
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities

April 2012

Prepared by

The Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, Chester County, Pennsylvania

Adopted by

East Coventry Township on April 10, 2012

East Nantmeal Township on May 2, 2012

East Pikeland Township on April 3, 2012

East Vincent Township on April 10, 2012

North Coventry Township on April 10, 2012

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Warwick Township on April 10, 2012

West Pikeland Township on April 10, 2012

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Acknowledgements

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IN MEMORY

We dedicate this plan to the memory of Eleanor May Morris, a pioneer in using conservation easements and public/private partnerships to save over 7,000 acres of land in the watersheds of the French and Pickering Creeks. May we all continue her legacy of vision, perseverance, and accomplishment to protect the lands, parks, watersheds and cultural heritage of northern Chester County for future generations.

**Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan for the
Federation of Northern Chester County Communities:**

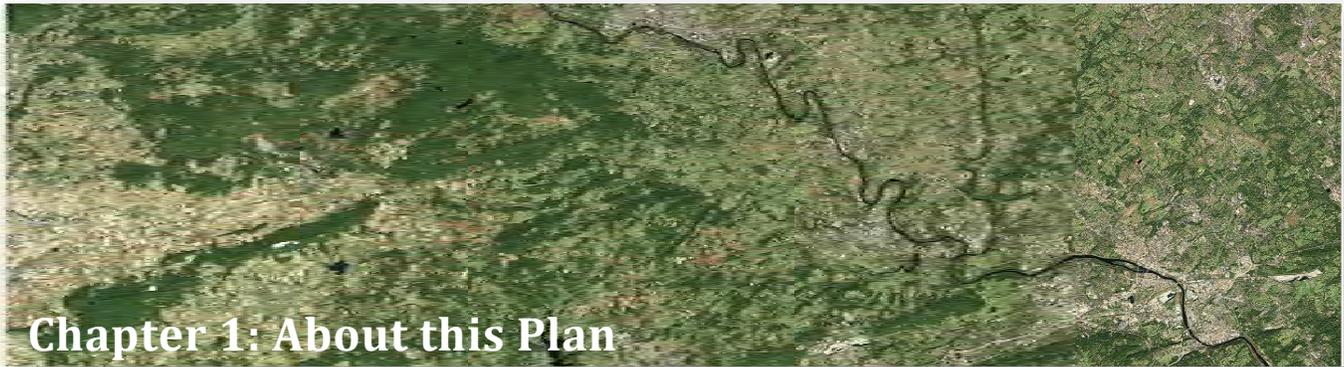
A FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION AMONG WILLING PARTNERS

The Northern Chester County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan is consistent with Article III, Section 303 "Legal Status of Comprehensive Plan Within the Jurisdiction that Adopted the Plan," of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247 as reenacted and amended.

This Plan serves as a guide. In adopting this plan, the participating municipalities are affirming their intent to continue cooperative efforts toward achievement of the Plan's regional goals. No participating municipality is obligated to undertake any particular plan element or expend funds for implementation.

After adoption, an individual township will only be bound to undertake or participate in any particular Plan element requiring contribution of funds, land or other resources by its adopted municipal resolution that sets forth the terms of the undertaking and the township's participation.

By working in collaboration, each municipality will maintain its autonomy while having the opportunity to participate in the development of a regional park, recreation and open space system that preserves the scenic beauty of our area, conserves our natural resources and provides recreation opportunities for our citizens to engage in active healthy living.



THIS PLAN

This plan was prepared for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, more commonly known as the Northern Federation. Established in 1974 to protect the French Creek Corridor, this longstanding intergovernmental partnership has grown from 5 to 11 member municipalities that participate in Federation activities based on relevance and interest. Over its 37-year history, the Federation has also expanded its mission from the French Creek Corridor to a wider array of community development and resource protection planning efforts.

To date, the Federation has led the preparation of 13 regional studies:

- *Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Comprehensive Plan: Background Section*, circa 1978
- *Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Comprehensive Plan: Plan Alternatives*, circa 1978
- *Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Comprehensive Plan: Regional Land Use Plan*, 1979
- *French Creek Scenic River Management Guidelines*, 1984
- *PA Route 100 Corridor Study*, 1986
- *Water Resource Management Study*, 1988
- *Wastewater Facilities Plan: Phases I and II*, 1990
- *Surface Water Runoff Study*, 1991
- *Pennhurst Center Land Use Feasibility Study*, 1993
- *Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Comprehensive Plan: Regional Land Use Plan*, 1996
- *Sustainable Watershed Management: The Vision for Northern Chester County*, circa 2000
- *A Model Program to Balance Water Resources and Land Development in the Schuylkill River Tributary Watersheds*, circa 2000
- *Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Comprehensive Plan: Regional Resource Protection Plan*, 2008

Nine municipalities are partners in this Regional Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan—the townships of East Coventry, East Pikeland, East Nantmeal, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent. The 75,000-acre area and nearly 44,000 residents of their nine jurisdictions, referred to as the Northern Chester County region (the Region), are the study area for this plan.

The plan was prepared as a guide for providing parks, recreation and open space protection in the interest of public health and wellness and environmental conservation. It was adopted as a supplement to each municipality's comprehensive plan and can be implemented, in whole or in part, among two or more willing municipalities.

Chapter 1

OUR PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to foster active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space. Active, healthy living involves regular physical activity as well as a healthy diet that benefits public health and wellness. Environmental conservation in our region focuses on the protection and stewardship of significant landscapes. This plan draws these values together to plan for places and programs that enable physical activity and support social connections to regional history, culture, and the natural environment.

We base our purpose on the beliefs that:

- The scenic, rural character of Northern Chester County represents our natural and cultural heritage, which should be celebrated and promoted through recreation and conservation.
- Parks and recreation, including trails, are essential to our quality of life, promote health and wellness, and contribute to a vibrant regional economy.
- It is important for the residents and community organizations to be fully informed about recreation and conservation opportunities in order to take advantage of them in a timely manner.
- Advocacy, innovation, and partnerships are vital in creating and sustaining the human and financial capital necessary to support parks, recreation, and open space in the Region.

Our guiding principles for the planning process included:

1. Focus on a clear public purpose that speaks to actions and benefits.
2. Build upon existing data.
3. Engage partners and the public in building consensus for public investment.
4. Define needs locally, not by arbitrary standards.
5. Bring to light hidden opportunities that are unique to our region.
6. Envision a regional strategy with local action items.
7. Leverage regional vision and willing partnership for larger-than-local benefits.
8. Jump-start plan implementation to build momentum for further action.

OUR PARTNERS

Public and private sector organizations in our region share our vision for a comprehensive parks, recreation, and open space system that fosters active, healthy living and environmental conservation through land protection. Additional planning participants included:

- Green Valleys Association
- French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust
- Natural Lands Trust
- Owen J. Roberts, Downingtown, and Phoenixville School Districts

- Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation
- Chester County and the Chester County Planning Commission

This Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan was developed in cooperation with the Chester County Planning Commission, and funded by the Vision Partnership Program (VPP) of Chester County and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in partnership with participating Northern Chester County communities. The VPP is a program designed to provide the most effective coordination and consistency between the growth management policies of *Landscapes2: Bringing Growth and Preservation Together for Chester County*, adopted in 2009 (Chester County's Comprehensive Policy Plan), and those of municipalities in the county. The strategies and recommendations identified in this Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan are consistent with the policies identified in *Landscapes2*, as well as in its implementation plans, *Linking Landscapes: A Plan for the Protected Open Space Network in Chester County, PA*, adopted in 2002, and *Watersheds: An Integrated Water Resources Plan for Chester County, Pennsylvania*, also adopted in 2002. The requirements and standards of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources planning grant program have also been fulfilled.

OUR PROCESS

This plan was prepared in four phases beginning in May 2009.

The **Inventory and Assessment** included:

- Reviewing municipal comprehensive plans and parks, recreation, and open space plans.
- Compiling and summarizing demographic trends and growth implications.
- Conducting a field tour of selected parks, recreation, and open space locations.
- Conducting additional field visits to community parks.
- Compiling park and recreation areas, recreation facilities, trails, natural resources, historic resources and cultural sites, and protected open space, recreation programs and services, service providers and management organizations, mandatory dedication of parkland ordinances, and sports league participation and facility demand.
- Compiling and updating Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapped resources.
- Assessing strengths, challenges, and opportunities, among study topics, including partnerships.

The inventory and assessment is documented in *Appendices 1 through 10* and summarized in Chapters 2 and 3 of the plan.

The **Vision, Goals, and Strategies** included:

- Articulating a vision for parks, recreation, and open space as a regional system.
- Formulating goals and strategies.
- Preparing the parks, recreation, and open space service zones (*Map A, Service Zones Map*).

The vision, goals, and strategies are presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 1

The **Plan Development** included:

- Developing recommendations.
- Prioritizing priority recommendations based on readiness and long-term value.
- Preparing the draft plan.

The plan's recommendations are presented in Chapters 5 through 8 with implementation priorities listed in Chapter 9.

The **Plan Review & Approval** included:

- Review by the Coordinating Committee and municipal Boards of Supervisors.
- Revising and publishing the draft plan.
- Public review.
- Plan adoption by the municipal Boards of Supervisors.

The participation of the Coordinating Committee, including representatives from each of the nine participating municipalities and the Chester County Planning Commission, was integral to the plan's preparation. The Coordinating Committee guided the direction of the plan, assisted the consultants in data collection, helped to organize public participation activities, and provided review and feedback on the draft plan. A Steering Committee representing a broader range of recreation and conservation interests served as a sounding board for issues, strategies, and recommendations at milestones in the plan's development. Additional public participation included:

- Interviews with municipal officials and representative community stakeholders, including school districts, county agencies, state and federal land managers, land conservancies, and trusts.
- Focus groups with sports leagues, park and recreation boards, trail developers and user groups, conservation and heritage organizations, and 5th graders.
- Public meetings at milestones in the plan's preparation.
- A public opinion survey.

A summary of these activities is reported in *Appendix 11*. A detailed report on the Citizen Survey is included as *Appendix 12*.

In addition, a project website was established to host information about the plan and its preparation and to help publicize public activities. Posted materials included a project fact sheet, public presentations, and regional newspaper coverage of the project.



OUR LANDSCAPE

The Northern Chester County region (the Region) lies at the juncture of historically and currently significant landscapes – the Schuylkill River corridor, where events of our nation’s formative history took place and riverside communities were established, and the Schuylkill Highlands, the last globally significant forested area in southeastern Pennsylvania. The river led colonists 35 miles northwest from Philadelphia to settle among rolling hills where they found favorable soils for farming, waterways to power mills, and iron ore deposits among acres upon acres of native woodlands. Colonists used these resources for their own subsistence and to support their army during the American Revolution. Once the Commonwealth and the nation were established, iron production continued and new community and economic pursuits emerged: production agriculture in the valleys, recreation in the woodlands, and community trade and institutions in the villages. With the exception of Pottstown Landing, Kenilworth, and Kimberton, where early American industrialization was focused, and a handful of country villages, landowners managed the landscape as large tracts of farmland and woodland into the 20th century.

This juncture of highland and water corridors is recognized by state and national designations. The Schuylkill River National Heritage Area celebrates the rich culture and history of the Schuylkill River watershed as one of America's most significant cultural and industrial regions. Schuylkill Highlands, a Conservation Landscape Initiative (CLI) of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, draws attention and resources toward the conservation of high quality lands and connecting people to the landscape through a network of trails and gateway communities in the Hopewell Big Woods.

The rural landscape pattern began to change in the early to mid-20th century when significant development began to occur along the rural state highways that provided access to major employment centers in Pottstown and Downingtown (via Route 100 north and south), Phoenixville and Lancaster (via Route 23 east and west), and Valley Forge (Route 724 east). Subdivision parceled land ownership, and development cleared farmland and woodlands for the construction of homes and roads in scattered locations across the Region. During the national debate between advocates of unchecked growth and environmentalists, local conservationists emerged. These visionaries urged communities of the Region to consider the long-range impacts of land use and infrastructure decisions, and promote balanced resource management. In the 1970s, local public officials took an active position in conserving the Region’s rural character and began meeting to discuss approaches to managed development and planned conservation. This regional conversation has continued for more than 35 years under the leadership of the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities.

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Today, our expansive region is still largely rural in character, with farmland, meadows, and woodlands draped over its rolling topography. Our region continues to sustain numerous natural communities and value its dark nighttime skies. Schools and parks are our “community centers.” Few commercial centers for shopping and employment are found here and are only marginally concentrated along the state highways. Historic settlements from as early as the 18th century, including urban neighborhoods of South Pottstown and Kenilworth, villages such as Kimberton and St. Peters, rural estates of iron barons, and farmsteads, along with mills, bridges, and canalways, still dot the landscape—though they are increasingly shadowed by the smaller-scaled contemporary development concentrated along the state highway corridors, particularly in the central and eastern portions of the Region. These characteristics make our Region a visually attractive place to live. The result is a growing population with diverse recreational needs, juxtaposed with development that impacts the very landscape and resources that attract them.

OUR PEOPLE

The region has grown from 26,795 residents in 1970 to 43,907 residents in 2010. Total population and growth rates have been higher in the eastern and central municipalities, where transportation and utility infrastructure allow for more intensive development, than in East Nantmeal and Warwick Townships. Population increases have been accompanied by

increased household incomes in these same municipalities as well as higher median ages. This translates to higher increases in older residents and lower increases in children, youth and young adults. The region’s racial and ethnic heritage is nearly homogenous with a majority of white, European descendants and a minority population of less than two percent; recent apparent increases in minority populations may be attributed to changes in census categories related to race and ethnicity.

According to population projections prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, the Region is expected to continue growing to more than 53,000 residents by 2030, with increases again concentrated in the central and eastern municipalities. Student and total population projections indicate continued aging among community populations, suggesting that public recreation provisions and conservation efforts will need to keep pace with both growth (total needs) and changing types of needs.

The 2010 public opinion survey conducted for this plan found three important resident perspectives. First and foremost, residents view the entire region as their community, as evidenced by their spending time in parks and participating in activities within and beyond their home municipality, as well as their preference for a one-stop source for information on recreational opportunities in the Region.

Second, conservation is more important to survey respondents than recreation. Residents value conservation landscapes and corridors more than parks, but nevertheless desire a park system that includes diverse park

While individual municipal populations are small, the region as a whole is as large as some of Pennsylvania’s small cities and major boroughs.

Survey Question #11

How would you prefer to get information about parks and recreation in Northern Chester County?

- 1. One website for all townships in Northern Chester County 51%***
- 2. One website for your township 48%***
- 3. Newsletter mailed to your home 48%***

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types, from large, nature-based parks and preserves, to community parks for physical activity, to trails for a variety of users.

Third, residents are most interested in self-directed outdoor activities, such as walking, bicycling, enjoying nature, and enjoying the dark night skies.

OUR PARK, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE ASSETS

Nature Parks and Preserves

Expansive public landscapes owned by federal, state, and county agencies and supplemented by municipal nature parks and private preserves offer more than 4,965 acres of protected open space with abundant passive recreation opportunities. The Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, French Creek State Park, and State Game Lands 43 span the Region's northern border with Berks County. They host unique natural and cultural resources significant to local, state, and national history, representing the American Revolution and the early American iron industry. Together with the Natural Lands Trust's Crow's Nest Preserve, this area offers 3,763 nearly contiguous acres rich in natural scenic beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities, ranging from hiking, biking, and horseback riding among interconnected trails to camping, boating, fishing, swimming, hunting, and winter activities. Warwick County Park adds another 538 acres of grass fields, meadows, wetlands and woodlands with historic resources, water access, active recreation facilities, and trails along Route 23 and French Creek. Tri-Town Park will soon be completed as an accessible fishing park along French Creek. Welkinweir, the home of Green Valleys Association, and Natural Lands Trust's Binky Lee Preserve, offer 209 acres demonstrating environmental stewardship, which are open to the public for walking and nature study. Coventry Woods (620 acres), Woody's Woods (263 acres), and French Creek Open Space (99 acres) are the three municipal nature parks offering similar trails for walking and nature observation.

In addition to the parks and private preserves open to public recreation, more than 19,500 acres are protected from development by agricultural easements, conservation easements, voluntary deed restrictions (though often less rigorous in protection and enforcement), transferred development rights, homeowner's association agreements, and municipal ownership (including municipal easements), many of which were acquired through voter-approved bonds. All of these protection techniques are voluntary actions on the part of the landowner to protect specified resources and guide development and its impacts away from these locations.

Community Parks

Our 11 community parks for active and passive recreation are located throughout the central and eastern portions of the Region. (See *Map 8, Recreation Features Map*, in the Appendix.) These parks offer a variety of sports fields, playgrounds, river and creek access, and picnic areas in traditional active recreation park layouts, as well as in natural or naturalized environments – often with both types occurring on the same site. Master plans have guided the most recent park designs and improvements. Other, generally older parks evolved to serve the needs of the community without a formal plan.

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Together these parks offer a total of 48 active recreation or physical play facilities for 13 unique active recreation activities, which tend to emphasize team sports and play equipment over fitness and non-competitive play activities. (See *Appendix 3, Recreation Facilities*.) They also offer a total of 59 features for passive recreation for 15 unique passive recreation activities or experiences. Most of these are areas of natural or naturalized landscape, trails, and seating and picnic areas. Notable features include the nature study area of Riverbend Park, the interpretation of Towpath Park's site history as part of the Schuylkill River Canal (the only integration of arts, culture, or history into a public park in the Region), and the former horseracing track at Pine Creek Park.

Schools, churches, and private facilities provide the majority of 21 diamond and 12 rectangular sports fields used by sports leagues for practice and games. With more than 4,000 sports league participants in 18 leagues across five sports, and most playing sports in more than one competitive season each year, fields are always in demand. East Coventry, East Pikeland and West Vincent have protected six sites (more than 265 acres) as open space for passive recreation and trail systems. The nearest indoor recreation or community centers are the Phoenixville, Pottstown, Upper Perkiomen, and Lionville Community YMCA facilities located just outside the Region.

Trails

The region offers more than 100 miles of land and water trails, including at least one existing public-use trail or path in every municipality, per Chester County's Trail Inventory and project updates. There are nearly 35 miles of trails available to equestrians, though roughly half of this mileage is the Horse-Shoe Trail, a longstanding social trail not fully protected by public ownership. Extensive trail systems are found in Coventry Woods, Woody's Woods, and Warwick County Park, throughout the state and national parks, and through Natural Lands Trust's Crow's Nest Preserve, Binky Lee Preserve, and Welkinweir. A handful of community parks have paths, too – most designed for circulation. Nearly 30 miles of off-road bicycling routes complement the trails in the Region with distance cycling (or touring) experiences and two public landings provide access to the water trail. Several major public trails, namely the Schuylkill River Trail, the French Creek Trail, the Pickering Creek Trail, and the Brandywine Trail, are under development and will connect the interior of the Region to nearby communities. An extensive network of social trails exists on private lands, used primarily by equestrians and only by private arrangement.

Accessible Private Recreation Lands

There are 22 privately-owned recreation sites, as shown on *Map 8, Recreation Facilities*, in the Appendix. In addition to the three nature preserves, commercial and non-profit entities provide day camps, campgrounds, sportsmen's clubs, golf courses, show grounds, indoor sports training centers, and a water park that can be accessed through daily fees or memberships.

Recreation Activities

Recreation activities in the Region and its surroundings abound. From the "all-American" community sports leagues to the Chester County favorites, beagling and bassetting (the hunting of hare and rabbits on foot with beagle or basset hounds), people who live in or visit our region can find a host of fun things to do in the

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great outdoors. These include traditional recreation opportunities provided by municipalities, community sports leagues, recreation commissions, and member-based sportsman's clubs.

- Eighteen community sports leagues and regional recreation commissions offer opportunities to play baseball, Little League, softball, football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, basketball, and swimming. About 4,051 participants from the Northern Chester County region alone played in the leagues in 2009 or were on league waiting lists.
- Municipalities and non-profit organizations sponsor community special events, such community fairs and festivals, art and craft shows, and holiday events, as well as events celebrating history, heritage, and conservation.
- Sportsman's clubs offer members a wide range of outdoor sport and game pursuits, from hunting by gun, bow, foxhound, beagle, or basset to fly fishing.

Other activities are unique to Northern Chester County and the activity sponsors:

- Owen J. Roberts provides two important recreation programs: a comprehensive Aquatics Program providing facilities, instruction, and coaching for varied levels of swimming, diving, and water polo; and the Adult Evening School, offering a wide variety of learning and recreational opportunities for people 18 years of age and older.
- Camp Innabah, Camp Sankanac, Crow's Nest Preserve, Miss Betty's Day Camp, Indian Springs and Welkinweir offer summer programs for children and youth.
- Along the newly-forming Wine and Cheese Trails, travelers can enjoy the Region's signature pastoral scenery as they traverse the countryside to taste locally made, internationally acclaimed wines and cheeses.
- Among many cycling events, the French Creek Iron Tour, sponsored by the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, raises money for the preservation of lands in the French Creek watershed.

The region is fortunate to have several active organizations dedicated to conserving the Region's historic living landscape. These organizations, such as Historic Yellow Springs, the Mill at Anselma, Ludwig's Corner Horseshow and County Fair, and Maysie's Farm Conservation Center, provide programs and events that inform and even inspire, blurring the line between cultural and heritage education and recreation. Local food growers and producers, such as Chester Springs Creamery and Milky Way Farm, demonstrate the conservation ethic through their sensitive and sustainable operations communicated through site tours and product packaging. All of these organizations add to the quality of life here by connecting customers and employees to the Region's agricultural past and present.

