Recreation Fee may only be used for park upgrades and expansions. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	No additional cost. This just specifies where funding for various project is to come from.
Recommendation #4	Seek funding through a variety of sources for the development of facilities. Work to leverage funds from one funding source against another to lower the Township’s costs for development. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	\$0
Recommendation #5	Utilize the budget figures from the recommendations charts to guide future development of Township Parks. Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners and Recreation Commission	See individual recommendations

ISSUE 7 – GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Findings

The general administration of Rostraver Township parks is done by the Recreation Commission. This Plan should provide guidance for their use in addressing current and future issues. The Commission could benefit from some assistance from outside professional sources.

Recommendations

Strategy		Anticipated Cost
Recommendation #1	Adopt this Plan as the basis for future development of Rostraver Parks and Recreation.	\$0

	Responsible Party: Township Board of Commissioners	
Recommendation #2	Join the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS) as a Board/Commission Member. Send Commission members to PRPS training opportunities. Responsible Party: Recreation Commission	\$400
Recommendation #3	Attend the 2008 PRPS Boards and Commissions Training Conference in Seven Springs. Attend future, similar conferences as well. Responsible Party: Recreation Commission	\$500

ISSUE 8 – OTHER REQUESTED FACILITIES

Findings

Several other recreation facilities were requested by residents throughout this planning process. They include the following:

Senior Center and/or Community Building or Community Room

Added onto the Municipal Building
At the Library

Skate Park

On Property owned by the Township in Fellsburg

ATV Facility or Park

Webster Hill
Van Meter

Horseback Riding Area

Cedar Creek County Park

Neighborhood Parks

Requested in the Sweeney Area and the Valley View Drive Area
The Township owns three parcels of property in the Sweeney Plan that may be able to serve as a neighborhood park. However, the Consultant has been told that local residents objected to a previous attempt to install a playground on these lots. If these are not to be used for future parkland, the Township should consider selling the properties and investing the proceeds into other park development.

Recommendations

This Plan makes no specific recommendations concerning these requests except that the Township should be aware of them for future planning.

SUPPORTING DATA FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Risk Management Plan

A Risk Management Plan for parks and recreation facilities is of the highest importance for the safety of the residents and to minimize the Township's liability exposure. Risk management is accident prevention. When facilities and programs are provided for public use, every precaution should be taken to ensure user safety. Documentation of all risk management procedures is essential, not only for good record keeping and maintenance scheduling, but also to provide evidence in case of legal action.

The Risk Management Plan should be based on the competence and training of recreation and maintenance staff. Staff should be trained in safety procedures and should be expected to be constantly aware of the condition of facilities used. Staff should be trained to recognize and post unsafe conditions, prevent the use of unsafe equipment and facilities, and report safety hazards, in writing, so they can be remedied in a timely manner. Regularly scheduled safety inspections should be conducted by trained staff at every facility available for public use. Written work orders should be issued for needed repairs, and completed work should be documented.

Adequate liability insurance must be kept up-to-date. As new programs and facilities are developed, liability insurance coverage should be revised to reflect new conditions. Regular communication with the insurance carriers is necessary. Both risk to users and insurance costs may be reduced if all existing and proposed facilities can be brought into compliance with current safety standards and guidelines.

Park Maintenance Plan

Development of a Park Maintenance Plan is the first step in risk management. A Park Maintenance Plan should set maintenance standards that will keep recreation facilities safe, reduce liability risks, and plan for prevention of accidents. In order to accomplish this, the municipality should develop and follow a complete preventative maintenance and risk management program. All facilities should be scheduled for regular inspection and assessment. In the spring and summer, these inspections may be performed when a site is visited for mowing. A written inspection form should be completed, and minor repairs should be made immediately. Areas or equipment needing major repairs or having parts missing should be posted as unsafe, reported in writing, and repaired as soon as possible.

Projects should be prioritized according to existing condition and usage. Work on these projects should be scheduled around the regular mowing, inspection, and repair schedule.

Routine equipment maintenance and servicing must be scheduled and performed on a regular basis. Maintenance equipment is expensive and should last a long time. With proper care, replacement of maintenance equipment can be kept to a minimum. An equipment and tool inventory should be kept accurate and up-to-date to assure the availability of proper tools when they are needed. A fund should be established to provide for new maintenance equipment and a regular replacement program.

Regular review of legal requirements and inspections for conformance to sanitary regulations, criteria for licensing, fire laws, building codes, pesticide applications, and safety procedures should be a priority for the maintenance staff. The Township should keep up-to-date with safety standards such as those published by the American Society for Testing Materials and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Maintenance staff should receive training in play equipment safety assessment and in the operation of hazardous maintenance equipment. At least one person should attend the National Playground Safety Institute's playground safety certification classes.

In addition to planning for risk management, a maintenance plan will set standards of care for all facilities. This allows for a measure of productivity in park and facility maintenance.

Park maintenance should be monitored and compared to 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.

Based on the standards presented in the above listed publication, this study recommends the Township establish its own parks maintenance program using a combination of Mode II and Mode III.

Mode II is considered for park areas with reasonably high visitation, such as playgrounds and ball fields that require a higher level of care. Mode III is considered to be a moderate level of maintenance associated with moderate to low levels of development, moderate to low levels of visitation, or with agencies that, because of budget restrictions, cannot afford a higher intensity of maintenance. With the combination of these modes, the following sample standards provide a starting place from which the Township can work.

Turf Care for Ball Fields and Playground Areas Grass should be cut once every five working days, with reseeded done when bare spots are present. Weed control should be practiced when weeds present a visible problem or when they represent 5% of the turf surface. Some pre-emergent products may be utilized.

Low Use Areas These areas should be cut once every ten working days. They normally are not aerated unless turf quality indicates a need or in anticipation of an application of fertilizer. Re-seeding is done only when bare spots appear. Weed control measures should be used only when 50% of the small areas are weed infested or general turf quality is low in 15% or more of the surface area.

Fertilizer Apply only when turf vigor seems low. Low-level application is done once per year.

Litter Control Minimum service is two to three times per week. High use may dictate higher levels during warm season.

Pruning Perform when required for health or reasonable appearance. With most tree and shrub species, this would not be more frequent than once every two to three years.

Disease and Insect Control This should be done only on an epidemic or serious complaint basis. Control measures may be put into effect when health or survival of the plant material is threatened or where the public's comfort is concerned.

Snow Removal Snow removal should be carried out on park roads only and generally accomplished by the day following snowfall.

Lighting Replacement or repair of a fixture should occur when a report is filed or when noticed by employees.

Surfaces High use areas should be cleaned two to three times per week. All surfaces should be repaired or replaced when appearance has noticeably deteriorated.

Repairs Repairs should be done whenever safety or function is in question.

Inspections Inspect high use areas daily; weekly for other areas.

Floral Planting Plant only perennials or flowering trees and shrubs. Annual plantings should only be done if maintained by a volunteer organization.

Restrooms Service a minimum of five times per week but seldom more than once per day unless otherwise dictated by use.

A variety of other maintenance planning systems are available that may also serve the Township's needs.

Land Dedication and Fees in lieu of

One of the potential funding strategies for the acquisition and development of the new community parks is through the "Land Dedication or Fees in Lieu of" ordinance. In this ordinance, developers of new residential properties are required to set aside land for recreational purposes within their Planned Residential Development (PRD). Those who do not wish to set aside the required land could pay a fee to the Township in lieu of the land dedication. The Township must use the funds collected through this fee to provide recreational improvements that will benefit future residents of the Township.

A prerequisite to this ordinance is to complete a recreation plan that establishes a baseline of recreation facilities for existing residents. That baseline is then used to project the demand for future residents as they move into new housing in the Township. This Plan meets this requirement.

Grant Sources and Funding Strategies

Grants Sources

There are many sources of funding for parks and recreation; however, there are three primary governmental programs that provide grants to local communities for parks and recreation purposes. The programs and funding opportunities are listed below. Additional sources of funding are listed at the end of this chapter.

1. PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Maximum Grant - Approximately \$100,000 (sometimes more can be available)

Local Match - Generally grants require a 50% local match.

Sources of Local Match - Generally local cash match. In-kind services are now eligible as a match under certain conditions. DCED grants can be used as a match.