Operations and Management

Nearly all that has been accomplished in parks, recreation, and open space in our Region has been due to the efforts of volunteers. Alongside elected officials and township staff, these volunteers have spearheaded

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efforts to determine policy, plan site acquisition and development, perform sports field maintenance, organize and lead programs, and manage finances through countless hours of community service. For many communities, the parks and recreation program is reliant on dedicated volunteers and their availability, capacity and enthusiasm to provide these services.

All nine municipalities have a history of recreation and open space planning in conjunction with their overall community development and conservation policies.

Seven of the nine municipalities have some form of mandatory dedication of parkland provisions in their subdivision and land development ordinance. Preserving open space and protecting natural, scenic, and historic resources as passive recreation areas are the primary focus of this planning tool. East Coventry, East Vincent, South Coventry, and West Vincent follow the most common practice of specifying an acreage (or square footage) to be dedicated based on the number of residential units. East Pikeland, and North Coventry require a percentage of the proposed development site, including proposed commercial, industrial, and institutional uses, to be dedicated as recreational lands.

Fees-in-lieu of land dedication are common in this region but could be strengthened by provision for fair market value assessment and inclusion of trails as permitted uses of such fees. Provisions specifying land characteristics and design standards for dedicated land are highly consistent across the five ordinances in which they are found. Provisions in several municipalities recognize trails as an appropriate facility for passive parkland and open space. Only East Pikeland Township's mandatory dedication of parkland provisions incorporates standards for trail design, construction, maintenance, and dedication, making it the most comprehensive in the Region.

With an eye toward future growth and recreational needs, six municipalities have acquired or expect to receive a total of 400 acres of future parkland. Some sites have been conceptually evaluated for active recreation development, but only one, Snyder Avenue Park, has been master planned. Recreational needs of residents, facility assessments, and other opportunities – identified by this Plan and other sources – will guide their planning and development.

Municipal parks and recreation is largely supported by tax dollars. East Coventry, East Pikeland, North Coventry, West Pikeland, and West Vincent supplement revenues for parks and recreation services through program fees and facility rentals. This limited operating investment in parks and recreation in the Region is lower than average for communities of similar size and context as a result of several factors. First, the Region includes communities with relatively conservative budgets. Second, volunteers provide the vast majority of labor. Second, Public Works or Road Departments are providing park maintenance but not tracking labor and expenses for park maintenance efforts separately. Finally, for many communities, the parks and recreation system is relatively new and growing by small, volunteer-driven steps toward expanded services and programs.



Parks, recreation, and open space protection are important to the contemporary culture of Northern Chester County residents. Hundreds of acres of parkland have been acquired, numerous recreation fields, courts, playgrounds, and other facilities have been developed, a wide array of programs and services have been offered, and thousands of acres of open spaces have been protected. These accomplishments are appreciated by citizens, as reflected in their participation and use of recreation opportunities and support for conservation initiatives, reported in the 2010 citizen survey and other public outreach activities.

However, citizens' interests are also growing and changing. In addition to the overall population growth trend, the number of active participants in sports leagues, recreation programs, and community educational programs is growing. The survey found latent interest in these opportunities among citizens. The leagues, programs, and other services are being offered more frequently throughout the year, and new ones are being introduced, placing greater demand on existing fields, parks, and their support facilities. In addition to this growing demand for places to play, sports field dimensions and accessibility regulations are changing, making many existing facilities out-of-date.

There are clearly needs for more, improved, and enhanced facilities and programs and the need for continuing open space protection efforts in this growing region. The comprehensive inventory and assessment of parklands, recreation facilities, sports fields, trails, open space protection, and programs and services (documented in *Appendices 2 through 6, and 8 and 10*) demonstrates these needs. In addition, the analysis of providers and management entities (*Appendix 7*) concludes that the capacity of entities to meet these needs individually is moderate to low, but is much higher through cooperative and collaborative efforts. Viewing needs region-wide provides opportunities to join efforts and leverage resources toward common goals. Additional opportunities to integrate themes of active, healthy living, conservation, and cultural heritage with community recreation are found as these elements are cross-referenced.

Continued, Targeted Open Space Protection

Four major landscapes define the Region's character – Hopewell Big Woods and the Schuylkill River, French Creek, and Pickering Creek corridors. Most of the Region's unique and defining natural and cultural resources are located within or can be related to these landscapes. Most of the protected land is also located within these landscapes, but the preserves, easements, and deed restrictions, though less rigorously, only protect some lands, not the entire landscapes. If lands where resources that define the Region's character are lost to or further fragmented by development, the Region's identity will suffer.

Chapter 3

BENEFITS OF PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE (AND TRAILS, TOO!)

Environmental Benefits

- Research shows that trees in parks have an individual, annual value of between \$94 and \$250 in energy savings and deterrence of environmental degradation. This has a total value of about \$17 million annually in the Delaware Valley.
- Parks help to improve water quality by providing green space that absorbs runoff and filters pollutants. Southeastern Pennsylvania realizes \$61 million in annual cost savings from protected open space's filtration of pollutants and replenishment of the water supply.
- Parks and open spaces preserve and buffer vital land and water resources, provide important habitat for plants and animals, and demonstrate low-impact environmental management practices. They can also important venues for environmental education and community-based environmental stewardship activities.
- A well-connected parks system supports wildlife movement and is essential to the life cycles of some species.
- Parks and open spaces can protect significant historic features of the natural landscape.

Economic Benefits

- Open space adds \$16.3 billion to the value of homes in southeastern Pennsylvania. Parks increase property values. Homes within 2,000 feet of a park have a premium of about 20 percent over similar homes farther away. Open space generates \$240 million in property tax revenues annually.
- Parks attract businesses. The availability of parks and recreation opportunities is the top reason that business owners choose a location next to location and availability of labor force.
- Parks are one of the most direct ways that our country can save money on health care costs by offering physical activity opportunities. The United States spends \$147 billion annually on direct and indirect costs of the obesity epidemic which stems largely from lifestyle choices of inactivity and poor diet. Improved health saves \$800 million in annual health care costs in the Delaware Valley.

Social Benefits

- Recreation has been found to be the number one factor in creating healthy family bonds, the foundation of our society.
- Parks and recreation is second only to the role of faith-based institutions in contributing to the happiness of the citizens about their community.
- Community facilities, including parks and open spaces, are the source of community pride and identity.
- Trails connect people to nature, provide transportation, create jobs, attract tourists and stimulate the local economy.

Personal Benefits

- Children's play is essential to the human development process.
- Physical activity and leisure are important to fostering a positive self-image and essential to stress management. Recreation opportunities for youth provide alternatives to delinquency and gang-related activity.
- Parks and park facilities provide important opportunities for regular physical activity – one of the best methods of health insurance. Each household with close to home public recreation opportunities saves \$392 annually.

Sources: National Recreation and Park Association, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Penn State University, Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, American Trails, and the Rails to Trail Conservancy.

Our Needs and Opportunities

Land protection should continue to be focused within these landscapes. Where voluntary protection techniques are used, outreach efforts to landowners on the benefits of land protection need to be more focused on and within these landscapes. Where mandatory dedication of parkland ordinances and fee-in-lieu of parkland alternatives are in place, standards and criteria need to be applied to provide appropriate land protection (or commensurate cash resources) at no cost to the municipality.

Land protection, especially along waterways, also conserves our waters. The exceptional value and high water quality designations for all the Region's major interior waterways characterize the aquatic habitat as nearly pristine. These designations call attention to the waterways' sensitivity to impacts but may not prohibit development, and its associated clearing, erosion, sedimentation, and other impacts, from occurring, nor do they provide public access for fishing, nature study, or scenic observation.

Finally, land protection influences our skies and air quality. Protection techniques significantly reduce travel associated with intensive development (in Northern Chester County, travel is almost exclusively by motorized vehicle), which decreases noxious pollutants from vehicular emissions. Other impacts from development, such as outdoor lighting for nighttime security, are also minimized, enabling citizens to experience one of the few remaining areas in the Delaware Valley with dark, starry skies.

Citizens support conservation efforts as a priority. Survey respondents rated the importance of nature reserves, trails, and greenways as important or extremely important. Written comments echoed and elaborated on this strong sentiment regarding the preservation of the Region's scenic rural character.

Over time, protection will be increasingly challenging. Each parcel subdivision creates more parcels and more parcel owners of smaller pieces of land, requiring more time, effort, and resources to protect and monitor these sites. Protection efforts need to be emphasized in the near-term, especially for the most critical resources.

More Distinctive, Well-Designed Parks

The location of existing parks relates reasonably well to the population distribution of the Region. Parks in the central and eastern municipalities provide close-to-home recreation sites for residents, and residents of East Nantmeal and Warwick have convenient access to Warwick County Park. Park locations are not well publicized and entrances are not well marked, especially where location, topography, or vegetation blocks views to recognizable park facilities. Signage, enhanced with landscaping, and publicity need to do a better job of communicating park locations in the community and in advance of park visits.

The same or better can be said about the location of most parklands owned by the municipalities for future development. These sites are:

- proximate to an elementary school with potential for joint development with the school district of ownership (e.g., the Reiff Tract behind East Vincent Elementary School),
- along the River (e.g., the Heyser, Faulk, and Wade Tracts in East Coventry),

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- along travel corridors (e.g., Hanover Meadows in North Coventry along Route 100), or
- in underserved areas of residential concentration, (e.g., the Pennhurst Tract on the outskirts of Spring City in East Vincent Township).

Other sites have unique features that would enable the development of a truly distinctive park experience, e.g., the historic Parker Ford Tavern. However, none of these sites is large enough, flat enough, or centrally located to multiple leagues for a multi-field sports complex.

Park design is noticeably improving. Newer parks take advantage of site features and topography, include circulation paths and natural or naturalized plantings to unify the site and buffer its facilities from one another, include some accessible facilities, and clearly mark and landscape parking areas. Some older parks lack these design characteristics, though the size and canopy of their shade trees is unmatched in newer parks. None of the parks are universally accessible, which is a concern for persons with disabilities as well as families with children in strollers, and elderly people who move about with assistance (cane, walker, or scooter.) Suggestions on park improvements and enhancements have been made for all existing parks (see Table 5-1, page 30), but further evaluation and detail should be explored.

Public outreach, specifically the survey, found that township park visitation is high (73 percent of residents use parks on at least an occasional basis) and that residents would use parks and recreation opportunities more if they had more information about them. In fact, lack of information – not lack of time or money as is more commonly reported in these types of surveys – was cited as the chief block to participation. Timely information compiled in one location is perhaps the single most important thing that Northern Chester County could do to foster participation in recreation and active healthy lifestyles among residents of all ages.

The survey also found interest in special use facilities, such as a dog park, a skate park, outdoor swimming pool, or ice skating rink, but not in sufficient degree to warrant recommendation. These facilities could be integrated within a multi-purpose park, or developed independently by special interest groups with consideration for park dedication over time, if public sentiment changes.

Owen J. Roberts School District's Fit for Life program and local sponsorship of the Adult Evening School offer opportunities for program expansion and coordination, serving as an indoor community center. The feasibility of an independent indoor community center facility that would support year-round community recreation and education, separate from the district's middle school/high school campus, should also be explored.

Variety in Type and Quality, Consistency in Safety among Recreation Facilities

Existing public parks and recreation sites in the Region are biased toward active recreation facilities, namely traditional sports fields and playgrounds. Some sites include natural areas and elements of history but do little to engage the everyday park visitor in understanding their significance to the park, the community, or the environment. Social areas (benches, tables, etc.) are limited to a single pavilion

Our Needs and Opportunities

or widely dispersed, not able to support multiple small groups and families at one time. They are also limited to either sun or shade locations; few parks offer both options. More and varied active, nature-based, and local interest facilities, supported by educational signage, programs, or public art, would create more distinctive park experiences and support the Region's upswing in fishing, hiking, and wildlife watching activities.

The greatest need among park-based recreation facilities is public-use sports field capacity. For years, community sports leagues have asked for more fields but have fallen short in response when asked to justify how many, what kind, where, and when fields were needed. The sports field analysis for this plan explored these needs based on league service areas, participation rates, team composition, and seasonal schedules (see *Appendix 9*) and found that community sports leagues—the only providers of youth athletics outside of the schools—could not operate without the borrowed use of school, church, and private field space. They make extensive use of fields that are undersized, moderately well oriented, and otherwise lacking field design. Many sites have issues with parking capacity. The region needs more fields—19 diamond fields and 13 rectangular fields—just to sustain youth sports. Another 4 diamond fields and 4 rectangular fields are needed to provide “room” for adult sports leagues to emerge and for general recreational play. The evaluation and redesign of older parks could push this number slightly higher if one or more fields are eliminated from an existing park to make room for alternative facilities.

In 2009-2010, more than 4,000 of our youth played sports as 253 teams in 18 leagues on 12 public fields and many borrowed fields. Our region needs many more public ballfields and playing fields to support residents' participation in youth and adult sports leagues.

Recreation opportunities for adults are lacking overall, not just in sports. Facilities, such as horseshoe pits, have been introduced into recent parks, but their numbers have been few and thus limit the number of persons who can play (and teach others) at any one time. Repeated facilities are needed to demonstrate real support for adult outdoor activity and build interest in adult recreation.

While unmanaged outdoor lighting impacts the dark skies, lighting can be beneficial in extending the amount of play on a field, court, or other outdoor recreation facility on a given day. Field lighting is controversial as a result of the type and direction of current lighting fixtures. Replacement equipment that reduces impacts should be considered. Field and facility lighting should also be part of any park planning or evaluation studies to determine if lighting is desirable and how best to minimize impacts.

Other important needs include:

- Replacement of play equipment that is outdated, unattractive, and unsafe in terms of ground surface fall zones.
- Addition of plantings at park entrances and social areas to enhance seasonality and offer a different experience each time.

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Expanded, Networked Trails

Pathways for safe walking and cycling emerged as the top facility that survey respondents identified as lacking in the Region. Walking was the top outdoor activity in which respondents participate (75 percent participation); bicycle riding ranked fifth (51 percent participation). About three out of five respondents indicated that there are not enough of safe places to walk and bike. The simplicity and low cost of walking and cycling as activities of an active, healthy lifestyle suggest that public investments in these areas would have great returns on public health.

More than 100 miles of public-use land and water trails seems like a lot. For a region that is 15 miles by 12 miles, 100 miles could traverse the entire region several times. But existing public-use trails are actually quite concentrated in a few locations and these clusters isolated from one another, thus they provide destinations for trail-goers but no real region-wide network.

Municipalities have independently conceived and planned trail networks, but few segments outside the parks and passive open spaces have been completed. Many of the proposed trails fall short of feasibility, even without detailed study, yet remain part of the “plan.” Municipal trail plans need to be reviewed, evaluated, and refined into a single coordinated or region-wide trail network plan to ensure that trails that connect parks, schools, and other community destinations meet at municipal boundaries. From this network, trails can then be prioritized for advanced study and planning to address:

- Detailed trail alignment and design, maintenance, and publicity.
- Infrastructure appropriate to each trail’s permitted use(s), such as:
 - access (trailheads, signage)
 - parking (vehicles and horse trailers)
 - starting and resting points (benches, mounting blocks for equestrians)
- Interpretive information on the corridor’s resources and history
- Restrooms and water fountains

The regional trails—Schuylkill River Trail, the French Creek Trail (including the Boars Back Trail), the Pickering Creek Trail, the Brandywine Trail, and the proposed Hopewell Big Woods connector trail—offer great potential for tying the Region together and establishing a region-wide trail network. Efforts to complete these regional trails need continued support for land acquisition or easement, trail design and development, and provisions for owner or volunteer trail maintenance.

Until public-use trails are in wide use across the Region and a track record of safety is established, the social trail network should remain privately-owned and personally-acknowledged through traditional gestures from individuals and small groups to owners. Those who have permission to use trails on private lands should use these opportunities to speak with landowners to share benefits and encourage right-of-way protection, fully respecting owners’ desires. Over time, owners may warm up to the idea of public access, or properties may change hands. A region-wide trail network plan should carefully consider select privately-owned “social” trails for long-term network integration.

Our Needs and Opportunities

Diversified, Coordinated, and Publicized Activities and Events

The range of public recreation services is infinite, but the focus of parks, recreation, and open space in this region is active, healthy living and conservation and stewardship of natural and cultural heritage. These should be the focus of additional services that offer activities and events for residents of all ages to connect with, celebrate, and appreciate. Adults and families are the underserved populations in recreation. Partners also have a keen interest in connecting children to the outdoors for spontaneous physical activity and exploration of the physical world, not just the virtual world.

The multitude of sports organizations and their extensive demand for field and facility use indicates that ongoing dialogue with these organizations is needed as additional facilities are planned and developed. Discussions among league representatives provided valuable information for this plan and should continue to inform and detail the need and desires for sports fields, surfaces and lighting, spectator areas, support facilities, and shared use and maintenance for all of the above.

As stated above, citizens need timely information about recreation activities and events. The challenge here is that each provider has its own method of publishing and distributing information. Some use newsletters, others flyers and signs. Some have websites, others do not. Some have bulletin boards, others prefer word-of-mouth. Knowing “what’s going on” is as difficult for the public as it is for scheduled program and event sponsors, occasionally resulting in conflicting activities being scheduled on the same day. Knowing from the survey that residents view Northern Chester County as their home community, not just their municipality, residents and program providers would benefit from one calendar of events, coordinated by providers behind the scenes and published in multiple outlets. Such coordination would also enable cost-sharing for advertising and other purchases.

Organized, Managed Partnerships

The analysis of providers and management entities found that the capacity to meet these needs individually is moderate to low. Municipal staffs are small, budgets are lean, and local accomplishments to-date are credited largely to the efforts of dedicated volunteers. Recreation, health and wellness, and conservation partners each have a more focused mission, yet their human and financial resources are also slim. School district partners have larger staffs and growing community outreach programs but increasing curricular and administrative demands on their budgets.

Many of these needs presented here will require capital investment: human capital and financial capital. Volunteers will certainly continue to lead many efforts, but professional staff (one or more positions over time) is needed to support broad multi-municipal or region-wide coordination of publicity, program expansion, park improvement planning, partnership development, fundraising, etc. An initial position should require recreational programming and management experience and could be part-time, and possibly combined with other municipal or multi-municipal functions.

Again, residents identify with the Region rather than only their municipality, and have expressed support for regional cooperation that removes redundancy and expands and improves services. The

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real opportunity to advance parks, recreation, and open space in Northern Chester County lies in future cooperative and collaborative efforts. Through such efforts, partners can share their people's time, knowledge, and skills and their financial resources to research and share best practices, and consolidate purchases and contracts. They can also leverage this cooperation in pursuing external funding from state, federal, and private sources, enabling them to expand and improve services.



Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision

Our residents' core values are the foundation of our plan. They communicate the qualities of our region that people hold in common regarding parks, recreation, and open space. From the core values, we cast a vision—a captivating description of the parks, recreation, and open space system we want for Northern Chester County. Our mission communicates our approach to creating this legacy in Northern Chester County. The strategies and recommendations direct our policies, projects and other actions to implement our vision and sustaining our values. This chapter presents this planning framework.

Core Values

As the qualities most valued by the communities of Northern Chester County, the core values are embodied in the goals, blueprint, and recommendations for parks, recreation, and open space. All policies and actions should be vested in the core values. The core values include:

- Community – Northern Chester County is a special place in which to live. Community involvement has sparked many of the important achievements of the Region in parks, recreation and open space. Building and strengthening the sense of community here through parks, recreation, and open space is essential.
- Health – The physical health and wellness of the residents is paramount. Providing opportunities for the residents to live active, healthy lifestyles through community recreation facilities, programs, and services will benefit the community.
- Heritage – Northern Chester County has a globally significant history. This unique heritage needs to be celebrated and promoted through recreational and educational opportunities.
- Scenic Rural Character – Our beautiful landscapes, dark night skies, and distinctive way of life need to be protected and treasured for present and future generations.
- Sustainability – Making the best use of all resources in ways that steward the environment, supports human and financial resources, and provides a legacy for future generations is vital.

Vision Statement

The community's core values underlie the vision for parks, recreation, and open space in the Region. Our vision is:

To establish a premier parks, recreation, and open space system in Northern Chester County through public and private partnerships that connects our history, culture, recreational, natural, and scenic resources and our physical health through facilities, programs and policies.

Chapter 4

Mission Statement for Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The mission statement presents how the Region can achieve its vision.

The mission of the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the Region's citizens through parks, recreation, and open spaces. We are committed to working with public and private sector partners to protect our rural landscape, interpret our heritage, expand our landscape-based economy, increase public awareness about parks and recreation opportunities, and foster active healthy living through recreation in a fiscally responsible manner. Our member municipalities will collaborate in a fair and equitable manner through the Federation to maximize our limited fiscal resources, reduce duplication of effort, and leverage additional funding and support in achieving this legacy for our citizens.

Goals

With the core values, vision, and mission defined, the next part of developing the planning framework was establishing community goals for parks, recreation, and open space. The goals contain specific outcomes of the Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. Four goals emerged from the process. Goals are the long-range outcomes desired from the implementation of the Regional Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. They include:

1. Protect open space that defines our region's natural, historic, and scenic character.
2. Foster active, healthy lifestyles through parks, trails, and programs.
3. Manage parks, recreation and open space to convey the best possible benefit to the public.
4. Establish a sustainable financial support system of public and private resources.

A Community-Based Level-of-Service System

To meet residents' recreation needs and to promote active, healthy living and a conservation stewardship ethic, the Northern Chester County region needs a way to guide municipal investments and partnerships. Traditional level-of-service methods outline acreage needs. More sophisticated methods detail facility needs. This region needs these parameters and more to make the best use of limited municipal capacity and financial resources for parks and recreation and continue open space protection efforts. The community-based level-of-service system for this region includes:

- Classifications for Public Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Appropriate Recreational and Support Facilities by Classification
- Three Service Zones
- A Trail Network
- A Public Park, Recreation, and Open Space Service Standard
- Principles for Design, Access and Management

Table 4-1 presents the classifications, their descriptions, services zones, and suggested recreational activities.

Table 4-1: Proposed Park Classification System for Northern Chester County

Park Classification Purpose and Description	Suggested Recreational and Support Facilities	Service Zones
Community Parks – Meet community-based recreation needs for active recreation facilities and preservation of local landscape features (minimum 20 acres; 2/3 for active and 1/3 for resource conservation).	Ball fields, game courts, playgrounds, and spectator seating areas.	Neighborhoods, Schuylkill Riverfront
Special Use Parks – Meet a single purpose need such as a swimming pool, ice rink, nature center, or riverfront access (variable, determined by special use).		Neighborhoods, Schuylkill Riverfront
Heritage Parks – Has a distinctive natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resource(s), preferably interpreted; is owned by a governmental entity or private sector partner (size determined by resource).	Observation and interpretation areas. Examples: Parker Ford Tavern and grounds, Snyder’s Mill, and Fricks Locks.	Riverfront, Neighborhoods, Scenic Rural Interior
Regional Parks – Preserve natural landscapes while offering active recreation opportunities (minimum 50 acres; 2/3 for resource conservation and 1/3 for active).	Nature-based recreation facilities such as camp sites, trails, nature center, and amphitheater.	Neighborhoods, Schuylkill Riverfront
Sports Complexes – Consolidate heavily programmed athletic fields and associated recreation and support facilities (minimum 50 acres); located along a major transportation corridor).	Sports fields, game courts, concession stands, spectator seating areas, food vendors, picnic pavilions, water fountains, shade, playground, exercise path.	Neighborhoods, Schuylkill Riverfront
School Parks – Integrate school facilities, park and recreation facilities in close to home locations to function as community parks, sports complexes, and special use facilities as needed (minimum 25 acres).	Sports fields, game courts, playground, walking paths, bicycle paths, skate park, restrooms, seating areas, pavilions, parking and landscaping.	Neighborhoods, Schuylkill Riverfront
Reserves – Preserve significant natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resource(s); may provide buffering to other parklands.	Nature viewing and interpretation areas.	Schuylkill Riverfront, Neighborhoods, Scenic Rural Interior
Trails Network – Provide multi-use trails within greenways and parks; connector trails for non-motorized access to parks, schools, and community destinations; on-street bikeways; and equestrian trails (within ½ mile of every home).		Schuylkill Riverfront, Neighborhoods, Scenic Rural Interior

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Classifications for Public Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

A classification system outlines the range of public park, recreation, and open space types that will be provided as the system is enhanced and expanded. It includes existing park types and other types to be developed over time. For example, classifications not present among current park and recreation sites, e.g. school-parks and public sports complex, suggest gaps in recreational experiences that improvements, enhancements, or new acquisitions could fill.

Eight classifications of park and recreation lands are proposed in the Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space System. Each classification serves a unique purpose, e.g., to support recreational sports, preserve sensitive natural areas, or connect/provide recreational travel corridors—all components valued by citizens of the Region as reported in the citizen survey.

Appropriate Recreation and Support Facilities

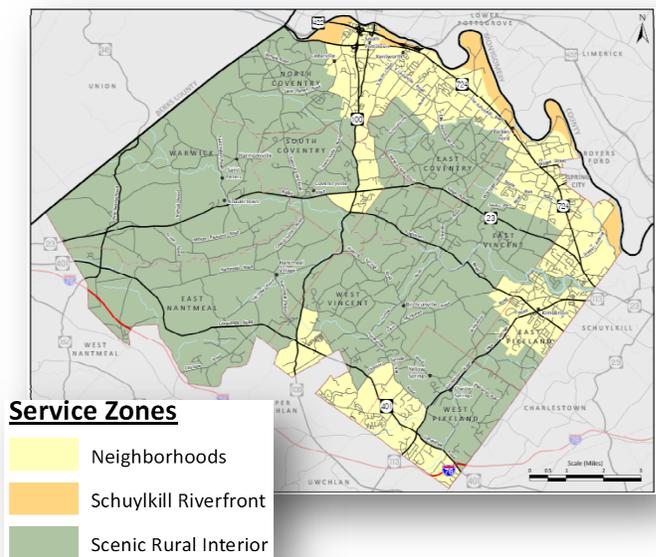
Since this is a rural area, no data for analyzing or projecting park visitation was available. However, the public opinion survey, key person interviews, focus groups, and work sessions with the Coordinating Committee provided extensive input to the recommendations for activities by classification. Data for the sports facilities was further informed by the sports league schedules and participation rates.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Service Zones

The analysis of population, parkland, and open space distribution across the Region suggests three distinct service zones that offer specific opportunities for the development of the parks, recreation and open space system: the riverfront, the rural interior, and the developing residential and service areas between them. (See *Map A, Service Zones Map*.) Public interest in safe places to walk and ride bicycles or horses indicates the need for a trail network that would span and interconnect all three service zones.

The Schuylkill Riverfront is a unique resource with opportunities for water access and water-

based recreation, environmental education, and heritage interpretation. In addition, lands along the river lie in the floodplain and/or host wetlands that are limited in their development potential but are suitable for low impact uses such as recreation, including recreational quality (not premier) sports fields. Therefore, these 2,100 acres along the river offer strategic opportunities to develop the kind of parks, recreation, and open space system that fosters river-based recreation opportunities, demonstrates river-focused land and water conservation, and celebrates river-related heritage. The Schuylkill Riverfront is shown in orange on *Map A, Service Zones Map*.



Our Values and Vision

The Neighborhoods are concentrated in the central and eastern municipalities, especially along the state highway corridors. These areas are also the location of most public elementary schools, which are hubs of community life in the Region. Land use and community service planning sustains this pattern as a means to promote small-scaled communities and conserve the rural landscape. These areas are close-to-home for both current and future residents, who desire nearer access to more facilities for regular recreation. Therefore, these 20,000 acres are the prime service locations for enhanced and expanded active recreation facilities, including sports fields of all qualities, and for smaller passive recreation areas that highlight unique site features for self-directed activities and scheduled programs. The Neighborhoods is shown in yellow on *Map A, Service Zones Map*.

The Scenic Rural Interior comprises the large conservation landscapes – the Hopewell Big Woods, the French Creek Corridor, the Pickering Creek Corridor, and the Marsh Creek headwaters. Here, the scenic, rural landscape holds center stage, with abundant natural and cultural resources and beauty. Community development in these areas is purposefully low density and low impact. The public parks, recreation, and open space system aligns its investments in this 53,000 acre area to ensure protection of contiguous landscapes and the resources they hold. Protected lands with public access could serve as nature reserves, heritage parks, picnic grounds, trailheads, or other passive recreation sites. The Scenic, Rural Interior is shown in green on *Map A, Service Zones Map*.

The service zones are intended to guide municipalities in the types of future parks/open spaces appropriate to be developed. Their edges are open to flexible interpretation. For example, Ludwig's Corner Horse Show Grounds lies in the Scenic, Rural Interior but could be further developed for recreation, given its proximity to the Neighborhoods, where the village of Ludwig's Corner is located. Similarly, lands shown in the Neighborhoods adjacent to the Scenic, Rural Interior may be more suitable for conservation, given the presence or proximity to other conservation lands. The map should contribute to discussion but the conditions of the site and its surroundings should ultimately determine the most appropriate park type.

For example, if a parcel is proposed for development in the yellow area (generally the municipally-designated planned development/growth area), any lands proposed for mandatory dedication of parkland should fit minimum criteria (flat land) for a community park (majority for active recreation fields plus some area for passive recreation). If the land does not meet the criteria, then fees-in-lieu of dedication should be paid to support development of active recreation facilities elsewhere in the vicinity. If the site has historic resources, French Creek, a trail corridor, or other unusual site resources, dedicated parkland for dedicated passive open space with enhancements to interpret the site would be appropriate.

A Northern Chester County Trail Network is needed to complement the three service zones. This network would expand from the framework provided by the regional trails. It would interconnect parks of all types with schools, historic villages, and community centers. It would interconnect the three service zones, enabling interpretation of nature and history across the woodlands, farm fields, villages and neighborhoods, and waterways.

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A Public Park, Recreation, and Open Space Service Standard

To sustain the proportion of protected public land for recreation for future residents, the Region will need to maintain a standard of 25 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

The parkland standard prepared for Northern Chester County considered the amount of land present and needed to support active healthy lifestyles among current residents of all ages.

- ***existing and future parkland***
- ***land needed to accommodate sports facilities for the existing organized sports***
- ***land needed for fields and supporting facilities for adults***

These parklands and parkland needs total 916 acres to serve today's 43,907 residents and yield a population-based standard of 19 acres per 1,000 residents.

Future generations will recreate through sports and other outdoor activities that are difficult to project today but will likely require open land areas. A previous Chester County policy set aside one-third of parkland for 50 years, as a legacy for future generations to program and develop. Incorporating this best practice increases the population-based standard by one-third to 25 acres per 1,000 residents.

See Appendix 8, Sports Field Analysis, and Appendix 10, Level of Service Analysis for further information.

Principles for Design, Access, and Management

Through improvement, enhancements, and new park design, all parks should:

1. Be designed to provide multiple opportunities based on the unique features of the site and resident needs. Regardless of park classification, they incorporate walking paths, places to sit, public art that interprets local values, large trees and landscaping that create “curb appeal” for park use, and signage that conveys the park’s identity and role in a larger park system.
2. Provide access to all recreational and support facilities, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, to support barrier-free recreation for all residents.
3. Be developed in phases. Initial development includes facilities, landscaping, and signage to establish the park as a destination. Some sites and portions of sites are landbanked to meet future recreation needs.
4. Be maintained with sufficient resources to provide clean, safe opportunities for recreational activities.

12 Key Strategies: A Blueprint for Action

The planning framework was completed with the definition of 12 key strategies for establishing a premier parks, recreation, and open space system in Northern Chester County. These strategies build upon the success, assets, and opportunities in place in Northern Chester County. They recognize that the Northern Federation is a unifying group with a productive track record in regional collaboration. They recommend continuing support of the things that work well (conservation and land protection) while strengthening service areas where community needs exist, namely in areas of active recreation, connection to the outdoors, trails, and collaboration on the organization of recreation and service delivery. They propose stronger working relationships with expert partners in conservation and recreation, such as the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valleys Association, the Natural Lands Trust, and private recreation providers.

These 12 key strategies are presented and detailed through recommendations in Chapters 5 through 8.

1. Enrich parks as a regional system of multi-faceted destinations.
2. Expand close-to-home recreation opportunities within the regional park system.
3. Develop more sports facilities within the regional park system.
4. Develop trails as a regional network.
5. Expand and diversify recreation programming.
6. Integrate open space protection with growth management and recreation planning.
7. Protect and interpret landscapes that define the Region's character.
8. Demonstrate and encourage resource stewardship.
9. Increase recreation participation through awareness of opportunities.
10. Organize a regional commission to coordinate the development and delivery of parks, recreation, trails, and open space services.
11. Increase operating and capital support for parks, recreation, trails, and open space.
12. Leverage the knowledge, skills, and resources of partner organizations that share the Region's core values.

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Parks, trails, and programs are key components of communities that foster active, healthy lifestyles. Together, they provide the places, the activities, and the direction to inspire physical activity. Their proximity to home and other daily destinations influences the convenience and regularity of their use. Local entities can plan, develop, and offer these services independently and successfully. However, when conditions are favorable, a regional system can streamline costs and reduce unnecessary duplication of effort – items of concern to local officials and taxpayers – while expanding facility and program offerings and enhancing the service quality important to recreation “customers.”

This chapter synthesizes challenges and opportunities identified in the inventory and assessment reports (*Appendices*) and presents recommendations under five Blueprint Strategies:

Strategy 1: Enrich Parks as a Regional System of Multi-Faceted Destinations.

Strategy 2: Expand Close to Home Recreation Opportunities within the Regional Park System.

Strategy 3: Develop More Sports Facilities within the Regional Park System.

Strategy 4: Develop Trails as a Regional Network.

Strategy 5: Expand and Diversify Recreation Programming.

Challenges and Opportunities

The Region is poised to coordinate the places and programs of parks and recreation as a regional system. The existing public parks are well known, frequently visited, and well located in relation to the resident population. While most parks offer traditional sports fields, courts, and playgrounds, there is diversity in their environmental setting and features, particularly when the less well known municipal open spaces for passive recreation and private preserves are included. Park improvements to highlight and interpret each park’s natural and cultural features would enhance this diversity to support an even wider variety of recreational experiences within the Region.

In this expansive region, most parks are drive-to destinations. In spite of the travel time and distance, a high percentage of residents (73 percent) use township parks at least occasionally as reported in the 2010 public opinion survey. But only 15 percent use parks on at least a weekly basis. If residents are to lead (and municipalities to encourage) active, healthy lifestyles, park usage needs to increase. A greater number of smaller, close-to-home parks, stated as important to nearly 9 out of 10 survey respondents, would increase the opportunity and convenience of physical and social activity.

Developing more parks requires significant investment in land and facilities, as well as the site development costs of parking, stormwater management, and utilities. The demand for more close-to-home parks, the location of public schools in proximity to the resident population – particularly the

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Owen J. Roberts schools, and the community-wide adult education programming provide an opportunity for joint development and programming of school sites as school-parks for active, healthy living. School-parks can become destinations for community education and recreation for all ages, bringing more diversity to recreation programming.

More sports fields are needed to sustain youth sports leagues alone, not to mention the need for adult league and general recreation access to fields. Additional fields that further differentiate recreational play from competitive and tournament-quality play would further enhance recreational opportunities. Fortunately, additional land is held in public reserve by municipalities and other public entities for additional and alternative parks and facilities, including parcels that could expand school-park sites, but they have not all been individually evaluated for site constraints. Additional land may be needed based on criteria for field configuration, support facilities such as parking, and reserve or landbanked areas for long-range, “next generation” site development.

The U.S. Surgeon General encourages communities and local governments to play a significant role in preventing obesity by providing services (such as recreation opportunities) that increase physical activity.

Current public-use trails are almost exclusively destination trails within the federal, state, county, or municipal conservation parks and private preserves. (The Horse-Shoe Trail threads its way through many of these sites but currently lacks the comprehensive public ownership to be called a public-use trail.) Existing trails are interconnected among adjacent sites but provide no real travel alternative to regional destinations; they also lack adequate accommodations for permitted trail users. Many other trails have been proposed but few have been evaluated for their physical and political feasibility, or their relationship to recreational and community destinations. However, several multi-mile public-use trails are under development. These span the Region along the riverfront, across its interior along French Creek, and along its eastern border. Upon completion, these three major trails could become the spines of a regional trail network that interconnects the Region’s park system with trail spurs and loops.

Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System

A regional system administered through one of several management options (outlined in Chapter 8, Management and Financing) would require several strategies to guide municipal efforts and investments in the areas of parks, trails, and programs. The remainder of this chapter outlines each strategy through a series of recommendations – some general, others specific; some region-wide, others municipal or multi-municipal.

Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System

Strategy 1: Enrich Parks as a Regional System of Multi-Faceted Destinations

Given the rural nature, rich history and culture, and existing parks and facilities of the region, parks should offer a range of park types, from community parks to heritage parks to nature preserves to sports complexes, each with distinctive themes and multiple activities that offer a variety of experiences for each visit. The system should appear unified to the park visitor through consistent signage, maintenance, and marketing.

Recommendation 1.1: Enhance existing parks as unique recreational destinations.

Parks that are most memorable and well-used are those that provide recreation facilities (fields, courts, equipment, paths/trails, etc.) and support facilities (social seating, spectator seating, restrooms, water, etc.) that match residents' needs in an easily navigated, well-designed setting. Most existing parks in the Region provide the recreation facilities but lack strong settings that distinguish them from other parks for the spectator or passive user. Well-placed facility improvements (upgrades, replacements, or additions) and park enhancements (shade trees, additional seating, and paths through or along natural features, along with interpretation of natural and/or cultural features through signage, art, or activity) will make each park experience unique.

Use a mini-planning process to evaluate the need for facility improvements and park enhancements in each existing park.

- Evaluate based on facility use, facility condition, park design, safety, and universal (ADA) access throughout the park. Determine which, if any, facilities should be replaced or removed based on use and condition. Determine which, if any, additional or alternative facilities are desirable. Consider the following recreational needs found in the 2010 public opinion survey (*Appendix 12*) and facility assessment (see *Appendix 3*):
 - Additional pathways for safe walking and bicycling, where possible. These can be shorter perimeter paths or loops within parks or longer independent trail systems, designed for leisure and fitness. Complement paths with shade trees (if not through a semi-shaded area), occasional seating, and interpretative signage of natural and cultural features of the site or the Region. Evaluate whether additional parking is needed to support use of walking/bicycling pathways.
 - Additional social and spectator seating and picnic areas. Feature one or more pieces of public art as a focal point.
 - Recreation facilities currently found in limited numbers, e.g., horse-shoe pits, exercise trail, skate rink, especially those that serve adult and multiple age groups.
 - Other facilities such as skate parks, ice rinks, Frisbee golf courses, sledding hills, climbing walls, amphitheatres or band shells, and manmade water features (e.g., fountains).

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- Prioritize desired facilities to sort “must have” from “should have” facilities. Review field/court/rink orientation, maintenance, safety, and insurance requirements, as well as ADA compliance, for each facility.
- Revise or redesign park layout.

This process should be applied based on the age and phase of park development. For parks in the process of phased master plan development, this recommendation entails a thoughtful review of the master plan prior to further construction. For recently completed or improved parks, it should be interpreted as an opportunity to identify short and long term enhancements; a comprehensive evaluation should occur five years after major improvement. For older parks, particularly those that evolved over time, it should guide a thorough evaluation and responsive redesign, as needed.

Site-specific park improvement and enhancement recommendations are listed in *Table 5-1*.

Table 5-1 Site-Specific Park Improvements and Enhancements

Community Parks	Improvement/Enhancement Recommendations
River Bend Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate play equipment use; replace desired equipment and install safety surface • Evaluate parking demand; expand parking as needed; consider low-impact/green parking lot techniques • Add a perimeter walking path and signed interpretation of the river history and ecology • Add trees for shade and to unify park • Convert a portion of grass area to meadow with walking path; interpret for nature study • Increase seasonal interest through ornamental trees/plantings • Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history • Add identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas • Add benches for shaded seating • Upgrade pavilion and add a second picnic area • Sign permitted Schuylkill River Trail users and direct non-permitted users to nearest facilities
Riverside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate court use; update/restore courts, if well-used • Add identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage • Unify park activities with ornamental plantings and sidewalk or walking trail • Consider an integrated design for circulation, landscaping, and signage with the adjacent Wampler Complex • Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history • Upgrade parking area

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Community Parks	Improvement/Enhancement Recommendations
Kenilworth Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate use of all fields; consider relocating or removing one or more fields to create larger buffers between activity spaces ● Add identification/welcome signage at each park entrance ● Add trees for shade and vegetation for seasonal interest to unify park ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Replace sidewalk along southern perimeter ● Replace trees misshapen by pruning ● Add benches for shaded seating ● Upgrade/add field lighting ● Add parking for permitted trail users and their vehicles ● Repair the pond's dam; Plant vegetation to buffer stormwater to pond; and Re-direct stormwater to pond via swales (per previous North Coventry plan)
Towpath Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Replace identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas (consistent with regional signage system) ● Interpret woodlands and river features for nature study ● Sign permitted Schuylkill River Trail users and direct non-permitted users to nearest available facilities ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Add a second pavilion ● Upgrade/replace children's play area with playground equipment
Ellis Woods Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Replace identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas (consistent with regional signage system) ● Interpret woodlands and creek for nature study ● Develop grass fields for active recreation activities and unify this area with trees and benches; or convert a portion of grass field to meadow with walking path that connects to Coventry Glen's sidewalks and interpret for nature study ● Sign permitted trail users and direct non-permitted users to nearest facilities ● Add seating area(s) and/or pavilion (not associated with playground) ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history
Community Park on the Ridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas (consistent with regional signage system) ● Add more trees (or tree clusters) for shade and benches for shaded seating ● Sign permitted trail users and direct non-permitted users to nearest facilities ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Hold additional field in reserve for long-range "next generation" recreation needs

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Community Parks	Improvement/Enhancement Recommendations
Kimberton Community Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add trees (or tree clusters) for shade and benches for shaded seating ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Expand walking trail to all facilities, e.g., hockey rink; extend to adjacent KYA ball fields ● Interpret Kimberton Village history ● Convert a portion of grass area to meadow and interpret for nature study, as previously planned ● Long term, replace identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas (consistent with regional signage system)
Pickering Grove	<p>Consider improvements to Pickering Grove to make all or portions of the site accessible for public recreation, while accommodating the summer camp use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas (consistent with regional signage system) ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Add picnic benches and seating for general use ● Designate parking for permitted trail users and their vehicles
Pine Creek Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Interpret natural features and site history ● Long term, replace identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas (consistent with regional signage system)
Andrew Evans Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Add trees, benches, or other unifying elements ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Plan for/add bike parking per trail use ● Extend walking trail to future West Vincent Trail System
Connie Batdorf Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhance entrance and orientation signage (consider consistency with regional signage system) ● Add perimeter walking trail ● Increase seasonal interest through ornamental plantings ● Add public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Consider replacing port-a-johns with permanent comfort facilities ● Add additional active recreation facilities as needed and as space allows ● Take steps to ensure safe pedestrian crossing over Route 100

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Recommendation 1.2: Master plan and develop future parks.