Funding Cycle - Applications are currently due in April of each year. Awards are announced in the following fall.

Eligible Uses

- a) Technical assistance
- b) Feasibility studies for recreation facilities
- c) Acquisition of additional park land
- d) Development and rehabilitation of existing facilities

2. PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

Maximum Grant - No specified limit; could be as much as \$500,000 or more

Local Match - Generally grants require some local match, although 100% funding is available. DCED grants can be used to match DCNR grants.

Sources of Local Match - Generally local cash match. In-kind services may be eligible as a match under certain conditions. Private local investment is encouraged.

Funding Cycle - Applications are accepted at any time. Awards are generally made on a quarterly basis in July, October, January, and April.

Eligible Uses

- a) Community facility construction and/or rehabilitation
- b) Some funding can be used for programming

3. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Maximum Grant - Determined by the County

Local Match - Determined by the County

Sources of Local Match - Generally local cash match. In-kind services may be eligible as a match under certain conditions.

Funding Cycle - Determined by the County

Eligible Uses

- a) Community facility construction and/or rehabilitation
- b) Some funding can be used for programming
- c) Limitations may be set by the County

Grants Strategies

Applying for a grant is not simply a matter of filling out the proper forms and submitting them. Grants can be very competitive. Often funding agencies receive requests that amount to as much as ten times more than the money that is available. It is, therefore, very important that you are well prepared in submitting your application. The following outlines several steps that can significantly improve your chances of receiving a grant.

1. Be well prepared
 - a. Know the funding agency - contact persons, addresses, and phone numbers.
 - b. Be sure you are an eligible applicant for the agency and program through which you intend to apply.
 - c. Investigate each grant opportunity to be sure that what you are applying for meets the funding criteria.
 - d. Be complete and accurate in your application. Do not assume that you will have an opportunity to correct mistakes, update data, etc.
 - e. Submit your application several days prior to the deadline. This assures it is in on time and shows that you are well prepared.
2. Have a vision and a plan
 - a. A vision shows the funding agency that you have looked to the future. It shows where your application fits into the bigger picture in your community and/or department. A vision can come from your Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan or be a part of a broader community effort.
 - b. A plan shows that you have looked at the details of what you want to do. Be more specific in your plan than in your vision.
 - c. Describe where your matching funds will come from. Show that you can leverage funding from a variety of sources - local taxes, private contributions, other grants, etc.

- d. Describe in detail how you will address maintenance of any facilities you are requesting funding for. Maintenance is a key factor if an agency is to invest large dollars in your project.
- e. Show previous success you have had. Show existing projects that have previously been funded. Indicate how your successes in other projects will impact the project you are applying for.

3. Contact the funding agencies

- a. Make a personal contact with the funding agency as early as you can in the process. Keep them informed but don't badger them. Show them your vision and how this specific project fits into it.
- b. DCED - Contact your local State Representative and/or Senator. Also contact the Pittsburgh DCED office.
- c. DCNR - Contact the Regional Recreation Advisor.
- d. CDBG - Make a personal visit to the County Office responsible for the CDBG Funding.

Other Funding Strategies

It is important to consider multiple funding sources for most major projects. Identify the possible groups, organizations, or grants agencies that may have an interest in a specific project. Consider the following potential sources of funding.

- ***Grants Agencies*** – See the list of potential grants sources provided in this report. It is wise to consider more than one grant source for multifaceted projects. Different agencies may be willing to provide funding for different portions of your project. For example, if a project includes construction of trails and development of a neighborhood park, there are agencies that will fund trails and others who will fund parks. Applying to both types of agencies for funding that meets their specific criteria enhances the likelihood of receiving a grant.
- ***Surrounding Municipalities*** – In some cases surrounding municipalities have a specific interest in park facilities located within another municipality. In these cases there may be interest in making a financial contribution toward the project.
- ***Local Organizations*** – Often, local recreation organizations are willing to raise funds to be used for upgrades to their facilities. These funds should be considered as part of the local match for grant funding. For example, if a football organization is already investing \$10,000 to \$15,000 annually into upgrading of facilities, they may be willing to utilize several years' worth of that investment toward a major renovation of the football facility. This could mean as much as fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars available to be used as matching funds for a grant.
- ***Funds Already Planned for Use*** – It is also helpful to consider funds that may already be allocated for use in or near a park that may be used as a source of matching funds. For instance, if a water or sewer line is being planned to run through a park, tapping into that line could make the money spent for its installation an eligible match for a park project. The same could be true of parking areas, roads, trails, trailheads, and other projects.
- ***Creativity*** – Creativity is key to finding and leveraging funding sources against one another. The intent is to reduce the local share to as low as possible, while accomplishing the goals of the project. Consider as many options as you can identify. Then contact the funding agencies to determine whether or not your plan meets their requirements.