With one exception (Snyder Avenue Park), future parklands will require further site-level evaluation and master planning to determine specific facilities, layout, and park design features. Guidance outlined here recommends park types and potential facilities based on site opportunities and facilities needs found through this planning process.

- Evaluate the site’s intrinsic qualities/characteristics: locations, surrounding uses, (potential for) access by road and trail, and natural and cultural resources.
- Compare qualities/characteristics to recreation facility needs to select an appropriate and desired park type (community, heritage, special purpose, sports complex, etc.). Define the amount and location of the park site to be reserved for future generations’ recreation needs; this area will remain in a natural (or other open space) condition for the next 30 years.
- Prioritize desired facilities.
- Design facility layout and other park features.

Recommendations for several future park sites are listed in *Table 5-2*. Additional future park sites are addressed by Recommendation 1.2.

Table 5-2 Site-Specific Future Park Development Recommendations

Future Park Sites	Development Concepts and Recommendations
Anselma Crossing	3-parcel site (approximately 9 acres across Route 401 from Anselma Mill) to be acquired by West Pikeland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve existing schoolhouse; improve, as needed, to support public use • Develop trail(s) to adjacent neighborhoods • Interpret wetlands • Consider tot lot, tennis courts, and basketball court, as well as other facility needs in the master planning process
Snyder Avenue Park	Pursue community park design as proposed by developer with the following inclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas • Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history • Include benches for sun and shaded seating • Designate parking for permitted Schuylkill River Trail users and their vehicles
Snyder Mill	Plan and develop as a Heritage Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas • Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history • Include benches for sun and shaded seating • Designate parking for permitted French Creek Trail users and their vehicles

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Future Park Sites	Development Concepts and Recommendations
Heyser Tract (and Faulk Tract)	<p>Pursue a use easement for the parcel of land between the Heyser and Faulk Tracts.</p> <p>Plan and develop as a riverfront Sports Complex of tournament quality fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate concept sketches or advance to preliminary design to determine developable land area and conservation (wetland) areas; capacity for fields and other facilities (play area, concessions, comfort facilities, picnic areas, Schuylkill River trailhead, park/trailhead parking, etc.) ● Evaluate the need for and impact of field lighting; if lighting is necessary, minimize impact to the greatest extent possible.
Parker Ford	<p>Master plan and program the park as a Heritage Park in conjunction with the nearby sites owned by Chester County (Schuylkill River Trailhead at the Parker House) and East Coventry (Wade Tract):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Include benches for sun and shaded seating ● Designate parking for permitted Schuylkill River Trail users and their vehicles
Pennhurst Tract	<p>Master plan Tract A (active recreation area) and Tract B (passive recreation area) concurrently and develop as a riverfront Community Park, phasing development, as needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history; e.g., Pennhurst hospital and geology that creates the peninsulas in the river ● Include benches for sun and shaded seating ● Designate parking for permitted Schuylkill River Trail users, particularly on the lower portion so that trail users can use the park as a resting point
Windolph Knoll	<p>Following determination of lands needs for sewage management, plan and develop as a Special Purpose Park. Consider an amphitheatre set into the site's gentle slope with long distance views in the background; surround the amphitheatre with planted meadows woven with walking paths. Alternatively, grade the site for tiered sports fields.</p>
Warwick Township	<p>Plan and develop as a Nature Park/Trailhead with grassed areas (not sports fields) and picnic facilities (similar to Towpath Park in design):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Designate parking for permitted Boars Back, French Trail, and Horse-Shoe trail users and their vehicles ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history
Site known as Wineberry Estates	<p>Plan limited development in conjunction with the adjacent Maack Property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop trails and establish permitted trail user groups ● Include identification/welcome signage at park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Include benches for sun and shaded seating ● Designate parking for permitted trail users and their vehicles

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Recommendation 1.3: Evaluate options for underutilized sites.

The **Bryton Avenue Play Lot** is a corner lot in the small neighborhood along Laurelwood Road between Route 724 and 422 in North Coventry Township. Options for this site include:

- Remove pavement and restore and maintain as a grassed lot for neighborhood play;
- Remove pavement and develop a neighborhood playground;
- Sell the lot and apply the revenue to the park and trail system in the vicinity of the neighborhood if possible.

If the township aims to foster neighborhood identity and if the neighborhood comprises young families, then options 1 or 2 should be considered. If the neighborhood is home to adult families and seniors and is not expected to turn over to younger families, option 3 would be more suitable, at least in the short term.

The **Riverside Avenue Play Lot** is located along the riverfront in the (Riverside) neighborhood. This neighborhood was separated from the rest of the community when US Route 422 was constructed. The township has purchased several lots in the neighborhood, removing development from this flood-prone area. The township plans to continue acquisitions in this neighborhood as opportunities arise. Once then area is publicly owned, the entire site should be planned as a riverfront park. Connections to the Schuylkill River Trail and to the Heyser Tract should be explored.

Other small, single property sites held by the municipalities for future parkland should be similarly evaluated for their potential role in providing local and regional recreation opportunities.

The **Fernbrook Access to Coventry Woods** is located on the south side of Saint Peters Road (just east of Fernbrook Lane) and was formerly a private camp. Concepts for future use of this site include:

- Formalize the site as the primary trailhead to Coventry Woods and a local gateway to the Hopewell Big Woods. Provide parking, comfort facilities, and picnic and camping facilities. Remove un-used facilities. Redesign circulation to minimize views of municipal storage areas. Rename to remove reference to camp.
- Formalize the site as the primary trailhead to Coventry Woods and local gateway to the Hopewell Big Woods (as described above) and challenge adventure park. In addition to trailhead/gateway facilities (described above), evaluate the addition of a low challenge activities for the development of group dynamics and social emotional learning, such as a rope course and rock climbing wall, for use by regional and nearby organizations, e.g., scouts, outing clubs, etc. (and investigate appropriate insurance).
- Lease the site for the operation of a private nature-based challenge adventure park by a third party.

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- Redevelop the site as a school-park for outdoor education. Develop cabins for student lodging. Make the school-park available to scouts and other outdoor clubs.

Any of these options could incorporate:

- The conversion of the three small cabins to environmental education centers, perhaps themed centers for watersheds, flora, and fauna.
- Interpretation of the site's cultural heritage, including the charcoal industry and the Free Love Valley.
- Restoration of Fernbrook Lodge and the Oaks Cabin for lodging and indoor events.

Fricks Locks, an abandoned cluster of approximately 10 structures, represents the Region's ties to the Schuylkill River Canal and its heyday of the 1820s and 1830s, and the subsequent route of commerce, the Pennsylvania Schuylkill Valley Railroad. This site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2003 but remained in private ownership, namely the Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO) and its successor, Exelon Corporation. Exelon Corp. has agreed to stabilize and rehabilitate the structures and then donate the land and structures to East Coventry Township.¹ Upon acquisition, the township should lead an effort to plan and program the site as a Heritage Park along the Schuylkill River Trail, including potential restoration of the building interiors.

Recommendation 1.4: Acquire additional parkland or fees-in-lieu of parkland.

Future parkland already owned by the municipalities will help to meet the need for additional sports fields, walking paths and trails, and other recreation facilities. However, their individual sizes, locations, and site constraints may not enable them to fulfill all present and projected future needs. Municipalities should continue to acquire parkland through municipal land acquisition as well as revised mandatory dedication of parkland provision and fee-in-lieu provisions.

Municipalities should strengthen their mandatory dedication of parkland provisions and create consistency among their standards to acquire parkland through the actions of private developers, i.e., at minimal cost to the townships. Stronger provisions will enable each municipality to continue to acquire and protect larger land areas where appropriate (especially flat lands suitable for active recreation) and to make strategic use of the fee-in-lieu of parkland dedication alternative (fee-in-lieu) to fund for site development when lands are not suitable for needed facilities. Consistency will reflect a shared vision and value for parkland and will encourage interconnectivity of parkland and trails. Municipalities should gather their provisions for comparison and assemble a regional model for municipal consideration. North Coventry and South Coventry, which outline provisions for eligible lands, and East Pikeland, which has the most detailed trail provisions, should be considered.

The regional model should incorporate or update the following:

¹ The Sanatoga Post, 24 February 2011.

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- **The application of mandatory dedication of parkland to all land developments** not just residential development. Where in use, this provision is applied as a percent of the parcel.
- **The amount of land to be dedicated.** A parkland standard of 25 acres per 1,000 residents is needed meet the true need to support active, healthy lifestyles among citizens. Table 5-3 shows this as an acreage per dwelling unit for each municipality based on the 2009 estimate of average household size, and a percentage of the parcel for proposed non-residential land uses. These figures should be recalculated using current household sizes when ordinance provisions are prepared.

Table 5-3 SALDO Application of 25 acres per 1,000 residents

	2009 Estimate of Average Household Size	SALDO Requirement to Achieve Parkland Protection of 25 ac/1,000 residents	
		Residential uses (Acres per dwelling unit)	For non-residential uses (Percent of tract)
East Coventry	2.67	0.07	
East Nantmeal	2.68	0.07	
East Pikeland	2.66	0.07	
East Vincent	2.73	0.07	• Commercial and industrial uses (20%)
North Coventry	2.44	0.06	
South Coventry	2.98	0.07	• Institutional uses (25%)
Warwick	2.53	0.06	
West Pikeland	3.08	0.08	
West Vincent	2.72	0.07	

Source: Gannett Fleming

- **Lands eligible for dedication**, based on this plan and other municipal planning for open space, which may specify natural drainageways, steep slopes, woodlands, prime farmland, significant natural areas, historical sites, and existing trails.
- **Other design considerations**, such as length/width configuration (except for trails), maximum area of passive open space, accessibility from public right-of-way, and interconnectivity.
- **Provisions and Standards for Fee-in-Lieu of Mandatory Dedication of Parkland**, including
 - Conditions under which the governing body should require a fee in lieu of parkland dedication, such as
 - when the land is incompatible in size, shape, location, access, topography or other physical features to the type of park need to meet recreational needs;
 - when the land otherwise does not conform to needs or specifications documented local and regional recreation plans;
 - when it is impractical to dedicate recreation or open space land as required by ordinance standards; or
 - Upon specific recommendation of the Township Park and Recreation Board to the Board of Supervisors for its consideration.

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- Fee Value and Determination that specify that the value of the fee in lieu of land dedication is equivalent to the fair market value (FMV) of buildable acreage on the property
 - where “fair market value” (FMV) of improved residential or non-residential land (land at highest and best use) is determined at the time of the filing of the final plan with the Township or the first final plan phase of a subdivision or land development plan consisting of multiple phases, and may be adjusted with each phased final plan submission to keep current with actual land value if the subdivision and land development is planned in phases over multiple years. This approach keeps fees in line with increasing market values without the need to amend the fixed fee provision of the ordinance.
 - based upon a written appraisal report prepared by the developer or applicant and signed by an appraiser licensed as such in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and certified by such appraiser to be a fair and reasonable appraisal of such land and submitted within reasonable time limits associated with the development proposal.
 - with a specified process to resolve disputed appraisals.

In addition, municipalities partnering to implement this recommendation should consider developing an intergovernmental agreement to enable municipalities that prefer resource conservation to apply their fees-in-lieu of dedication toward active recreation parks facilities in another municipality. Under the Pennsylvania’s Municipalities Planning Code provisions for regional (multi-municipal) planning, additional tools are granted for implementation, where an intergovernmental agreement is in place and based on the regional plan. This provision allows for revenue sharing and may allow for the type of fee transfer suggested here. A legal opinion should be sought prior to taking action on this aspect of mandatory dedication of parkland.

Recommendation 1.5: Explore support for an indoor recreation center.

Conduct a feasibility study to determine community need and support as well as technical operations, management, and financing. Include a vigorous public participation process with opportunities to engage all age groups. Retain a consultant with expertise in indoor recreation center planning and operation. Consider visits to a variety of indoor recreation centers to see facilities and operations and to ask about “lessons learned.” Involve regional health and wellness partners: the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation, the Owen J. Roberts School District, and partners associated with the proposed YMCA site at Ludwig’s Corner. Involve community sports organizations if the center is envisioned to accommodate indoor sports training facilities.

Recommendation 1.6: Present parks as a unified system.

Residents of the Region already use a variety of public parks. Their perception of the quality of the park experience is influenced by the park’s ease of location, appearance, cleanliness, safety, and accessibility. Accessibility should be addressed primarily by design, but appearance, cleanliness, and safety all require ongoing maintenance efforts that vary from one municipality to the next. In this

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region, where high value is placed on environmental quality, economically and environmentally sustainable approaches, techniques, and materials should be the norm.

To present the parks (and trails) as a unified system, the municipalities should:

- Implement a regional signage system to identify the parks in the system. The sign template should reflect the character of the Region and its park system. Its design should be consistent with other recreation and wayfinding signage in the Region, e.g., Schuylkill River Heritage signage, though it need not be identical. Each sign should include the park name and regional system name. Signage types should include park identification/welcome signage at the park entrance from the street and park orientation signage at the parking area. Other interior park signs, such as signage for rules and regulations, could be standardized in design and/or policy over time. Park identification/welcome signage should be accompanied by landscaping to increase curb appeal. Park orientation signs should illustrate park layout. It should also show the entire regional park and trail system, if space allows, or at minimum the nearest parks and trailheads.
- Develop a consistent park maintenance program that addresses sustainable facility maintenance, sports turf management, and natural resource management. Gather park maintenance staff annually, at minimum, to exchange ideas, techniques, and information to promote consistent maintenance approaches. Dedicate some time to comparing the short-term costs of changing “the way we’ve always done it” to long-term savings in alternatives. Long-term costs of operating and maintaining facilities are high – estimated at 75 percent of the 40-year lifetime of a park.

Recommendation 1.7: Encourage special interest groups to self-serve.

While taking steps to leverage resources and expand recreation opportunities, municipalities should encourage special interest groups, such as those requesting single-use dog parks, mountain biking areas, etc., to provide their own facilities. Over the long term, the Region may be able to integrate these facilities into its regional park and trail system. But in the near term, the focus should be prioritized on places and programs for active, healthy living and cultural heritage for the general public.

Recommendation 1.8: Develop a regional publicity program.

Public awareness of park locations should be integrated with information about available recreational programs and activities. See Chapter 7, Raising Public Awareness for integrated publicity recommendations.

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Strategy 2: Expand Close-to-Home Recreation Opportunities.

The public opinion survey found that residents desire more close to home recreation opportunities. For such a large region, close to home may mean anything from “in my neighborhood” to “less than 20 minutes from home.” Given the distribution of public school sites in relation to the population, school-parks offer a model for accommodating more close to home recreation opportunities (indoor and outdoor facilities and programs) on existing school sites.

Recommendation 2.1: Develop school-parks.

School-parks are sites that offer public education and community recreation. They leverage public investment for both public services to streamline costs for facilities and operations. They have grown out of joint use agreements, in which two entities agree to shared maintenance, operations, liability, ownership, and costs of an existing facility, to include the design and development (or enhancement) of school sites that can support planned community recreation programs. The proximity of future parkland to several of the Region’s elementary schools make school-parks a particularly viable opportunity for expanding recreational programs and facilities in Northern Chester County.

School-parks have been developed in communities across the country, including other areas of Pennsylvania, however the Springfield-Greene County, Missouri, Park Board represents one of the most successful school-park partnerships and a potential model for the Northern Chester County region.

In its 2010 *School-Park Partnerships: A Case Study of Excellence*, the Springfield-Greene County Park Board (www.parkboard.org) describes how its partnership with the Springfield R-12 School District plans, designs, constructs, and operates its school-parks. The partnership works by enabling the school district to program its academic and extracurricular services during school hours, and allowing the Park Board to offer recreational programs and access to indoor and outdoor facilities in the remaining hours. Today, four school-parks are complete.

Joint use -- the sharing of space between schools and communities -- makes it easier for people to be active and healthy. Joint use provides kids and adults alike with safe, conveniently located, and inviting places to exercise and play. Besides making sense from a health perspective, joint use agreements make sense financially because they build upon assets a community already has. Sharing existing space is cheaper and more efficient than duplicating the same facilities in other parts of the community.

Source: www.jointuse.org

The Federation and its planning partners, including the school districts, were introduced to the school-park concept during this planning process. In fact, the Owen J. Roberts School District noted the potential for joint school-recreation development when it acquired a 52-acre site adjacent to the East Coventry Elementary School in early 2011. Municipalities and interested school districts should continue to discuss where and how school-parks could serve the Region. They may want to correspond

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with the Springfield-Greene County Park Board and the Springfield R-12 School District through audio or video conference calls to learn more about this successful partnership. A visit to the Park Board’s school-parks, playful pathways, and other facilities would be informative and inspirational.

Table 5-4 Site-Specific School-Park Development Recommendations

School- Park Sites	Development Recommendations
East Coventry Elementary and adjacent 52-acre site	<p>Pursue site master plan and development as a Community Park with varied active recreation fields, courts, etc.; passive/natural areas; and a reserve area for future recreation needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include identification/welcome signage at school-park entrance(s) and orientation signage at parking areas ● Include a perimeter walking path that connects to Coventry Glen's sidewalks ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history; perhaps on the history and practice of agriculture ● Include tree clusters and benches for sun and shaded seating ● Plan for future parking for permitted trail users and their vehicles
East Vincent Elementary and Reiff Tract (36 acres)	<p>Pursue site master plan and development as a Community Park with varied active recreation fields, courts, etc.; passive/natural areas; and a reserve area for future recreation needs.</p> <p>Consider previous plans for soccer fields and a passive natural area. Consider how the natural area can serve as an outdoor classroom, i.e.; need for pavilion with tables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include identification/welcome signage at school-park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas ● Include a perimeter walking path ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Include tree clusters and benches for sun and shaded seating ● Pursue trail connection to Community Park on the Ridge
North Coventry Elementary / Hanover Meadows (22 acres) and Bickels Run (32 acres)	<p>Consider how Hanover Meadows can meet physical education/active recreation needs and how Bickels Run Park can meet outdoor education/passive recreation needs; address street crossing, as needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include identification/welcome signage at school-park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas ● Include a perimeter walking path ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Include tree clusters and benches for sun and shaded seating

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School- Park Sites	Development Recommendations
French Creek Elementary	<p>Explore potential shared use of adjacent conservation area with access to French Creek.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include identification/welcome signage at school-park entrance and orientation signage at parking areas ● Include a perimeter walking path ● Include public art on one or more themes of nature, culture, or history ● Include tree clusters and benches for sun and shaded seating
West Vincent Elementary	<p>Enhance as a Nature Park with interpretive trails for self-directed nature study.</p> <p>Connect to Henrietta Hankin Branch Library and Evans Park via Township trail system.</p>
Kutz-Painter Tract (39 acres) and Bealer Tract (58 acres)	<p>Both sites are central to the Region with good transportation access via Route 100. The Kutz-Painter tract is an upland site. The Bealer Tract lies along Pigeon Creek. Either could be considered for a Sports Complex with portions protected in a natural condition.</p>
Pennhurst Tract (OJR SD owned) (22 acres)	<p>This site seems a most likely of the three undeveloped school district sites for a future elementary school. If so, plan and develop as a community park with consideration for facilities planned or developed for East Vincent’s Pennhurst Tracts.</p>
East Pikeland Elementary	<p>Phoenixville Area School District is planning a facility expansion; a playground, one grass field and other small recreation facilities should be incorporated into the new site design.</p>

Strategy 3: Develop More Sports Facilities within the Regional Park System.

The sports league survey found high levels of participation among community and scholastic sports leagues, creating high demand for sports fields. But non-league players desire informal and impromptu access to sports facilities, as well. In addition to greater number of sports facilities to accommodate practice, games and field rest, a broader range of facilities is needed from recreational quality to tournament caliber—each with appropriate design and maintenance standards.

Recommendation 3.1: Acquire and develop additional park land for sports fields for both community sports leagues and general community recreation.

Community and scholastic sports leagues have high levels of participation, and their intensive use of available sports fields already shows unmet demand and heavy wear on field surfaces. With a deficit of sports fields in the Region today, additional sports fields are needed to provide practice and game fields, as well as field rest, for community sports leagues. But others desire informal and impromptu access to sports fields as well. A greater number of facilities and wider range of field quality – from

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recreational quality to tournament caliber, each with appropriate design and maintenance standards – is needed. Three approaches are outlined below to increase sports fields in the Region.