CHAPTER 5 – POTENTIAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Township should explore all potential funding sources and apply for funding as often as possible. An application that is rejected one year may still be accepted in future years.

The following is a list of known potential funding sources as previously listed, along with descriptions, program requirements, and contact information.

Baseball Tomorrow Fund

The Baseball Tomorrow Fund is a joint initiative between Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association. The mission of the Baseball Tomorrow Fund is to promote and enhance the growth of baseball in the United States, Canada, and throughout the world by funding programs, fields, and equipment purchases to encourage and maintain youth participation in the game. Grants from the Baseball Tomorrow Fund are designed to be sufficiently flexible to enable applicants to address needs unique to their communities. The funds may be used to finance a new program, expand or improve an existing program, undertake a new collaborative effort, or obtain facilities or equipment necessary for youth baseball or softball programs. The Baseball Tomorrow Fund is intended to provide funding for incremental programming and facilities for youth baseball and not as a substitute for existing funding or fundraising activities or to provide routine or recurring operating costs or funding for construction or maintenance of buildings. The Baseball Tomorrow Fund supports equal opportunity in its grant making. The opportunities that prospective grantee organizations provide for minorities and women will be considered in evaluating proposals. Grant proposals are considered on a quarterly basis.

Contact:

Baseball Tomorrow Fund
245 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10167

Website: www.baseballtomorrowfund.com

USDA Forest Service Wood in Transportation

Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Program Goals: To develop structures that showcase wood in transportation technology and provide useful design and cost information to potential users throughout the country. The use of locally available wood species not traditionally used for bridge construction is preferred. Applicants should submit a site plan and construction drawings prepared by a registered professional engineer. Sketch drawings are adequate at the time of application if detailed drawings are not available.

Use of Funds: Requires minimum of 50% match from local project sponsor. USDA grant amounts are limited to \$20,000 for pedestrian bridges and \$150,000 for vehicular bridges. Other federal funds cannot be used as the applicant's match.

Contact: Northeastern Area - State and Private Forestry (DE, MD, NJ, OH, PA, WV)

Mr. Ed Cesa

USDA Forest Service

180 Canfield Street

Morgantown, WV 26505

Phone: (304) 285-1530

Fax: (304) 285-1564

Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/na/wit/>

U.S. Soccer Foundation

The Foundation's Grants Program is open to anyone with a soccer-specific program or project that benefits a not-for-profit purpose. A complete list of guidelines for the Foundation's Grants Program can be obtained by reviewing the instructions section of the grant application.

The United States Soccer Foundation, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation qualified under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Earnings from the permanent endowment fund of the Foundation are the source for grants made by the Foundation for worthy soccer projects. The Foundation awards grants to governing bodies, having awarded approximately \$17,000,000 in grants during its first nine years of operation. The Foundation commences its grant process in the fall and announces the recipients each spring. The following, listed in prioritized order, have been established to fund innovative and creative programs:

- Ethnic, minority, and economically disadvantaged players
- Player and coach development
- Referee development
- Field development

Contact:

US Soccer Foundation
1050 17th Street, NW
Suite 210
Washington, DC 20036
Attn: Grants Department

Website: ussoccerfoundation.org - Grant Applications may be filed electronically ONLY at the Foundation's website

21st Century Community Learning Centers Program

Agency: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Program Goals: This program was authorized by Congress to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to plan, implement, or expand projects that address the education, health, social services, cultural, and recreational needs of the community.

Program Restrictions: School Districts must collaborate with an outside entity, such as another public agency or non-profit organization

Use of Funds or Support: Applications must address four of the following program activities: literacy education programs; senior citizen programs; children's day care services; integrated education; health, social service, recreational, or cultural programs; summer and weekend school programs in conjunction with recreation programs; nutrition and health programs; expanded library service hours to serve community needs; telecommunications and technology education programs for individuals of all ages; parenting skills education programs; support and training for child day care providers; employment counseling, training, and placement; services for individuals who leave before graduating from secondary school, regardless of age of such individual; services for individuals with disabilities.

Contact:

21st Century Community Learning Centers

Attn: CFDA 84.287, U.S.
Department of Education Application Control Center
Regional Office Building 3
Room 36337th & D Streets, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4725

Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN

Website: www.ed.gov/21stcclc

National Tree Trust

Program Goals: This program provides tree seedlings for planting on roadsides, highways, or land under the jurisdiction of any federal, state, municipal, or transportation authority.

Program Restrictions: Limitations include a minimum of 100 trees to a maximum of 10,000 trees. All trees delivered must be planted, and only volunteers may do the planting. The trees must be planted on public property.

Use of Funds or Support: Monetary grants are provided to local tree-planting organizations that support volunteer planting and education efforts throughout the United States.

Contact:

Todd Nelson
1120 G Street
Suite 770
Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 1-800-846-8733

Website: <http://www.nationaltreetrust.org>

Community Conservation Partnerships Programs

Agency: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Program Goals: To develop and sustain partnerships with communities, nonprofits and other organizations for recreation and conservation projects and purposes. The Bureau of Recreation and Conservation is responsible for fostering, facilitating, and nurturing the great majority of these Partnerships through technical assistance and grant funding from the Community Conservation Partnerships Programs.

Program Restrictions: See DCNR grant application manual for the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, as program restrictions vary by type.

Use of Funds:

- 1) Planning and Technical Assistance: Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plans; County Natural Area Inventories; Feasibility Studies; Greenways and Trails Plans; Rails-to-Trails Plans; Master Site Plans; River Conservation Plans; Education and Training; Peer-to-Peer Consultation and Circuit Riders (temporary employment of a full-time Park and Recreation Practitioner).
- 2) Acquisition Projects: Park and Recreation Areas; Greenways, Trails, and Rivers Conservation; Rails-to-Trails; Natural and Critical Habitat Areas;
- 3) Development Projects: Park and Recreation Areas; Park Rehabilitation and Development; Small Community Development; Greenways and Trails; Rails-to-Trails; Rivers Conservation; Federally Funded Projects; Lands and Water

Conservation Fund (LWCF) Projects; Pennsylvania Recreational Trails.

Contact:

Kathy Frankel
PA DCNR
Southwest Field Office
1405 State Office Building
300 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Phone: (412) 565-7803

Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us>

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Agency: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Program Goals: To provide a flexible source of annual grant funds for local governments nationwide: funds that they, with the participation of local citizens, can devote to the activities that best serve their own particular development priorities, provided that these projects either: 1) benefit low and moderate income persons; 2) prevent or eliminate slums or blight; or 3) meet other urgent community development needs.

Program Restrictions: Low and moderate income persons (generally defined as members of a family earning no more than 80% of the area's median income) benefit most directly and most often from CDBG funds for activities that principally benefit low and moderate income persons.

Use of Funds or Support: Building public facilities and improvements, such as streets, sidewalks, sewers, water systems, community and senior citizen centers, and recreational facilities. There are other possible uses of funds that do not relate to parks and recreation.

Community Improvement Grants

Agency: Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Department Program Goals: Focus is to support "greening" partnerships linking grassroots organizations, local community groups, and natural resource experts in support of community resource and natural resource management.

Use of Funds or Support: Encourages partnerships with and between diverse organizations and groups. Supports local improvement projects, tree planting projects in parks, greenbelts, schools, and community public spaces.

Contact:

Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences
Butler County Cooperative Extension
101 Motor Pool Way
Butler, PA 16001-3545

Phone: (724) 287-4761

Fax: (724) 287-9911

Email: ButlerExt@psu.edu

Website: <http://butler.extension.psu.edu>

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Agency: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Program Goals: Designed to reduce erosion on sensitive lands, CRP also improves soil and water, and provides significant wildlife habitat.