- Develop at least two centralized sports complexes to provide tournament quality, competitive play facilities in the Region. Each can be dedicated to either rectangular fields or diamond fields or can be a mix of the two. Sizeable tracts of land with minimal environmental constraints are present in every municipality, however many of these tracts lie in the scenic rural interior service zone, where sports complex development is generally not appropriate. Some lands along the edge of this zone may be suitable. Others in the Schuylkill Riverfront may be impacted by the floodplain, and should be eliminated from consideration as a sports complex location but may offer opportunities for practice fields alone. The remaining sites, including additional suggested parcels and clusters, are shown on *Map B, Potential Sports Complex Locations Map*.

More detailed screening of these sites is needed to determine which are most appropriate for field development. In addition, local officials may know of smaller parcels that could be jointly developed for fields. Implementation of this recommendation should begin with a joint work session of local representatives to identify realistic sites for further evaluation and prioritization.

Park master planning should consider 1) the installation of synthetic turf or alternative surface fields to eliminate field rest and minimize maintenance; 2) the use of field lighting to extend use of existing fields into dusk; and 3) use of revenue-generating events, e.g., tournaments, to offset operating costs.

- Develop additional sports fields at school-parks and in community parks, where appropriate, for general community recreation (i.e., no use by sports leagues), as well as for adult leagues. Sports facilities in school-parks should provide instructional, skill development, and recreational play in close-to-home active, healthy living parks. Facilities in community parks can also serve in this role.
- Secure public access to privately-owned sports fields through long-term lease, easement, or acquisition to protect open these existing fields for public use. Potential locations include:
 - The Kimberton Ballfield Complex
 - The Wampler Ballfield Complex
 - Springford Area School District fields (Springford Youth Athletic League complex)

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Strategy 4: Develop Trails as a Regional Network.

With several regional (multi-municipal) trails under development and avid public interest in walking and biking, Northern Chester County is primed for a trail network that connects destinations throughout the region. Focus on getting people to existing trails, e.g., the Schuylkill River Trail, for positive trail experiences. At the same time, expand the trail system. Consider establishing a regional trails committee. Look at a system of trails including loop trails in parks, linear or “walking parks,” off-road trails, and on-road cycling routes. Not all trails need to serve all trail users, but each user should be able to use continuous parts of the system. Start with pilot projects featuring trail segments that have the support to be built.

Recommendation 4.1: Establish a regional trails committee.

The committee would comprise representatives of each municipality for the purpose of developing a regional trail network. Coordination with the Natural Lands Trust, Hopewell Big Woods, Horse-Shoe Trail Club, and Chester County Parks and Recreation is recommended, through additional committee membership or regular committee communications. Membership of local trail and outing organizations may also be considered.

Recommendation 4.2: Prepare a Northern Chester County trail network plan.

The network should be based on the regional trail spines and existing trails with new branch/spur and loop trails connecting to various recreation and community destinations and scenic journeys. Trail network planning will require the study of new and existing proposed trails, focusing on regional (multi-municipal) connections and realistic physical and political feasibility.

The regional trail network should offer a variety of trail experiences ranging from short fitness routes, where residents can walk or ride (on bike or horse) frequently for short durations, as well as to region-wide recreational journeys for half-day or multi-day excursions. Most, if not all trails, should be designed for multi-purpose use, providing all intended users with adequate trail surface, parking and trail use signage. Trails permitting specialized use, e.g., equestrians, should offer specialized facilities, e.g., mounting blocks, as appropriate to the use. Not all trails need to serve all trail users, but each user should be able to use continuous parts of the system. This will also require a coordinated bicycle plan to guide improvement of on-road conditions.

Having a trail network plan will help to prioritize trail development and improvement. It will enable the municipalities to acquire right-of-way (land or easements) through the land development process, strategic purchase and donations, beginning with feasible trail segments that have the public and political support to be built. Extensions and interconnections among trails can be longer term development phases with the completion of “missing links” pursued as conditions change over time.

The trail network planning process should include these steps:

1. Compile a map of proposed trails. Request current trail inventory data from the Chester County Planning Commission. Include new trail proposed by this plan, namely the Hanover Trail extension

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south to French Creek (via the OJR school district campus) and the Pigeon Creek Trail. Review map of proposed trails with municipalities and trail planning entities for accuracy.

2. Evaluate proposed trails to determine which trails should advance for feasibility or further study. Consider potential trail connections that would provide close-to-home loop trails in the Livable Communities Landscape, and park-to-trail and park-to-park connections, and trail-to-trail interconnections throughout the Region.
3. Conceptualize trail users, surfaces, accessibility, and trailhead and rest area locations. Suggest each trail's users (pedestrian, bicycle, equestrian, dogs and their walkers) based on location and compatibility with adjacent trails and park paths, recognizing that uses may be refined during individual trail master planning. Given the importance of trails as a means to experience the natural and cultural significance of the Region, several accessible trail opportunities should be planned and developed. Accessible trails need not be flat, straight trails but do need to alert persons with disabilities in advance (at the trailhead or trail juncture where an alternative trail is available) to obstacles and challenges that they will encounter.
4. Prioritize trails for feasibility study or further planning. If several proposed trails are located in a concentrated area, consider studying them as a group, not individually.

Recommendation 4.3: Complete, or support completion of, planned regional trails.

Planned regional trails include the Schuylkill River Trail, the French Creek Trail (Boars Back and Sowbelly Trail Segments), the Hopewell Big Woods connector from the Schuylkill River Trail in Berks County to the Boars Back Trail, the Pickering Creek Trail, and realignments of the Horse-Shoe Trail. These routes provide the major spines or spokes to which local trails can connect and should permit and support all users (pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian) on these long distance trails.

Recommendation 4.4: Improve and expand existing trails and networks.

Municipal trail network plans should be refined to complement regional trails with realistic local connections. This could be completed within the context of a regional trail network planning effort, depending on the depth of scope and available resources. If prepared separately, these plans should note locations and support for regional trails then focus on trail spurs, loops and other connections among neighborhoods and community destinations, including the trail facilities and amenities noted below.

Some trail improvements and extensions can occur with little or no additional planning. Such projects should:

- Improve trail facilities and amenities for permitted trail users; alternatively, direct users to nearby facilities in advance and on-site. Provide or provide direction to restrooms, drinking water, and public phones. Provide trash/recycling receptacles or notify users of pack-it-in, pack-it-out policies. Provide trailhead parking for all permitted users. Consider providing running water/water troughs or directions to nearest water source at trailheads where equestrian use is permitted.

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Provide trail surfaces for casual horseback-riding and horse-running, as appropriate. Provide mounting blocks or large boulders for horseback-riders to mount and dismount their horses at the trailhead and at regular intervals along the trails.

- Complete proposed expansion segments of existing trails systems, e.g., within Coventry Woods, the Reconnections Loop Trail between North Coventry and Pottstown.
- Complete feasibility study, design, and development of proposed interconnections among existing trail systems. These include:
 - Coventry Woods to French Creek State Park
 - Woody's Woods to Coventry Woods trail
 - Woody's Woods to Warwick County Park / French Creek Trail
- Develop additional river access to the Schuylkill River Water Trail. This should include visual and physical access to the water and surroundings, as well as interpretation of the river's history and the natural environment. Additional access can support short, family-oriented and skill-building water trail opportunities, such as Towpath Park to Parkerford.

Recommendation 4.5: Strengthen municipal mandatory dedication of parkland provisions to address trail development.

Update municipal ordinances to include trails and paths as eligible lands for mandatory dedication of parkland and as eligible uses for fees-in-lieu of parkland dedication; also provide standards for trail design, construction, maintenance, and dedication. East Pikeland Township's provisions (Subdivision and Lands Ordinance, 2008, Section 424.E) should be used as a model for the Region. (See also Recommendation 1.4)

Recommendation 4.6: Present trails as a unified network.

Just like parks, trail experiences – and the desire to return to a trail or seek others – are influenced by the trail user's impression of ease of location, appearance, cleanliness, safety, and accessibility. See Recommendation 1.6 for integrated recommendations regarding trail signage and appearance.

- Coordinate trailhead and interpretive signage with other parks and recreation signage in the Region.
- Improve trail maintenance. Coordinate trail users in the voluntary maintenance of trails, e.g., trash pick-up, right-of-way clearing, fence repair, minor resurfacing, etc. Schedule "maintenance days" when equipment, supplies, etc. can be provided, volunteers can be guided (if necessary), and volunteer hours can be tracked. Employ municipal staff or contractors in larger, more complex maintenance projects.
- Strengthen trail easement monitoring and enforcement. This has been a recent focus of the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust. The Trust may be willing to share its protocols and experience with others that take on this responsibility.

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Recommendation 4.7: Develop a regional publicity program.

Publicize available trails and paths to residents through mechanisms outlined in Chapter 7, Strategy for Public Awareness. Include permitted trail users, available and nearby facilities and amenities, and guidance on trail use and etiquette including respect for property owners. On trails with user restrictions, direct non-permitted users, which may include equestrians, mountain bikers and ATV riders, to the nearest available facilities. (The nearest ATV trails on State Forest Land are in the Delaware State Forest in Monroe and Pike Counties and in the Michaux State Forest in Adams and Cumberland Counties. The nearest private facility, a motocross track, is the Pagoda Motorcycle Club Inc. in Birdsboro.)

Recommendation 4.8: Sustain private social trails through partnerships and stewardship.

Continue expressions of appreciation. Continue informal discussions with land owners to address emerging concerns about trail use and opportunities for permanent protection. Include information regarding protection from liability as provided under Pennsylvania's Recreation Use of Land and Water Act.

Recommendation 4.9: Prepare a bicycle network plan.

This plan would assess and recommend improvements to on-road cycling conditions in the Region and would interface with the regional trail network at planned trailheads. This plan should:

- Evaluate BicyclePA Routes L and S and previously used Iron Tour routes for public use. Other studies have raised concerns about route safety based on physical roadway and shoulder conditions.
- Assess the road network for realistic "complete street" improvements, such as shoulders, bike lanes and compare best practices regarding maintenance techniques.
- Assess local cyclists' knowledge of safe bicycling techniques, and recommend educational topics and programs.
- Evaluate the Region's potential as a destination for cycling clubs and tours, and the economic benefits of such tourism.

Chapter 5

Strategy 5: Expand and Diversify Recreation Programming.

While conservation has strong roots here, community recreation for all ages is fledgling initiative. A variety of recreation activities through the efforts of Welkinweir, Green Valleys, Crow's Nest, Warwick County Park, and sports leagues and clubs are in place but are fragmented in scheduling, promotion, evaluation, and renewal. Recreation service that fully reflects Northern Chester County culture could be a blend of organized activities such as league sports, community events (important community builders), fitness and wellness, conservation in action, nature observation, and family-based activities. Foster what organizations are already doing well for their target audiences while actively supporting efforts to expand the range of activities for all ages.

Recommendation 5.1: Focus programs in active healthy living and cultural heritage.

The range of public recreation services is infinite. The Federation cannot be all things to all people. It is better to do a few things at very high quality than to undertake too many things at lesser quality. Active healthy living and cultural heritage programs and events will enable the Federation to serve a broad range of citizens including youth, adults, and families in line with the Region's values. Cultural heritage programs include nature, the environment, and the history of the Region.

Forging the relationship between the Federation and the school districts, Owen J. Roberts, Downingtown Area and Phoenixville Area, as well as the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation and Downingtown Area Recreational Consortium, will help to provide community programs in both areas. This partnership should pursue the "school-parks" concept in programming active, healthy living activities during after-school hours and on weekends for people of all ages and families. See Recommendation 1.3, and expand cultural heritage programs for adults through the Adult Evening School (Recommendation 5.2).

Recommendation 5.2: Expand adult lifelong learning programs.

Adult lifelong learning emerged at the top activity in which survey respondents are interested. One in five adults reports participating in adult programs already. Further research and interviews revealed that citizens have a keen interest in learning about the history of the area. Serve the high rate of interest with ongoing and publicity of current programs as well as expansion of program frequency and topics. Consider bringing additional programs under the umbrella of The Adult Evening School or coordinating adult program publicity through one recreation website (See Chapter 7, Raising Public Awareness).

Recommendation 5.3: Continue community sports league summits.

This planning process convened sports leagues on two occasions to discuss facilities and participation. The Federation, or its implementation entity, should continue this regional dialogue. Changes in field specifications and league classifications affect existing fields and the need for additional fields. Program and facility providers need to have regular (annual or semi-annual) communication on program and facility assessments, and evolving facility requirements established by national leagues. (See also Chapter 8, Management and Financing)

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Recommendation 5.4: Engage youth in the Region's natural and cultural heritage.

Reach youth through programs for this age group or for intergenerational groups, or through assistance in developing program technologies. This age group can be challenging to engage in any adult-directed activity, however, 5th graders interviewed for this project expressed a desire to play in the woods, in the creeks, and on equipment for their age group. For some, access to these types of environments will fulfill their needs. For others, some programming may be needed or helpful in connecting them with the environment, e.g., as a theatre for their play. Washington and his troops crossed the Schuylkill River, but 5th graders, with supervision, could certainly cross a creek as a smaller-scaled reenactment.

Alternatively, offering them an opportunity to develop geo-caches, videos, and games and to offer other ideas for portraying the Region's history, environment, and culture *technologically* may attract their skills and interests directly and ultimately influence their appreciation for the Region.

Recommendation 5.5: Address water safety.

Access to the river and creeks is important to many residents and a cultural value to be shared with children, youth, and adult residents, old and new. This value includes respect for the resource in terms of cleanliness (free from litter and pollutants) and personal safety. Programs that promote access to the river and creeks should provide instruction on water safety and emphasize policies on trash removal.

Recommendation 5.6: Coordinate special events and activities.

Along with the recommendation for the establishment of a Northern Chester County Parks and Recreation Board (See Chapter 8, Partnerships) is the recommendation to use this board as the vehicle for coordinating, planning, and scheduling recreational/cultural events in the Region. By working together, the organizations and municipalities will be able to maximize public recreation services and events in terms of schedule, event theme, location, and promotion.

Northern Chester County is home to more than a dozen historic villages: Birchrunville, Bucktown, Cedarville, Chester Springs, Coventryville, Fricks Lochs, Harmonyville, Kenilworth, Kimberton, Knauertown, Nantmeal, Parker Ford, Pottstown Landing, St. Peters, Warwick, and Yellow Springs, as well as other many historic sites. Tours, programs, and events in these communities would be a way to inform local residents of their heritage through recreational experiences.

Recommendation 5.7: Link Recreation with Other Community Building Endeavors.

Engaging in activities that build community through parks and recreation is important for the Region.

- Include a course on Northern Chester County history in the Owen J. Roberts Adult Evening School.
- Provide tours of historic sites, natural areas, and villages on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Work with Schuylkill Highlands with developing driving tours through smart phone apps.
- Work with Community Service and justice system participants on recreation and heritage projects in the Region.

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- Coordinate efforts with the Welcome Wagon to meet with new residents and inform them of the Region's recreation, heritage, and desire to conserve the scenic rural character of the area.
- Develop a way to recognize volunteers annually and formally. Consider a celebration in a park or heritage site as a way to bring people together for this important recognition. Try to include fun activities. Strive to get sponsors or partners to support the cost.

Recommendation 5.8: Develop a Regional Publicity Program

Public awareness of scheduled programs, available activities, and special events should be integrated with information about park locations. See Chapter 7, Raising Public Awareness for integrated publicity recommendations.

Replace with *Map B, Potential Sports Complex Location*
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Protecting open space is essential to sustaining the Region’s character. This region is unique in its location at the nexus of the Highlands and Schuylkill River watershed. Its location influenced, and continues to influence, the abundance of woodlands and the quality of waterways found here. Previous generations employed these resources and others in settlement, agriculture, and industry, as well as in support of the American Revolution. Today, residents value these same resources for their ecological functions (filtration, infiltration, habitat, biodiversity, etc.) and their scenic, rural character under sunlit and dark night skies, and wish to protect and sustain them for future generations.

Protecting the land from development through easements and acquisitions is already under way with over 18,700 acres protected by municipalities, state and federal agencies, land trusts, and private individuals. Historically, local protection efforts were largely opportunistic, based on landowner interest and initiative. Today, the pattern of protected lands is somewhat concentrated in the western portion of the Region, including Coventry Woods and Woody’s Woods as well as state and federal lands and privately eased lands, and but protection of the Region’s defining landscapes is incomplete.

Multi-partner conservation initiatives are looking at entire landscapes, prioritizing outreach and protection efforts and developing recreation and trail systems that bridge the invisible ownership boundaries. These collaborations have drawn attention to the expansive nature of the Hopewell Big Woods and the Schuylkill River corridor. To fully protect these natural communities, natural systems, and scenic landscapes, further integration with local planning and land protection efforts is needed.

Furthermore, sustainable resource management, managed public access to sensitive resource areas, and interpretation of resource use are needed to ensure the legacy of Northern Chester County. Land protection alone does not prevent disturbance of habitat, infestation by invasive species, or other management effects to the presence and quality of the vegetation. Nor does it enable close contact with nature or an immediate understanding of the environmental, economic, and social benefits of protected open space.

This chapter synthesizes challenges and opportunities of open space protection, identified in the inventory and assessment reports (*Appendices*), and presents recommendations under three Blueprint Strategies:

Strategy 6: Integrate Open Space Protection with Growth Management and Recreation Planning

Strategy 7: Protect and Interpret Landscapes that Define the Region’s Character

Strategy 8: Demonstrate and Encourage Stewardship

Chapter 6

Strategy 6: Integrate Open Space Protection with Growth Management and Recreation Planning.

These three topics are closely interrelated when it comes to conserving the landscape and sustaining a culture of active, healthy living. Protection through acquisition or easement should be compatible with, or even complementary to, goals for growth management and recreation. Progress toward all three goals should be monitored and reported to the public, who value and financially support these initiatives.

Recommendation 6.1: Adopt a goal of protecting half of the remaining open space.

This goal represents protecting an additional 13,000 acres and would achieve protection for approximately half of the Region. While few communities in Pennsylvania have protected more than 30 percent of their lands, there is such a wealth of natural and cultural resources and such strong support for public and private land protection efforts in this region that a goal of 30 percent protection seems insufficient. Indeed, there are few large unprotected parcels in this region from which to make significant strides toward the goal, thus protection of small, preferably contiguous, acreages will play an important role. The goal could be refined based on further analysis of anticipated growth rates, growth management techniques, and funding feasibility. However, given current support for open space protection, the important message is continue open space protection efforts in full, pursuing all available open space protection techniques as appropriate to the resource(s) proposed to be protected and landowner preferences.

Recommendation 6.2: Establish a region-wide open space committee.

This committee would be responsible for sharing, promoting, and coordinating open space protection in the Region, and coordinating its implementation with growth management in the Region. The committee might comprise the existing municipal open space committees, meeting at a summit-style event, or include one to two appointed municipal representatives. Regardless of organization, the committee should meet every three to six months to discuss parcels recently protected, parcels under consideration (including concerns of the landowner and supplemental outreach to the landowner and neighboring landowners), progress toward goals, publicity of progress, and future educational and outreach needs, programs, and campaigns. The Land Preservation Committee (LPC) of the French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust fulfills several of these parameters. If the LPC can accommodate the entire geography of the Region, which extends beyond the French and Pickering Creeks watersheds, this existing committee should be considered in lieu of forming a new one. Supplemental resources, e.g. funding, volunteer time, or other, may be needed but still more efficient than a separate effort.

Recommendation 6.3: Establish a region-wide program for open space mapping.

This program would assist the regional open space committee in measuring changes to the acreage of protected open space and undeveloped unprotected open space at least every five years based on the availability of updated aerial photography. Such a program should be conducted in coordination with non-profit land trusts and other entities that hold easements in the Region.

Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes

Recommendation 6.4: Publicize progress toward the open space goal.

Annually publish the goal, the acreage of protected open space, and if available, past trends. This information could be maintained on a region-wide website, and/or published through periodic Federation and municipal newsletters.

Recommendation 6.5: Use mandatory dedication of parkland provisions to protect open space for passive recreation.

Amend municipal mandatory dedication of parkland ordinances, where necessary, to include natural resource preserves with limited public access as eligible for parkland dedication and use of fee-in-lieu of parkland dedication funds. (See also Chapter 4, Recommendation 1.4.2.)

Recommendation 6.6: Expand existing parks, where practical and as land is available.

Where adjacent lands are suitable for active recreation facilities, parks located in the Neighborhoods Service Zone should be expanded by the acquisition of adjacent parcels, as opportunities arise. Similar expansions should be explored for passive recreation areas.

Recommendation 6.7: Determine the need for park and facility lighting on a case-by-case during the master planning process or park review process. (See also Chapter 5, Recommendations 1.1 and 1.2.)

Although outdoor lighting runs counter to the value the Region places on dark skies, natural habitat, and being “good neighbors,” there may be certain sites and facilities where outdoor lighting enhances use, e.g., to extend play on specialized or popular evening facilities, and indirectly contributes to conservation of other lands. This perspective applies to all outdoor lighting, including but not limited to recreational park and field lighting.

All necessary lighting should be facility-focused, time-limited, and have minimal impact to adjacent properties. All unlit parks and facilities should be regulated as dawn-to-dusk facilities to minimize liability.