Program Restrictions: Applications are for 10 and 15 year contracts.

Use of Funds or Support: The CRP offers annual rental payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost-share assistance to establish approved groundcover on eligible cropland.

Contact: RR#12, Box 202 C, Greensburg, PA 15601-9271

Phone: (724) 834-9063 ext. 3

Fax: (724) 837-4127

Website: www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/

Kodak American Greenways Awards Program

Agency: The Conservation Fund and Eastman Kodak Company

Program Goals: Provide seed money to stimulate greenway planning and design. Supports pioneering work in linking the nation's natural areas, historic sites, parks, and open space.

Program Restrictions: Grant recipients are selected according to criteria that include: importance of the project to local greenway development efforts; demonstrated community support for the project; extent to which the grant will result in matching funds or other support from public or private sources; likelihood of tangible results; capacity of the organization to complete the project.

Use of Funds or Support: Planning, Implementation

Contact: Leigh Anne McDonald, American Greenways Coordinator, The Conservation Fund, 1800 North Kent Street, Suite 1120, Arlington, VA 22209

Phone: (703) 525-6300

Email: lmcdonald@conservationfund.org

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Program Goals: To provide park and recreation opportunities to residents throughout the United States, to allow communities to acquire and build a variety of park and recreation facilities, including trails. Funds are annually distributed by the National Park Service through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

Program Restrictions: Communities must match LWCF grants with 50% of the local project costs through in-kind services or cash. All projects funded by the LWCF grants must be exclusively for recreation purposes, into perpetuity. Grants are administered through the DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2).

Use of Funds or Support: Planning and investment in an existing park system.

Contact:

DCNR Recreational Advisor

KaBOOM! (National Non-profit)

Program Goals: To bring together people, community organizations, and businesses, to develop safe, healthy, and much-needed playgrounds.

Use of Funds or Support: Leveraged spending power with well-established companies in the play equipment industry. Also, corporate and foundation support that can include volunteers and technical resources.

Contact:

2213 M Street NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20037

Phone: (202) 659-0215

Website: <http://www.kaboom.org>

National Recreational Trails Fund Act (NRTFA)

Agency: PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) - administered through the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)

Program Goals: The recreational trails program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. The program funding represents a portion of the revenue received by the Federal Highway Trust Fund from the federal motor fuel excise tax paid by users of off-road recreational vehicles.

Program Restrictions: A component of TEA21, matching requirements for the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants are 80% federal money, up to a maximum of \$150,000, and 20% non-federal money. However, acquisition projects will require a 50/50 match. "Soft match" is permitted from any project sponsor, whether private or public money. ("Soft match" includes credit for donations of funds, materials, services, or new right-of-way).

Use of Funds or Support: The department must distribute funding among motorized, non-motorized, and diverse trail use as follows: 40% minimum for diverse trail use, 30% minimum for non-motorized recreation, and 30% minimum for motorized recreation. The Commonwealth may also use up to 5% of its funds for the operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to the use of recreational trails. The department will also consider projects that provide for the redesign, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, or relocation of recreational trails to benefit the natural environment.

Contact:

Kathy Frankel
PA DCNR
Southwest Regional Field Office
1405 State Office Building
300 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Phone: (412) 565-7803

Website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us>

Pennsylvania Conservation Corps

Agency: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

Program Goals: This program provides work experience, job training, and educational opportunities to young adults while accomplishing conservation, recreation, historic preservation, and urban revitalization work on public lands.

Program Restrictions: The project sponsors receive the services of a Pennsylvania Conservation Corps crew, fully paid, for one year. Sponsors can also receive up to \$20,000 for needed materials and contracted services. Sponsors must provide a 25% cash match on material and contracted services costs.

Use of Funds or Support: Funds may be used for materials and contracted services needed to complete approved projects.

Contact:

Director
1304 Labor and Industry Building
7th and Forester Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Phone: (717) 783-6385

Website: <http://www.dli.state.pa.us>

Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds

Agency: Department of Transportation (PennDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Program Goals: These funds can be used for bicycle and pedestrian facility construction or non-construction projects such as brochures, public service announcements, and route maps. The projects related to bicycle and pedestrian transportation must be a part of the long-range transportation plan. These funds are controlled by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the Transportation Improvement Program.

Program Restrictions: Expands STP eligibilities to specifically include the following [1108(a)]: sodium acetate/format, or other environmentally acceptable, minimally corrosive anti-icing and de-icing compositions; programs to reduce extreme cold starts; environmental restoration and pollution abatement projects, including retrofit or construction of storm water treatment facilities (limited to 20% of total cost of 3R-type transportation projects); natural habitat mitigation, but specifies that if wetland or natural habitat mitigation is within the service area of a mitigation bank, preference will be given to use the bank; privately owned vehicles and facilities that are used to provide inter-city passenger service by bus; modifications of existing public sidewalks (regardless of whether the sidewalk is on a Federal-aid highway right-of-way), to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act; infrastructure based intelligent transportation system capital improvements.

Use of Funds or Support: Transportation, planning, railroad crossing improvements.

Contact:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator
PennDOT District 11-0
45 Thoms Run Road
Bridgeville, PA 15017.

Phone: (412) 429-5000

Website: www.dot.state.pa.us

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA21)

Agency: TEA21 / ISTEPA

Program Goals: The primary source of federal funding for greenways and trails is through the Transportation Equity Act of 1998 (TEA21), formerly the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). ISTEPA provided millions of dollars in funding for bicycle and pedestrian transportation projects across the country and will provide millions more as TEA21. There are many sections of TEA21 that support the development of bicycle and pedestrian corridors. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) can utilize funding from any of these subsets of TEA21 and should be contacted for further details.

Use of Funds or Support: Safety and Transportation Enhancements

Contact:

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

Phone: (412) 391-5590

Website: (Federal Highway Administration) <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/>

Wal-Mart - Good Works

Agency: Wal-Mart Foundation

Program Goals: Allows local non-profit organizations to hold fundraisers at their local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club. Wal-Mart and Sam's Club can elect to match a portion of the funds collected, up to \$1,000. Events held on the premises are eligible for funding when a Wal-Mart or Sam's Club Associate is actively involved in the event. Additionally, once the Wal-Mart or Sam's Club Associate has met certain criteria in the Matching Grant Program each year, a second source of funding is awarded to the store/club to use in the community. These funds do not require a fundraiser to be held; instead, the funds can be awarded directly to a deserving organization.

Program Restrictions: Organizations that may qualify to receive funding through the Matching Grant Program are 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations or organizations that are exempt from needing 501(c)(3) status, such as public schools, faith-based institutions such as churches (must be conducting a project that benefits the community at large), and government agencies.

Use of Funds or Support: Community Improvement Projects. Community Involvement Coordinator at your local Wal-Mart or Sam's Club store.

Website: www.walmartfoundation.org/wmstore/goodworks

Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation

Program Goals: Education. Community improvement projects, such as projects at parks and other public areas, housing for underprivileged, and innovative environmental issues.

Program Restrictions: Organizations that may qualify to receive funding through the Matching Grant Program are 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.

Contact:

The Foundation only accepts grant applications submitted online through the website.

Website: <http://www.easy2.com/cm/lowe/foundation/intro.asp>

Tony Hawk Foundation

Program Goals: The Tony Hawk Foundation seeks to foster lasting improvements in society, with an emphasis on helping children. Through grants and other charitable donations, the foundation supports programs focusing on the creation of public skateboard parks, and other causes. The primary mission of the Tony Hawk Foundation is to promote high-quality skateboard parks in low-income areas throughout the United States.

Program Restrictions: The Foundation will favor parks that: are designed by qualified and experienced skate park contractors; include local skaters in the design process; are in low-income areas, or areas with a high population of at risk youths; can demonstrate a strong grassroots commitment to the project, particularly in the form of fund-raising by local skateboarders and other community groups; have a creative mix of street obstacles and transition/vertical terrain; don't require skaters or their parents to sign waivers; encourage skaters to look after their own safety and safety of others without restricting their access to the park or over-regulating their use of it; are open during daylight hours 365 days a year; don't charge fees; are in areas that currently have no skateboarding facilities.