If desired, a more progressive approach would involve the adoption of municipal ordinance provisions to manage outdoor lighting (both fixed and portable) and promote the preservation of dark skies.

Chapter 6

Strategy 7: Protect and Interpret Landscapes that Define the Region's Character.

Open space protection is most effective when it focuses on clustered or contiguous parcels that encompass natural communities or define local character. The Schuylkill Riverfront and the Scenic Rural Interior, including Hopewell Big Woods, the Great Marsh, the French Creek Corridor, and the Pickering Creek Corridor, are significant and defining landscapes that should be protected. Protection across such large areas should apply acquisition of parcels in-fee or easements appropriate to the resource or resources proposed for protection, and therefore may be varied even within a single parcel. But protection is only part of the story. Providing public access, where feasible, for passive recreation and interpretive activities that tell of the landscape's role in history and ecology is also important in sustaining the region's culture.

Recommendation 7.1: Protect the riverfront.

Though an ambitious goal, the Region should protect all of the Schuylkill Riverfront from development and provide as much public access to the river as possible. Such access should support water-based recreation activities, such as boating and fishing, as well as visual access for nature study and environmental education. Parcels should be prioritized based on the threat of development and opportunity for contiguous protection.

Recommendation 7.2: Protect the scenic rural interior.

- **Expand and fill the unprotected gaps in clusters of protected open space (known in Chester County as outfill).** These clusters include lands protected by any and all techniques.
- **Protect natural areas of significance (Natural Areas, Important Bird Areas, and Important Mammal Areas as shown on Map 4, Natural Areas), and prioritize land protection in locations where such areas overlap.** Consider acquisition of parcels in-fee or easement to manage sensitive sites as nature preserves, including but not limited to: the upland buffers and water sources to the Great Marsh (Site #11), privately held portions of Pine Swamp (Site #114), and Warwick Seeps, (Site #9).
- **Consider acquisition of private, non-profit recreation lands, as opportunities arise.** The various private camps, campgrounds and sportsman's clubs have recreational facilities that would complement those currently available in the Region, if they were available to the public. If such lands become available for purchase (or easement), an evaluation of the site location, natural and cultural resources, facility inventory and conditions, and trails should inform a purchase/easement decision.

Recommendation 7.3: Protect the primary stream corridors.

The primary stream corridors include main stems of French Creek, Pickering Creek, Pigeon Creek, and Stony Run. Protection along these stream corridors should include both protection from development (controlled through floodplain management and managed as vegetated riparian buffers) as well as easements and acquisitions that provide public access to the water. Much of French Creek lies in the

Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes

Scenic, Rural Interior or is already protected in East Pikeland Township with plans for trail development. Similarly, portions of Pickering Creek are protected and have developed streamside trails in West Pikeland. Nevertheless, segments of unprotected, unmanaged, and inaccessible corridor remain. Currently, Ellis Woods Park provides the only publicly accessible land along Pigeon Creek; a future passive open space park is proposed at Wineberry Estates. Development has already occurred along portions of Stony Run, making comprehensive protection and trail development an impractical goal, however stream access for fishing, nature study, and cultural heritage interpretation should be pursued.

Recommendation 7.4: Interpret open space that defines regional character.

- **Investigate the Pennsylvania Byway Program** to determine if there are roadways within the Region that are worthy of state designation and special local management. If so, nominate the roadway, or portion thereof, to PennDOT for consideration to the program.
- **Develop an interpretive tour of protected lands in the Region.** This tour route could be based on one or more of the Iron Tour routes that feature protected lands in the French Creek watershed, one or more PA Byways in the Region (once designated), or other routes. Tour narratives could be published online for easy revision and update. Website programming could also include an e-mail prompt to a tour survey for user feedback (or student quiz, if the tour were integrate into a local history course). Tours should be promoted only as driving tours until roadway conditions are assessed and improved, as needed, for safety.
- **Host cultural heritage programs and special events on protected open space lands**, engaging the site, its history, and significance to the Region.

Recommendation 7.5: Continue education and outreach efforts.

- **Continue to meet with landowners** to make them aware of various open space protection techniques (full or partial parcel protection; acquisition or easement; paid or donated; near term action or future bequest; etc.) and their unique benefits. Compile and coordinate educational information with local private and municipal land trusts in response to their interests and concerns. Prioritize outreach to landowners of 1) parcels 40 acres or more in size; 2) land enrolled in the Clean and Green program that is not already protected by easement; and 3) parcels contiguous to protected lands.
- **Invite the Greenspace Alliance and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission to present its findings on the economic impact of open space** to elected officials of the Region.
- **Document a series of landowner legacies** – personal stories about the importance of land protection. Use the landowner legacies as an aid to individual outreach meetings, a handout at special outreach events, or a larger outreach campaign. Pike County used this approach to share four landowner legacies with prospective land donors.

Chapter 6

Strategy 8: Demonstrate and Encourage Resource Stewardship.

Our use and management of the landscape can promote the health and dynamics of natural communities and the preservation of historic structures, or can contribute to their decline. Resources on public and private lands should be purposefully managed for their long term presence in the region. Publicly protected open space lands offer an opportunity to demonstrate environmental stewardship toward natural, historic, and other resources in ways that others can observe and apply to their own priorities.

Recommendation 8.1: Practice resource management on public lands.

All public lands with natural areas should have resource management plans that address the health and dynamics of the plant and animal communities and the preservation of natural features and scenic vistas through planned management activities and public access and recreation policies. Where public access is permitted, resource management areas may be posted with information on the technique and intended benefits.

Recommendation 8.2: Encourage resource management on private lands.

Similarly, private landowners of natural areas, including homeowner's associations, should be encouraged to develop and manage resources sustainably in accordance with their goals for the land and resource(s). Such management plans need not be complex but should address the specific natural resources of the site (woodlands, fields/meadows, waters, plant and animal communities), historic resources (buildings, structures, fences, walls, etc.), vegetative patterns, and public access to these features.



Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness

Providing information about parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services is an important public service. Convenient, timely information enables people to engage in recreational activities, plan for memorable experiences, and lead active, healthy lives close to home. Nearly three out of five survey respondents indicated that they would like to have more information about parks, recreation facilities, trails, events, and activities – and they want to know where to go to get that information. Survey respondents listed the lack of information about parks and recreation as their chief block to participation! When asked how they would like to get information, more than half the survey respondents indicated that one website for Northern Chester County is their preferred method. Next in preference was township websites and newsletters mailed to homes. Making information about parks and recreation easy for residents to access could be one of the most valuable new or improved services that the Region offers.

This chapter synthesizes challenges and opportunities regarding public awareness and presents recommendations under one Blueprint Strategy:

Strategy 9: Increase Recreation Participation through Awareness of Opportunities

Challenges and Opportunities

There are a lot of recreation options in Northern Chester County. Many organizations are providing facilities and services. From things people can do whenever it suits them such as walk, enjoy a picnic, or look at the starry skies, to organized activities such community fairs, opportunities for fun and enrichment abound. The problem is that these opportunities are fragmented and there is no one place to get information about parks, recreation facilities, trails, programs, or services. Too often residents reported missing out on a great activity simply because they were unaware of it. While trails are important to 85 percent of the survey respondents, fully 63 percent report not having enough information about them. In providing information about parks and recreation to residents, the Region is facing a number of challenges including the collection of timely information; the methods for distribution; and how to make residents and visitors aware of information sources. It takes time, expertise, and commitment to capture, organize, and distribute information on an ongoing basis. Developing a “go to” resource for information about parks and recreation is an important undertaking to advance the vision for the Region. The nature and extent of what information will be collected and distributed regarding parks and recreation must be determined.

The public involvement process yielded a significant finding: residents identify with the Northern Chester County region as a whole more so than relating only to their township or their school district.

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This underscores the need for a consolidated information source. Many organizations have information to provide. Many organizations are already providing information, including Chester County, the nine municipalities, the three school districts, sports leagues, land trusts and conservancies, quasi-public tourism organizations, health organizations, historic and cultural private sector businesses with recreation related functions, newspapers, various websites, and many others. Tapping these various sources of information and distributing their collective information would expand parks and recreation possibilities for people who live and visit in the Region.

Strategy 9: Increase Recreation Participation through Opportunity Awareness.

Increasing participation in recreational activities is key to the public's life-long health and wellness. Participation starts with awareness of "what to do and where to do it" for both scheduled and self-directed recreation activities, and may include activities offered by both public and private providers. Such information should be timely, accurate and accessible in multiple formats to promote participation across the community.

Recommendation 9.1: Provide a parks and recreation guide for the Northern Chester County region in print and digital/online formats.

A guide with information about all the parks, recreation facilities, trails, services, programs, contact information, and related information will help people who live or visit here to partake in recreation opportunities. Consider the guide as a whole but composed of parts that could stand on their own for targeted audiences with specific interests, such as land and water trails, birding areas, playgrounds, historic sites, cultural events and so on. Sell advertising for the guide to offset production costs.

Recommendation 9.2: Provide a website for parks and recreation in Northern Chester County.

The public participation process found that the citizens relate to Northern Chester County overall as their home region more than any other sub-entity. This result positions the Region as the candidate with the most potential for success in providing a website for parks and recreation.

- Determine a suitable organization to house the responsibility for the website. Evaluate the feasibility of organizations and partners to oversee website services:
 - Northern Federation staffing or contracting.
 - A multi-municipal partnership.
 - A multi-municipal/school partnership.
- Other private sector partners, such as Chester Springs Surrounds.

Strategies and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness

- Continue to use the www.northernfederation.com site developed for this plan as the website for Parks and Recreation. Websites appear to be the most preferred method for residents and tourists to use as a resource for information about parks and recreation. Determine what information will be placed on the website. This could include a range of topics that could be added over time such as:
 - Parks and recreation facilities and addresses. Park site maps. Linkage to MapQuest or other online navigation tool for directions. Rules and regulations.
 - Contact information for sports leagues; arts, cultural and historic organizations; schools and school-related facilities and programs.
 - Information that connects recreation with open space efforts, trails, historic and cultural sites and activities, and other related efforts.
 - Information on accessibility of facilities and programs.
 - Shared calendars of events sponsored by the municipalities; schools; regional and community organizations; county, state, and national park partners; tourism agencies; fire companies; and others.
 - Information about registration and permits for facility use.
 - Registration for programs along with the option for payment by credit card.
 - Reservations for facilities.
 - Information to support and advance volunteerism related to parks and recreation.
 - Parks and Recreation Boards meeting dates, agendas, reports, and special features.
 - Benefits of parks and recreation.
 - Testimonials from citizens engaged in recreational activities.
 - Stories about participants involved in parks and recreation.
 - Photographs of people engaged in recreational activities, programs, and events in the Region.
 - Plans related to parks and recreation such as the Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plans; trails plans; park master plans; survey reports; capital improvement programs; open space plans; greenway plans; county and regional plans related to parks, recreation greenways, trails, and heritage areas; and special studies such as economic development, health and wellness, and other related topics.
 - Links to reports and studies that might be of interest to key stakeholders involved with parks, recreation, and open space.

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- Provide links from www.northernfederation.com to the websites of recreation providers, including municipalities, school districts, faith-based institutions, health and wellness groups, and other organizations.
- Promote this website by including the web address in all marketing materials, newsletters, forms, and other materials of the Northern Federation, its municipalities, and partner organizations.

Recommendation 9.3: Continue to use township newsletters to distribute parks and recreation information.

Direct mail newsletters are still a major way to promote parks and recreation to the community and will continue to be of value for the near future. It would be important to use the newsletters to steer people toward the Region’s website for parks and recreation for additional information.

Integrate human interest with newsletter information. Include testimonials, photos, and stories about participants and how they benefit from parks and recreation in the newsletters instead of only providing schedule information. Such an approach will help to motivate citizens to go to the website and find opportunities of how to join in programs or use facilities.

Include information on how parks and recreation benefits the community. This can be increased property values, cost savings from and conservation vs. development, environmental benefits of a tree planting program, how families build strong bonds through recreation, and so on.

Recommendation 9.4: Enhance the Northern Federation’s relationship with the news media.

Outlets such as newspapers – whether print or online – and radio provide additional ways to get the word out to the public on parks and recreation.

- Continue to create public interest stories about parks and recreation to take to the local newspapers for publication.
- Aim to get Philadelphia market television and radio coverage for the major events such as the Iron Tour.

Recommendation 9.5: Explore the use of social media to share information.

Recognize that Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media are the preferred method of communicating by the Millennial Generation (born after 1989). Interviews with youth support this concept. It is important for the Region to look ahead in serving upcoming generations.

Form an Advisory Group of youth and others with expertise in the use of social media to advise the Region on increasing public awareness about parks and recreation through social media.

Consider developing an “App” for smart phones for parks and recreation in Northern Chester County. Work with another organization such as the Schuylkill Highlands in developing this since it is a large-scale effort. Focus on parks and recreation facilities, including trails, as the first application.

Strategies and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness

Recommendation 9.6: Encourage individuals, families, and small groups of friends to experience the natural, cultural, and recreational assets of Northern Chester County.

Retaining the scenic, rural character and peaceful way of life in Northern Chester County is of paramount importance. While increasing public awareness, visitation, and use of special destinations (such as Parkerford Tavern, the Schuylkill River Trail, the parks, and Hopewell Big Woods) is important, traditional tourism that targets throngs of people and suggests hotels, motels, franchise restaurants and other Anywhere, USA, development is not appropriate for this region. Instead, marketing should invite residents to experience recreational, natural, and cultural places of interest and activities that they would not normally visit as part of their routine lives and usual destinations. The concept is akin to being a “tourist in your own town.”

- Direct Marketing of Recreation, Heritage, and Conservation Destinations to Families and Small Groups. Tourism in this area should not be designed to attract busloads of people, but rather small groups of people that would arrive by individual car. The goal would be to get such visitors to spend a day or stay overnight and spend money in the local economy for food, lodging, products, gifts, art, and products unique to the Region, in municipalities that desire to use regional visitation to support and retain local businesses.
- Consider how to Brand the Northern Chester County Region with a Unique Identity. Use the unique characteristics and features of the area, determined in the July 2010 branding exercise, including:
 - Schuylkill Highlands
 - Hopewell Big Woods
 - Iron and Steel Heritage
 - Revolutionary War: the Story Before Washington’s Winter in Valley Forge
 - Open Spaces, Historic Places, and Hidden Treasures
 - Scenic Beauty
 - Historic, Living Landscape (similar to the Revolutionary War era).

If no single identity emerges, consider partnering with a larger related effort, such as the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative.

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Chapter 8: Strategies and Recommendations for Management and Financing

The Northern Federation exemplifies the benefits of partnerships through its nearly 40-year history of successful planning and land conservation efforts. Volunteerism and collaboration are the lynchpins of community parks and recreation in the Region. The nine municipalities are relatively small communities that have commensurately small staffs and budgets. Each municipality is too small to provide an independent public parks and recreation system. But together, and along with other public and private sector partners, the Region is large enough to be able to offer a parks and recreation system to serve people of all ages, year-round, with a wide range of opportunities, facilities, and services.

This chapter synthesizes challenges and opportunities identified in the inventory and assessment reports (*Appendices*) and presents recommendations under three Blueprint Strategies:

Strategy 10: Organize a regional commission to coordinate the development and delivery of parks, recreation, trails, and open space services.

Strategy 11: Increase operating and capital support for parks, recreation, trails, and open space.

Strategy 12: Leverage the knowledge, skills, and resources of partner organizations that share the Region's core values.

CHALLENGES

This Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan focuses heavily on recommendations that require a high degree of activity, organization, and management. Through good fortune, the generous spirit of volunteers, and the support of key stakeholders, parks are in place, events and activities are happening, and planning continues in many varied parks and recreation efforts from trails to park master plans and school-parks. However, the Region has reached the size and critical level of effort in which the fragmented efforts of many providers cannot expand and improve independently. Partnerships and multi-municipal collaboration are necessary for everything from efficiency and cost savings to being competitive for grant funding to providing more and better public service. Instituting a formal organized approach to partnerships led by the multi-municipal coalition, the Federation, appears to be a sound direction. To implement this plan, some paid staff is necessary to carry out daily functions of partnership-building and plan implementation, freeing volunteers to carry out major projects and initiatives.

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OPPORTUNITIES

The Northern Federation, nine municipalities, three school districts, major conservancies and land trusts, dozens of community organizations, and a host of interested citizens came together in a public conversation about how to work together in providing parks, recreation, greenways, trails, and preserving open space. While there are well over 100 organizations with partnerships under way or with potential for parks, recreation, and open space progress through joint efforts in Northern Chester County, it is essential to focus on several crucial partnerships that, if successful, will make all other partnerships possible. These crucial partners include:

1. the Federation’s municipal partners organizing for the planning, development and operation of parks, recreation, and open space;
2. the Owen J. Roberts, Downingtown Area, and Phoenixville Area School Districts to advance the school-park concept;
3. the sports leagues, Downingtown Area Recreation Commission and Phoenixville Recreation Department for development and maintenance of the major recreation facilities most in need—athletic fields
4. the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation and Phoenixville Community Foundation for active, healthy living;
5. Hopewell Big Woods, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, and Chester County for conservation;
6. the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiatives Program for tourism and economic development; and

While there are a host of other important organizations that are involved in partnership efforts, the work involved with the major partners mandates a strong and specific focus.

Strategy 10: Organize a Regional Commission to coordinate the development and delivery of parks, recreation, trails, and open space services.

Several management approaches to service delivery are available to the region—each with its own benefits to the municipalities and to the region’s residents. The range of options could be viewed as a progression of an increasingly cooperative and collaborative partnership.

Recommendation 10.1 Establish a Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission.

Five options for parks, recreation, and open space were developed for consideration as a management structure for a regional parks, recreation, and open space system. These are shown in *Table 5 of Appendix 7, Organization, Management, and Financing*, on page A7-15. Based upon the ideas and concerns of the participants involved in the planning process, this plan recommends formal

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regionalization – a Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission – for recreation planning, programs, and services. Alternatively, naming the Commission as the Federation Park, Recreation, and Open Space Commission would draw upon the organizations successful and respected reputation.

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission would operate as a volunteer organization. Its purpose would be to plan, direct, and evaluate the formation of a regional parks, recreation, and open space system in Northern Chester County. Its main focus would be on the implementation of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. Park ownership and maintenance would continue as an individual municipal function.

- 1) Determine the composition of the commission. It is suggested that the commission members include each municipality, each school district and the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities. This would make a 13-member board. Each member organization would appoint a representative and a designated alternate, and hold one vote. Municipal representatives would preferably comprise a parks and recreation board member, open space board member, or an elected official. It is important to ensure that a broad range of interests is represented on the Commission including conservation, recreation and sports.
- 2) Have the respective entities appoint the members to staggered terms of office.
- 3) Determine an organizational framework to establish the roles, responsibilities, and methods for decision-making. Consider how decisions will be made in serving the Region as a whole while supporting the needs of the sub-regions for active recreation facility planning, development and operation. If outside assistance is needed, consider applying for a Recreation and Parks Technical Assistance Program (RecTAP) grant of \$3,500 with no match required, or a Peer Grant of \$10,000 with a \$1,000 match required, to assist in this matter.
- 4) Develop a one-year action plan defining the projects, roles, schedule, and resources based upon the goal of implementing the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.
- 5) Determine a budget for the commission based on the one-year action plan and the formula that sets for the contributions by the partners.
- 6) Evaluate progress at the end of one year and determine whether the commission is ready to formalize their relationship, e.g., with an Intergovernmental Agreement, and proceed in planning year two. Evaluation should address plan implementation and commission roles and functions and include input from the commission as well as the partnership organizations.
 - Evaluate the current opportunities and emerging needs in parks, recreation, and open space.
 - Analyze the previous year's accomplishments and indicate reasons for progress or lack of it.
 - Determine if staffing is needed. Assess the potential for a Circuit Rider.
 - Develop a plan of action for the next fiscal year.

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Recommendation 10.2: Consider addressing sports facilities through sub-regions.

In terms of the regional planning, development and maintenance of sports facilities, the Region is especially complex. The complexity is due to the fact that residents of the nine municipalities are served by 15 athletic leagues with 26 divisions covering seven sports. Only two leagues have their own facilities; the rest schedule use of public and private fields. Some leagues feed the athletic programs of the three school districts and reflect participant preference to play with others they know. In addition, residents of East Pikeland and West Pikeland have access to professionally-led community recreation programs through the Phoenixville Recreation Department and Downingtown Area Recreation Consortium respectively, while residents of the remaining municipalities have had more limited programs offerings largely provided by volunteer and private organizations.

Background

A review of league service areas, player participation by municipality, and school district service areas found two sub-regions in the Northern Chester County area: East Nantmeal, East Coventry, South Coventry, North Coventry, East Vincent, and Warwick in the northwestern area and East Pikeland, West Pikeland and West Vincent in the southeastern area. While West Vincent is in the Owen J. Roberts School District, its residents primarily play in recreational leagues that operate outside of this school district. Of the 4,050 registered players in the sports leagues serving in the Region, players are nearly evenly split between the two sub-regions. Table 8-1, Possible Sub-Regions for Sports Facility Planning, Development and Use, presents the two possible sub-regions according to municipalities, participation, school districts, leagues and recreation providers.