Use of Funds or Support: To facilitate the design, development, construction, and operation of new, quality skateboard parks and facilities. The Foundation may offer technical assistance on design and construction, promotion materials, training materials, and safety information. The Foundation may also facilitate support from vendors, suppliers, and community leaders.

Contact:

Tony Hawk Foundation
P.O. -Box 1780
El Granada, CA 94018

Email: Hawkquestions@tonyhawkfoundation.org

Website: <http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org>

APPENDIX

DRAFT

Rationale for Rostraver Township Recreation Mandatory Land dedication or Fees in Lieu of Land

The provision of recreation land or fees in lieu must be related to the rationale established by the Official Recreation Plan. One way to establish this is by examining the projected community growth, amount of parkland needed to meet this growth, and any other capital needs.

Anticipated Growth 2007-2020--- The Township is expected to gain 1104 new households from 2007 to 2030. This is based upon the adopted Comprehensive Plan

Parkland needed—As determined by the Township's Draft Official Recreation Plan, the Township will need at least 88-93 acres of developed parkland to maintain a consistent level of service with anticipated growth (88 acres of community park/5 acres of neighborhood park) This Plan was prepared by a Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources certified Recreation Practitioner and completed in consistency with National Recreation and Parks Association standards. The Township will need to either receive through dedication or buy this amount of land to maintain a consistent level of service.

Raw land Costs—

How much would buying raw land for recreation cost the Township?

Real Estate multi lists were consulted (via www.realtor.com) to determine this.

MLS Number	Acres	Price	Per Acre
667434	8	\$230,000	\$28,750
683926	96	\$399,900	\$4,166
705624	239	\$1,300,000	\$5,439
713585	12	\$95,000	\$7,917

This analysis results in a mean cost for raw land of \$11,568 per acre. However, the price of smaller tracts tends to be higher per acre. If the 8 acre tract is removed, the mean falls to \$5,841 per acre

Development costs ---Unless of a tract size suitable for conservation recreation, the raw land would need to be developed to make it usable for active Recreation. The Comprehensive Plan determined that to develop needed capital facilities for it flagship recreation facility is estimated at \$300,000. This is a very conservative estimate; as it does not take into account either inflation, or the need to develop any other new parks. The per capita share for each new household would be \$271 for this one park, and would represent a very reasonable capital needs amount.

The impact of each new dwelling: In order to ensure the Township's recreation level of service remains consistent with growth; each new dwelling would need to contribute 3472 square feet of land plus at least \$271 dollars for capital improvements. This represents about one acre for every 12-13 new homes.

Value of land in lieu of land dedication: To determine how much developers would need to contribute in fees in lieu of land, two scenarios were developed, based upon the different raw land costs.

Scenario 1 (assumes \$11,588 per acre purchase costs)

New Households	1104
Acres Needed	88
Cost of acres needed	\$1,019,744
Cost Per household	\$923

Acres needed per new household	0.07971
SQ FEET needed per HH	3472.174
Capital Budget Per Household	\$271
TOTAL FEE IN LIEU (land plus capital)	\$1194

Scenario 1 (assumes \$5,841 per acre purchase costs)

New Households	1104
Acres Needed	88
Cost of acres needed	\$514,008
Cost Per household	\$465

Acres needed per new household	0.07971
SQ FEET needed per HH	3472.174
Capital Budget Per Household	\$271
TOTAL FEE IN LIEU (land plus capital)	\$736

In conclusion, The Township could justify a fee in lieu of land of up to nearly \$1,200 per dwelling. However, the lower \$736 fee may shift the preference of developers over to a preference for fees rather than land dedication.

As a cross check, the value of building lots can be analyzed, as that is what each developer is losing if he chooses land dedication over fees. Building lots in the Township seem range between \$12,000 and \$34,000. A created a theoretical weighted average lot of 1.2 acres that I valued at \$24,200. This represents the potential loss to a developer for a land dedication. The \$736 fee for twelve homes would amount to \$8,832 (about one third the cost of land dedication). The \$1,194 fee would be \$13,260 (about half the land value).



Mercer County Office
PO Box 69
Greenville, PA 16125
724-588-7961
www.pashekla.com