Table 8-1 Possible Sub-Regions for Sports Facility Planning, Development and Use

Sub-Region	Participants	Municipalities	Leagues (Predominant)	Recreation Program Provider
Northwestern	2,030	East Nantmeal, East Coventry, South Coventry, North Coventry, East Vincent, Warwick	Coventry Little League, Coventry Soccer, Coventry Youth Lacrosse, Coventry Girls Basketball, Norchester Red Knights, NYAA, SFYAL, Wildcats Football	Volunteer parks and recreation boards
Southeastern	2,020	East Pikeland, West Pikeland, West Vincent	DARC, GEYA, KYAL, LYA, NYAA, Phoenixville Baseball,	Phoenixville Recreation Dept., DARC

Source: Toole Recreation Planning

It is important to note important nuances reflected in *Table 8.1*. The leagues shown for each sub-region are the predominant leagues for the Region, however there is some crossover of players. Interviews and focus groups found that citizens are oriented to their leagues, school districts and community recreation program providers. People like to recreate with their neighbors, schoolmates and friends. Sustaining these social patterns while expanding sports facilities and program for all ages will increase recreational activity and foster active, healthy lifestyles.

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Sports facilities would be located as close to home as possible thereby making facility use more convenient resulting in more use, more feasible bicycle and pedestrian distances, and thus less driving and environmental impact. Facilities would be configured to serve people where they want to play thereby enhancing a sense of community.

The analysis of sports field needs determined that the following facilities are needed:

- 19 diamond fields for youth
- 13 rectangular fields for youth
- 4 diamond fields for adults
- 4 rectangular fields for adults

Based upon the nearly equal level of participation in the two sub-regions, the facilities needed in each sub-region would also be about equal. The northwestern region would need 12 diamond fields and nine rectangular fields. The southeastern region would need 11 diamond fields and eight rectangular fields.

An advantage of this configuration is that it will enable all municipalities to compete for grant funding by collaborating in a joint application. By partnering within the sub-regions, the municipal partners and school districts can ensure that their resources are maximized, facilities are not duplicated unnecessarily, and operating costs are streamlined.

Recommendations

1. Consider forming two sub-regions for active recreation facility planning purposes. Sub-regions are common in large parks and recreation systems for efficient and effective service.
 - Northwest Sub-Region: East Nantmeal, East Coventry, South Coventry, North Coventry, East Vincent, and Warwick
 - Southeast Sub-Region: East Pikeland, West Pikeland and West Vincent
2. Plan the needed additional 40 sports fields according the sub-regional needs.
3. Planning for the development and operation of sports facilities needs to include representatives of municipal government, sports program providers (leagues and recreation providers), and school districts working together in a positive and collaborative fashion. Together, these partners can accomplish what no one entity could do on its own.
4. Consider locating one sports complex in each sub-region.
5. Advance the concept of School-Parks throughout Northern Chester County in the three school districts of Owen J. Roberts, Phoenixville and Downingtown.
6. West Pikeland should continue to be a partner in DARC for sports and other recreation programs, and the Federation of Northern Chester County for other services and facility improvements supported by this plan, including networking and partnership development.

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7. East Pikeland should continue to be a partner in the Federation of Northern Chester County for parks, recreation, open space, greenways, trails and other related functions. East Pikeland could also consider opening discussions with the Phoenixville Area Recreation Department regarding the provision of recreation services to East Pikeland. The residents are already participating in these programs. The Department has re-organized and staffed recreation operations since East Pikeland withdrew from this partnership five years ago. This could include the exploration of the services to be provided, funding, and most importantly, regular reporting of participation by township residents and other benefits to East Pikeland as a result of the partnership.

Recommendation 10.3: Consider staff to support coordination and/or expansion of services.

As the members carry out their work, the commission could decide when to hire staff. That could be sooner or later depending on how the work goes along with plan implementation and the capacity of the volunteers to support progress. When that time comes, this plan recommends that a Circuit Rider be considered. A Circuit Rider is the name of a PADCNr grant-funded position for regional parks and recreation management. This position would be a Recreation Coordinator for Northern Chester County. Over the four-year course of the Circuit Rider grant, PADCNr would fund half of the salary of the Recreation Coordinator – 100 percent in year one, 75 percent in year two, 50 percent in year three, and 25 percent in year four – to be matched with local funds. This gives the Region four years to establish the system as well as begin implementing the plan.

The Recreation Coordinator would serve the Region by planning, marketing, directing, coordinating, and evaluating parks and recreation programs. The Recreation Coordinator would also help advance other partnership recommendations. It may be possible to secure the matching funds from a partnering organization in the Region.

Recommendation 10.4: Establish a central clearinghouse for technical information about parks, recreation, and open space.

Since parks, recreation, and open space initiatives in Northern Chester County are largely implemented by volunteer Parks and Recreation boards, there is a higher need for convenient access to technical resources, funding sources, case studies, service standards, best practices, and so on. Armed with useful information, volunteers can then work toward the advancement of parks and recreation goals. Mandatory Dedication of Parkland was just one example of the type of information that park and recreation board members were interested in. Several informative websites, plans, reports, and studies have been listed in *Appendix 13, Tools and Resources*, but these are just the tip of the iceberg. Additional research and information sharing would greatly benefit volunteers and ultimately the Region's residents.

1. Evaluate the capacity of organizations in the Northern Chester County region to support an information clearinghouse.
2. Determine the parameters that the clearinghouse will encompass.

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3. Undertake the function and scope of the clearinghouse that can be supported wither regional resources or through a partnership with another organization such as the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation. It is better to have a smaller clearinghouse with a targeted scope that works well rather than an extensive clearinghouse that is irrelevant due to insufficient capacity.

Recommendation 10.5: Actively develop and manage partnerships.

Recognize that partnerships are key components of creating a regional parks, recreation, and open space system and that these partnerships must be managed. The Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Commission cannot undertake everything they would like to do. By focusing a few key partnerships (see Strategy 12) while addressing others to a lesser extent, the commission should be able to get the maximum benefit from partnerships.

1. Develop a strategic plan for partnership development and management.
2. Identify three to five core partnerships that will involve 80 percent of the total time devoted to partnership development.
3. Identify all of the other partners that will get 20 percent of the focus of partnerships.
4. Create a “Friends of the Parks and Trails” organization with an objective of having a Friends organization for every park and trail in Northern Chester County. The Friends groups would serve as advocates, ambassadors, watchdogs, fundraisers, and overall supporters.

Consider making partnership development a primary responsibility of a future Recreation Coordinator.

Strategy 11: Increase operating and capital support for parks, recreation, trails, and open space.

Whether implemented individually, cooperatively, or through joint efforts, a finance strategy is needed to support capital (land and facility) and operational (program and publicity) recommendations. Consider that staff may be needed, if a more intensive level of service is to be attained. A capital and operating finance strategy should assemble a mix of sources—public, private, and individual—to support parks, recreation, trails and open space.

Recommendation 11.1 Adopt a financial support policy that sustains parks and recreation over time.

The policy should address the following components:

- Government Role, explaining that local government can provide (and thus fund) some but not all parks and recreation opportunities independently. Services will require a mix of public and private resources, both human and financial.

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- Revenue Sources, stating that revenues to support parks and recreation need to come from both public and private revenue. This includes taxes, earned income, contractual receipts (leases, rentals) and financial assistance (grants, gifts, donations, bequests).
- Fees and Charges, indicating that parks, recreation facilities, and events that benefit the general public will continue to be free of charge; facilities that require a higher level of maintenance for specific uses such as sports and programs that benefit the participants individually would be supported through a mix of user fees and volunteer support.
- Capital Donations, outlining criteria and procedures to ensure that any significant donation can be supported over time, whether that is through municipal support, private support, or a mix of public and private support. Significant donations could include land, trails, recreation facilities such as ball fields, playgrounds, pavilions, park benches, etc.

Recommendation 11.2 Increase municipal investment in the daily operation of parks and recreation to enhance the quality of life.

Work toward aligning the municipal operating budgets for parks and recreation with the \$28.78 per capita annual average of Pennsylvania municipalities.² Expand budgets over time as additional facilities and services are provided.

Recommendation 11.3 Keep park maintenance expenditures a function of each individual municipality.

As small rural communities with limited staff, workload and cost tracking of park maintenance tasks are not always performed. Since three out of every four dollars of the lifetime cost of a park is in maintenance, tracking maintenance is important. The conundrum is that it is relatively easier to get funds to buy land and build facilities than it is to get funding for operations and management. Often new parks are added and recreation facilities built, but no additional staff or budgets are added to support their maintenance (see *Recommendation 11.4*). As a rule of thumb, the municipalities could work toward tracking maintenance costs and an average per acre maintenance cost for active areas of \$1,500 - \$3,000 per acre, and \$250 to \$500 per acre for passive parks. While continuing to maintain parks individually, the townships as a region can develop an approach to park maintenance by exploring this municipal function as a network in which staff share information, training, joint purchasing, and perhaps maintenance software that could be used by the Northern Chester County municipalities.

Recommendation 11.4 Consider a Maintenance Impact Statement to evaluate future operating costs when planning capital improvements.

To ensure that the municipalities or the Region can support a planned capital improvement, it is essential to consider maintenance, operations, and funding during the planning process.

² Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources and Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society, *Pennsylvania Parks & Recreation Budget and Salary Survey*, 2002. Pennsylvania Department of Conservation, Harrisburg, PA.

MAINTENANCE IMPACT STATEMENT

Purpose

1. To assess the capital and operating impact of a significant proposed project or a major program and its effects on other parks and recreation facilities and services.
2. To support an informed decision about feasibility and viability of the proposed project.

Method

1. Determine Capital cost of the proposed project.
2. Determine Operating costs of the proposed project. Include:
 - Number of staff hours required, and cost of staff hours
 - Volunteer support (any indirect costs)
 - Cost of materials and supplies
 - Miscellaneous costs
3. Determine impact on other facilities and programs with the implementation of the proposed project.
 - Will the project/service require funds needed for other facilities/programs?
 - Will the project/service require staff time needed for other services/programs?
 - How will the project impact the quality of service in Northern Chester County?
 - Will the project require resources from the community and are they available?
4. Determine revenue sources.
 - Municipal funds – within current budget
 - Municipal funds – additional appropriation
 - Non-tax funds to be generated from the project/program
 - Grants, Donations

Decision-Making

Based upon the above information, does the region (or a municipality) have the resources to develop and sustain this project?

Recommendation 11.5 Consider capital improvement programs for each municipality.

Every municipality should consider having a five- to seven-year capital improvement program for parks, recreation, and trails. The first year of the program would go into the current fiscal year's budget. Having a five- to seven-year plan enables municipalities to undertake projects in an organized manner rather than as a reaction to a crisis, urgent need, or public pressure. Allocating a designated amount of funding annually and regularly facilitates planning. For example, East Vincent Township allocates about \$50,000 annually for capital improvements. Other funding sources can include the Chester County Open Space Program, fees-in-lieu of dedication of parkland, bond issues, loans, grants, and partnerships.

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Recommendation 11.6 Consider pooling a dedicated amount of funding for regional parks and recreation efforts.

This would be considered as part of the per capita investment level. This funding could be used to support projects and programs that are beyond the capacity of volunteers to undertake. Part-time staff or contractors for a specific project could undertake specific tasks and actions to implement the recommendations of this plan.

A regional funding formula that strives to equalize the responsibilities and the benefits of parks and recreation is crucial. This is especially important in Northern Chester County where some municipalities provide multiple parks and recreation facilities and others provide few to date. Regional parks and recreation system contributions begin at a few dollars per capita. Determining this formula requires discussion and negotiation to reach a fee is fair and equitable.

One way to test this at limited cost to the municipalities is to secure a Circuit Rider Grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to hire a parks and recreation professional to work on the implementation of this plan. See description under *Recommendation 10.2*.

Consider undertaking a major regional parks and recreation improvement program as a way to demonstrate that this plan is being implemented. The annual contribution per municipality would need to be determined. This could be for ball fields, a sports complex, trails, and other facilities. These projects and the joint investment would be particularly competitive for grant funding.

Strategy 12: Leverage the knowledge, skills, and resources of partner organizations that share the region's core values.

While citizen volunteers are leading parks, recreation, and open space at the municipal level, other organizations are working toward similar goals. Local government, school districts, and private organizations can accomplish more together than they can independently.

Recommendation 12.1 Advance the Concept of School-Parks with the Owen J. Roberts School District.

The school-park partnership can grow from the sharing of information, programs, services, and maintenance to the development and operations of facilities that serve recreational and educational purposes through joint use agreements. The region's participation in discussions of future school district improvements, i.e., its strategic plan, can provide maximum benefit to residents of all ages for both educational and recreational use. Therefore, families with or without children will benefit from educational experiences. Collaboration on school sites may make cost savings possible in the construction and operation of educational/recreational facilities. Municipalities and school districts may be able to pool resources to develop facilities neither could afford independently. See specific

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guidance on advancing the school-park concept and description of joint use under Recommendation 2.1.

Recommendation 12.2 Foster active, healthy lifestyles with the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation.

Public recreation is public health. Recreation is an important tool in fixing the national health crisis stemming from obesity, which results from a lack of physical activity and poor nutrition. The U.S. Surgeon General has stated that communities can offer an important public health services by providing facilities such as trails and parks close to home, along with programs and activities for citizens to participate in physical activity for fun and fitness. The Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation and Northern Chester County are ideal partners in pursuing their common interest in fostering active, healthy lifestyles in the Region.

1. Continue to explore the potential of a regional circuit rider for Northern Chester County and a mega-region circuit rider for active, healthy living.
2. Continue to work together in projects and programs to engage citizens in physical activity through recreation.
3. Continue to pursue funding from the Foundation to help support recreation and wellness in Northern Chester County. Focus on facility improvements using Foundation funding to match other grants.

Recommendation 12.3 Consider strategic marketing and development of special destinations and experiences with conservation and tourism partners.

As described under Recommendation 9.6, traditional tourism is not appropriate for this region. However, the Region could benefit economically from greater local and niche awareness and use of recreational, natural, and cultural places of interest and activities. Efforts are underway by conservation partners to promote recreation and tourism as appropriate economic development. The region will need to continue to participate in these discussions and developments to promote sensitive development, management, and use of the landscape.

1. Continue to work with the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscapes Initiative on appropriate economic development.
 - Focus on heritage outdoor recreation tourism.
 - Identify projects that can be undertaken in a specific time frame along with the roles and responsibilities of each organization.
 - Apply for funding from the grant program offered by the Schuylkill Highlands. Consider funding for signage in the Region as a high priority.
2. Work with the Convention and Visitors Centers to increase appropriate tourism.
 - Work with the Brandywine Conference and Visitors Bureau on folding Northern Chester County into its promotional activities at a higher level.

Chapter 8

- Work with the Valley Forge Convention and Visitors Bureau to direct visitors from Valley Forge National Historic Park to related sites and programs in Northern Chester County.

Recommendation 12.4: Continue to work with sports leagues in the planning, development, operation, and maintenance of athletic fields.

Additional ball fields and game courts are needed to provide sufficient facilities for youth sports and adult sports that are now not addressed at all. Community sports groups can be valuable allies in undertaking the goal of providing additional facilities as well as taking care of facilities that are already in place.

1. Consider establishing a Northern Chester County Regional Sports Association. This would be an umbrella group for community sports leagues. However, each league would continue to manage its own operation. The umbrella organization would focus on issues and opportunities that are regional in nature.
2. Hold an annual sports summit for the purpose of identifying and addressing issues and opportunities.
3. Involve the sports organizations in the planning of future athletic facilities.
4. Consider partnerships in sports fields in which there could be funding from both public and private sources.
5. Work with the leagues in figuring out ways of maintaining sports facilities in a fair, equitable, and high quality manner.

Recommendation 12.5: Support and expand partnerships in conservation, trails, and open space preservation.

Many major organizations have invested their time, money and expertise in Northern Chester County in order to preserve its historic resources, scenic beauty, and outdoor recreation opportunities. These partnerships will become more important than ever as fiscal challenges continue.

1. Continue to work with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association on river access, trail development, advertising, and programs.
2. Continue to partner with the Chester County Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation department on open space, trails, and recreation.
3. Continue to partner with conservation and trail organizations in the Region, including the French & Pickering Conservation Trust, Green Valleys Association, the Natural Lands Trust, The Nature Conservancy, The Brandywine Conservancy, and the Bicycle Coalition of Philadelphia.

The conservation and trail organizations are instrumental partners in preserving natural and scenic resources as well as in providing trails to create community connections. Consider creating a sub-committee(s) of the commission for conservation and trail groups. At least annually, interview these organizations to determine and help support their goals and projects.



In preparing this plan, we've developed a vision and strategies to foster active, healthy living and environmental conservation among the residents of our region. Our discussion among the municipal and project partners and the public has generated interest and enthusiasm for recreation and conservation efforts that integrate our values for community, heritage, natural beauty, health, and sustainability. We now must maintain that momentum as we implement our plan.

The steps of implementation are challenging but not insurmountable. Some steps are significant and will require major investment, while others are smaller and can be readily undertaken by volunteer efforts. The number of communities and topics adds complexity to each recommendation, but multi-municipal collaboration and focused partnerships can help streamline efforts. Working collaboratively, our service can greatly surpass that of separate actions, benefitting citizens now and leaving a legacy of parks, recreation and open space for future generations.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES BY TOPIC

The intent for implementation is to lay out a pragmatic and achievable course of action that also allows for more progressive actions should the opportunities emerge. The 63 recommendations in Chapters 5 through 8 include a broad range of land and facility, policy and program, and management, and financing actions. Tables 9-1 through 9-6 provide direction for organization and start-up.

For each recommendation:

- The timeframe column is used to order each table. Ongoing and short term (2012-2014) actions are listed first, shaded in green, followed by mid term (2015-2018) and long term (2019+) projects and initiatives, shaded in yellow.
- Partners are identified as lead partners, those with primary responsibility for organizing and initiating the recommendation, and support partners, those with a supporting role of advocacy, technical knowledge, associated action, or other resources.
- Estimated cost ranges are based on recent PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program grants for similar projects, as well as recent planning, construction costs in Northern Chester County.
- Page numbers to the detailed recommendations are provide for quick reference.

Table 9-1 Implementation Strategy for Parks

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
Parks			
3.1: Acquire and develop additional park land for sports fields for both community sports leagues and general community recreation. Pg 44	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation (sub-regions) and Sports Leagues for development of sports complexes Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for fields in community parks Municipal Park and Recreation Board and Municipal Officials for securing private fields in their respective townships through written agreement	Volunteer effort to identify, evaluate, and select a candidate sports complex site for detailed feasibility study; feasibility studies prepared by a professional park and recreation consultant Estimated value of \$25,000 to \$50,000 per sports complex master site plan; estimated value of \$8 to \$10 million for construction, though costs will vary by site and facilities.
		Sports Leagues for fields in community parks	
1.4: Acquire additional parkland or fees-in-lieu of parkland (through mandatory dedication of parkland ordinance. Pg 38 Steps: 1. Review recommended standards and provisions for parkland, open space and trails. 2. Prepare a revised standards and provisions 3. Submit revision to Municipal Planning Commission	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions to update mandatory dedication of parkland (and fee-in-lieu) standards Municipal Officials to enforce standards	Volunteer effort with review by Municipal Solicitor Nominal cost of for required public meeting advertisements prior to adoption of ordinance amendment
		Federation (including Municipal Planning Commissions and Park and Recreation Boards) for compilation of model standards	

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
1.6: Present parks as a unified system. <i>Pg 40</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation for signage design; consider Schuylkill River Greenway signage system as basis or model Municipal Public Works/Park Maintenance for comparison of park maintenance practices	Sign design template led by volunteer effort, supported by staff Sign design (template) prepared by a professional designer Estimated value of \$15,000 to \$30,000 for regional sign template development service Nominal cost of Park Maintenance coordination by staff
		N/A	
2.1: Develop school-parks. <i>Pg 41</i> Steps: 1. Organize Federation School-Park Sub-Committee and gain representation on the School District Strategic Facilities Plan implementation committee(s) 2. Conduct a field visit to Springfield-Greene County, Missouri by partners 3. Revitalize an existing school property as a school-park; program indoor and outdoor facilities for after school recreation and learning 4. Develop new school-parks, as needed	Short Term, 2012-2014 to Long Term (2019+)	School Districts, Federation, Municipal Officials, Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for land acquisition, planning, development, programming, maintenance	Volunteer and staff effort to organize sub-committee and field visit Estimated cost of field visit to Springfield MO: \$4,000 - \$5,000 for 4-5 officials from Northern Chester County Prepared by a professional architect/landscape architect consultant Estimated value of \$15,000 to \$60,000 per school-park revitalization master site plan; development/construction costs will vary by site and facilities.
1.7: Encourage special interest groups to self-serve. <i>Pg 41</i>	Ongoing	Municipal Park and Recreation Boards and Municipal Officials for response to requests	N/A

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
<p>1.1: Enhance existing parks as unique recreational destinations. Pg 31</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individual park and facility evaluation of 14 parks to assess current facility use, safety conditions, and ADA accessibility; invite public participation 2. Recommendations to address issues and add facilities and amenities; invite public participation 3. Construction of solutions and enhancements; invite public participation in construction 	<p>Mid Term, 2015-2018</p>	<p>Municipal Park and Recreation Boards to perform/initiate park and facility evaluation and enhancement recommendations</p> <p>Municipal Officials for local funding</p>	<p>Possibly performed as a volunteer/staff effort by Municipal Park and Recreation Board, Municipal Engineer/Landscape Architect knowledgeable in park design and current ADA standards, and Certified Playground Safety Inspector; track volunteer and staff hours as potential in-kind services to match external funding</p> <p>Preferably performed by or in conjunction with a professional park design consultant</p> <p>Estimated value of \$3,500 to \$25,000 per professional park assessment and recommendation; enhancement costs will vary by park</p>
		<p>Federation for pursuit of concurrent professional park design services and/or external funding</p>	
<p>1.2: Master-plan and develop future parks. Pg 35</p> <p>Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Park planning/design. Consider “bundling” several park master plans into one planning project for efficiency, time and budget savings; invite public participation. 2. Development/construction of facilities and amenities; invite public participation in construction 	<p>Mid Term, 2015-2018 to Long Term, 2019+</p>	<p>Municipal Park and Recreation Boards to initiate park planning and development</p> <p>Municipal Officials for local funding</p>	<p>Prepared by a professional park design consultant</p> <p>Estimated value of \$25,000 to \$80,000 per park master site plan</p> <p>Estimated value of \$300,000 to \$5+ million for construction (recent 15-acre community parks average \$1.5 million); costs will vary by site conditions and planned facilities.</p>
		<p>Federation for pursuit of concurrent professional park design services and/or external funding for planning and /or development</p>	

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
1.5: Explore support for an indoor recreation center. <i>Pg 40</i> Steps: 1. Work with the school districts to maximize the use of school facilities for recreation during after-school hours. 2. If and when existing facilities no longer meet program needs, undertake a feasibility study for an indoor recreation center. 3. Continue to explore partnerships such as with the Freedom Valley YMCA/YWCA as this long term action is considered.	Long Term, 2019+	Federation (possibly a sub-regional initiative)	Performed by a professional recreation center consultant
		School Districts, Health and Wellness Partners, Sports Leagues, YMCA/YWCA	Estimated value of \$40,000 to \$60,000 per professional feasibility indoor recreation study
		Health and Wellness Partners, Sports Leagues	Estimated value of \$4 to \$18 million for construction

Table 9-2 Implementation Strategy for Trails

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
4.3: Complete, or support completion of, planned regional trails. <i>Pg 47</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014	<p>Federation and Municipal Officials for trail advocacy, where regional trail development is led by others</p> <p>Federation and Municipal Officials for trail completion for regional trails planned in the NCC trail network plan</p>	<p>Volunteer effort and nominal cost for advocacy efforts</p> <p>Estimated value of \$121,000 per mile of trail acquisition (@ \$50,000/acre and 20' right-of-way)</p> <p>Estimated value of \$13,500 per mile of trail easement (@ \$5,500/easement acre and 20' right-of-way)</p> <p>Estimated value of \$40,000 to \$400,000 per mile of trail construction; costs vary widely by trail surface, width, location, needed structures, signage, and amenities</p>
4.4: Improve and expand existing trails and networks. <i>Pg 47</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014	<p>Federation Trails Committee and Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for planning improvements and extensions to existing trails and networks</p> <p>Municipal Officials for funding</p>	<p>Volunteer efforts for trail improvement planning</p> <p>Trail extensions designed by a professional trail plan consultant</p> <p>See Recommendation 4.3 for trail construction cost ranges</p>
		<p>French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust for experience, knowledge of standards and best practices; Trail User Groups for planning participation</p>	

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
4.5: Strengthen municipal mandatory dedication of parkland provisions to address trail development. <i>Pg 48</i> <i>Steps:</i> 1. Identify desired trail corridors 2. Where land development proposals cross desired corridors, request trail land dedication and development (per standards) to fulfill the mandatory dedication provision.	Short Term, 2012-2014	Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions to update mandatory dedication of parkland (and fee-in-lieu) standards; Municipal Officials to enforce standards	Volunteer effort with review by Municipal Solicitor See also Recommendation 1.4 for mandatory dedication of parkland updates
		Federation (including Planning Commissions and Park and Recreation Boards) for compilation of model standards	Nominal cost of for required public meeting advertisements prior to adoption
4.8: Sustain private social trails through partnerships and stewardship. <i>Pg 49</i>	Ongoing	Individual Trail Users and Trail User Groups for landowner outreach	N/A
4.6: Present trails as a unified network. <i>Pg 48</i> See also Recommendation 1.6 for compatible recommendation	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation Trails Committee for signage design Municipal Public Works/Park Maintenance for comparison of trail maintenance practices	Sign design (template) prepared by a professional designer working with local volunteers Estimated value of \$5,000 to \$15,000 for regional sign template development service Nominal cost of trail maintenance coordination by staff
4.1: Establish a Regional Trails Committee. <i>Pg 46</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation for organization of the Federation Trails Committee	Volunteer effort to organize committee
		Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia and the Schuylkill River Greenway Association	

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
4.2: Prepare a Northern Chester County trail network plan. <i>Pg 46</i> Steps: 1. Determine scope of trail plan: a. regional (multi-municipal) trails only; regional and local trails; b. off-road trails only; on- and off-road trails (combine with Rec 4.9) c. connection opportunities vs. initial feasibility criteria 2. Hire trail plan consultant 3. Prepare plan To be followed by individual trail feasibility studies and master plans for trail development and maintenance	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation Trails Committee for regional trails planning	Prepared by a professional trail plan consultant
		French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Schuylkill Highlands, Schuylkill River Heritage Area, Trail User Groups, Chester County for planning participation	Estimated value of \$50,000 to \$80,000 for off-road trail network only; \$70,000 to \$90,000 for on- and off-road trail network
4.9: Prepare a bicycle network plan. <i>Pg 49</i> See also Recommendation 4.2 above for compatible recommendation; consider joining both into one planning effort.	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation Trails Committee for planning Federation, Municipal Officials, and PennDOT for subsequent development	Prepared by a professional trail plan consultant; traffic engineering review recommended
		Municipal Public Works and PennDOT's Chester County Maintenance Department for planned maintenance	Estimated value of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for bicycle plan only; \$70,000 to \$90,000 for on- and off-road trail network

Table 9-3 Implementation Strategy for Programs

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
5.1: Focus programs in two areas: active healthy living and cultural heritage. <i>Pg 50</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation for identification of program opportunities and potential providers	Staff and volunteer effort for programming of school-parks and financing administration (program fees can generate revenue to offset costs)
		School Districts, Recreation Program Providers, Health and Wellness partners	
5.2: Expand adult lifelong learning programs. <i>Pg 50</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation for identification of potential topics and speakers Owen J. Roberts School District/ Adult Evening School for programming	Volunteer effort for planning OJR/AES staff effort for programming
		Municipal Park and Recreation Boards, Municipal Historical Commissions and Societies, Heritage partners, Health and Wellness partners	
5.6: Coordinate special events and activities. <i>Pg 51</i> <i>Steps</i> 1. Identify events and activities with similar target audiences 2. Determine which events and activities could be synergistic if programmed and/or advertised concurrently or in series	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation and Event/ Activity Sponsors such as the historical commissions and societies, conservation organizations, fire companies, and others.	Volunteer effort for sponsor coordination
5.3: Continue community sports league summits. <i>Pg 50</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for organizing annual Sports League Summit	Volunteer effort for organization and documentation of summits
5.4: Engage youth in the region’s natural and cultural heritage. <i>Pg 50</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation for identification of youth program opportunities and youth services in support of program development	Volunteer effort

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
Consider appointing two high school students as representatives on the Federation PROS Commission (or interim committee)		Municipal Park and Recreation Boards, Municipal Historical Commissions and Societies, School Districts, Recreation Program Providers, Health and Wellness partners	
5.5: Address water safety. <i>Pg 51</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation for identification of events and programs with which to integrate water safety instruction	Volunteer/staff effort for program development and program offering
		Health and Wellness partners	
5.7: Link recreation with other community building endeavors. <i>Pg 51</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation (including Municipal Park and Recreation Boards) for outreach to other community organizations; possibly coordinated through an annual planning summit	Volunteer efforts to coordinate opportunities and responsibilities; for example, engage Municipal Planning Commissions in securing trail connections during the land development process and EAC's in identifying priorities for open space protection, resource stewardship demonstration sites, and interpretive sites.

Table 9-4 Implementation Strategy for Open Space Conservation

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
6.1: Adopt a goal of protecting half of the remaining open space in the region. <i>Pg 54</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 to adopt goal	Federation to draft goal as a resolution	
6.2: Establish a region-wide open space committee. <i>Pg 54</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation to organize the Open Space Committee or designate responsibilities and resources	Volunteer effort by Federation for determination of appropriate committee composition (or designee), scope of responsibilities and resource support
		French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valley Association, Natural Lands Trust	
6.5: Use mandatory dedication of parkland provisions to protect open space for passive recreation. <i>Pg 55</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Municipal Officials and Planning Commissions to update mandatory dedication of parkland (and fee-in-lieu) standards; Municipal Officials to enforce standards	Volunteer effort with review by Municipal Solicitor See also Recommendation 1.4 for mandatory dedication of parkland updates
		Federation Open Space Committee (or designee) (including Planning Commissions and Park and Recreation Boards) for compilation of model standards	Nominal cost of for required public meeting advertisements prior to adoption
6.6: Expand existing parks, where practical and as land is available. <i>Pg 55</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation, Municipal Officials and Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for identification, evaluation and acquisition of park adjacent properties	Volunteer effort Estimated value of \$50,000/acre for fee-simple acquisition, or \$5,500/easement acre
7.5: Continue education and	Ongoing	Open Space Committee	Volunteer effort

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
outreach efforts. <i>Pg 57</i>		(or designee)	
		French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valley Association, Natural Lands Trust	
6.7: Determine the need for park and facility lighting on a case-by-case during the master planning process or park review process. <i>Pg 55</i>	Ongoing	Federation and Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for inclusion of lighting discussion in planning processes	Volunteer effort
		Sports Leagues	
7.1: Protect the riverfront. <i>Pg 56</i>	Ongoing	Federation Open Space Committee (or designee) and Municipal Open Space Committees for identification of potential land acquisitions and easements Municipal Officials for acquisitions and easements	Volunteer effort Estimated value of \$50,000/acre for fee-simple acquisition, or \$5,500/easement acre
7.2: Protect the scenic rural interior. <i>Pg 56</i>	Ongoing	Same as 7.1 above	Volunteer effort Estimated value of \$50,000/acre for fee-simple acquisition, or \$5,500/easement acre
7.3: Protect the primary stream corridors. <i>Pg 56</i>	Ongoing	Same as 7.1 above	Volunteer effort Estimated value of \$50,000/acre for fee-simple acquisition, or \$5,500/easement acre
6.3: Establish a region-wide program for open space mapping. <i>Pg 55</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation Open Space Committee (or designee) to develop data tracking and update process	Volunteer and staff effort to coordinate data and mapping requirements Value to be based on data availability, data consistency, and level of effort to achieve a minimum quality product
		Chester County	
6.4: Publicize progress toward the open space goal. <i>Pg 55</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation Open Space Committee (or designee) for preparation and distribution of annual report	Volunteer effort Nominal cost for digital distribution of annual report

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	
8.1: Practice resource management on public lands. <i>Pg 58</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Municipal Open Space Committees and Municipal EACs for identification of appropriate lands Conservation District and Land Conservancies to develop management program and train maintenance staffs Municipal Public Works Departments for property maintenance	Volunteer effort to determine potential projects Project and maintenance costs to vary by site
		French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valley Association, Natural Lands Trust	
8.2: Encourage resource management on private lands. <i>Pg 58</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation Open Space Committee (or designee) and Municipal Open Space Committees and Municipal Officials	Volunteer effort by Federation, staff effort by partners
		French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valley Association, Natural Lands Trust	
7.4: Interpret open space that defines regional character. <i>Pg 57</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018 to Long Term, 2019+	Federation Open Space Committee (or designee) and Municipal Open Space Committees for identification and development of interpretive programs, events, activities, etc.	Volunteer effort to determine potential projects Project development costs to vary

Table 9-5 Implementation Strategy for Public Awareness

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	Recommended
9.3: Continue to use township newsletters to distribute parks and recreation information. <i>Pg 62</i>	Ongoing	Municipal Park and Recreation Boards for home delivery of parks and recreation information	N/A
9.1: Provide a parks and recreation guide for the Northern Chester County region in print and online formats. <i>Pg 60</i> <i>Steps:</i> 1. Gather examples of guides; meet with recreation program providers to learn from their experience 2. Evaluate data types and format 3. Determine minimum and optional data to be collected 4. Collect and compile data consistently 5. Design and produce website and/or print publication; work with local newspapers to print and distribute guide annually Strive to be web-based to avoid printing and distribution costs.	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation for annual data compilation and sponsor financing Private Recreation Providers, Local Newspapers	Volunteer effort to research and compile data and to sell advertising and sponsorships to offset costs Estimated value of \$10,000 budget to seed the project.
9.2: Provide a website for parks and recreation in Northern Chester	Short Term,	Federation for website development and	Prepared or guided by a professional website designer as a paid or pro bono community

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources Recommended
		Support Partners	
County. Pg 60	2012-2014	data maintenance	service Estimated value of \$6,000 to \$10,000 for website design and maintenance plus \$500 annual hosting fee
9.4: Enhance the Northern Federation’s relationship with the news media. Pg 62	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation for outreach to media	Volunteer effort to provide media with timely, accurate information (press releases, invitations to cover events, topics, etc.)
9.6: Encourage individuals, families, and small groups of friends to experience the natural, cultural, and recreational assets of Northern Chester County. Pg 63	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation for branding and marketing initiatives	Prepared by a professional marketing consultant Distributed and promoted by volunteers and Federation staff
9.5: Explore the use of social media to share information. Pg 62	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation for exploration and evaluation of varied social media sources and use	Volunteer (and youth) effort to explore social media formats Volunteer effort or small professional service contract to manage social media accounts

Table 9-6 Implementation Strategy for Management and Finance

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources Recommended
		Support Partners	
10.2: Consider addressing sports facilities through sub-regional organization. <i>Pg 68</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation (northern and southern sub-regions) for the planning and development of sports complexes	Volunteer effort to lead coordination Estimated value of \$25,000 to \$50,000 per master plan for sports fields. Development costs to be determined by master plan
12.4: Continue to work with sports leagues in the planning, development, operation, and maintenance of athletic fields. <i>Pg 76</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation and Sports Leagues for information sharing to facility planning, construction and maintenance	See also Recommendations 3.1 and 10.2 Volunteer efforts in the short term
11.3 Keep park maintenance expenditures a function of each individual municipality. <i>Pg 72</i>	Ongoing	Municipal Public Works Departments to give input to annual municipal budget Municipal Officials to review input prior to budget adoption	Strive to maintain active parks at a rate \$1,500 to \$3,000 per acre for active parks and \$300 to \$500 per acre for natural areas phased in over time.
11.4 Consider a Maintenance Impact Statement to evaluate future operating costs when planning capital improvements. <i>Pg 72</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Federation and Municipal Park and Recreation Boards to evaluate this tool	Municipal staff and volunteer effort
12.1 Advance the Concept of School-Parks with the Owen J. Roberts School District. <i>Pg 75</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014 and Ongoing	Municipal Officials, Municipal Park and Recreation Boards, and School Districts	Cost would vary from volunteer time up to major park and recreation facility development as school parks.
12.2 Foster active, healthy lifestyles with the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation. <i>Pg 75</i>	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation and Pottstown Area Health and Wellness for program and facility development and promotion	Federation/municipal volunteer effort, PAHWF staff effort
12.5: Support and expand partnerships in conservation, trails,	Short Term, 2012-2014	Federation, Federation Trails Committee, and Municipalities for partnered regional	Volunteer effort

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources Recommended
		Support Partners	
and open space preservation. <i>Pg 77</i>	and Ongoing	efforts that are efficient, cost-shared, cost-effective and grant-competitive	
		French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust, Green Valley Association, Natural Lands Trust	
10.5: Actively develop and manage partnerships. <i>Pg 71</i>	Ongoing	Federation and Federation Recreation Coordinator	Volunteer effort in the short term; ultimately a Recreation Coordinator responsibility
11.2 Increase municipal investment in the daily operation of parks and recreation to enhance the quality of life. <i>Pg 72</i>	Ongoing	Municipal Park and Recreation Boards to give input to annual municipal budget and to propose fee structure for programs Municipal Officials to review input and fee structure prior to budget adoption	Volunteer effort
10.1 Establish the Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission. <i>Pg 67</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation for organizing the Commission	Volunteer effort to explore formal organization of Commission Estimated value of \$7,500 to \$10,000 for professional facilitation of Commission feasibility, composition, organizational structure, etc.; consider seeking either a RecTAP grant of \$2,500 or a Peer Study grant of \$10,000 with \$1,000 local match to assist with this effort
10.3: Consider staff to support coordination and/or expansion of services. <i>Pg 70</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018 to Long Term, 2019	Federation to determine appropriate time and conditions to hire staff	Via PA DCNR Circuit Rider grant, estimated value of \$200,000 over four years split among ten partners and matched by PADCNR. Via long term local support, \$45,000 - 50,000 annual salary
		Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation for shared support of staff	
11.1 Adopt a financial support policy that sustains parks and recreation over time. <i>Pg 72</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Federation to request samples from PADCNR and draft a financial policy statement Municipal Officials to review and adopt	Volunteer effort with potential Municipal Solicitor review

Recommendation	Timeframe	Lead Partners	Effort and Resources
		Support Partners	Recommended
11.5 Consider a (five year) capital improvement program for each municipality. <i>Pg 72</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018	Municipal Officials with input from Municipal Park and Recreation Boards	Level of detail and effort to be determined by each municipality and developed by volunteer and staff efforts
11.6 Consider pooling a dedicated amount of funding for regional parks and recreation efforts. <i>Pg 72</i>	Mid Term, 2015-2018 to Long Term, 2019+	Federation, Municipal Officials and School Districts to explore options Federation Recreation Coordinator to foster multi-municipal financing options based on other successes	Volunteer effort to explore precedents, determine if regional pooling is feasible, and if so, propose a mechanism Regional recreation organizations generally dedicate \$3 to \$10 per capita annually to support regional parks and recreation operations. In contrast, individual municipalities spend an average of \$30 in PA and \$65 in the USA.
		School Districts	
10.4: Establish a central clearinghouse for technical information about parks, recreation, and open space. <i>Pg 70</i>	Long Term, 2019+	Federation Recreation Coordinator	Initial volunteer efforts for early gathering of information and resources Ultimately a Recreation Coordinator responsibility
12.3 Consider strategic marketing and development of special destinations and experiences with conservation and heritage partners. <i>Pg 76</i>	Long Term, 2019+	Partners to be determined	Volunteer efforts for informal discussions Professional services recommended for formal marketing study To be determined based upon scope of marketing discussions and plan.

A SHARED RECREATION COORDINATOR AS A LONG TERM OPTION

The findings of the work detailed below revealed that the concept of the Recreation Coordinator Circuit Rider for Northern Chester County would be a cost-effective way to advance the plan implementation. However, many of the participating municipalities were apprehensive about committing to a multi-year program with uncertain outcomes. Steering Committee members indicated that “smaller first steps by volunteers and township staff” was a preferred approach. Once underway, the partners would monitor progress and determine an appropriate time to hire staff. Though not being advanced at the outset, the effort to investigate this concept is documented here for future reference, when the right circumstances, opportunities or need would arise.

See page 26 for Year 2012 Projects and Initiatives.

The Recommendation

Under Strategy 10 to organize a Regional Commission to coordinate the development and delivery of parks, recreation, trails, and open space services, Recommendation 10.3 states “Consider staff to support coordination and/or expansion of services.” Staff could be part-time, contracted for specific projects, shared among several willing partners or defined by another configuration of common interest and shared support. A paid recreation professional could free volunteers to work on projects by assuming organizational, fundraising, and financing responsibilities. Well before the plan was fully prepared, discussions about the potential for establishing paid staff began to occur.

The plan specifically recommends that a Circuit Rider be considered. A Circuit Rider is a staff position serving and funded by multiple municipalities – in this case, recreation facility, services and management coordination – by leading projects and programs that each of the municipalities is too small to do on its own. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) has a grant program to assist in establishing circuit riders in multi-municipal regions. Over the four-year grant period, the grant funds half of the salary of the Recreation Coordinator – 100 percent in year one, 75 percent in year two, 50 percent in year three, and 25 percent in year four – to be matched with local funds in years two through four. This gives the region four years to establish services and begin to realize the benefits of their planning.

Early Discussions

Between June 2010 and June 2011, project partners including the Federation, PA DCNR, Chester County Parks and Recreation, Owen J. Roberts School District, Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation, DARC, and Phoenixville Recreation and Parks Department were asked for their input on a potential circuit rider position for Northern Chester County. Municipal partners met with Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation, area school districts, including Pottstown, and PA DCNR on three occasions to discuss the concept. The concept was also introduced to the region’s municipal park and recreation boards at the January 2011 Parks & Recreation Summit sponsored by South Coventry Township.

Chapter 9

Coordination with the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation led to the concept of dual Circuit Rider positions that would serve the region in different ways: one Circuit Rider would serve the mega-region within a 15-mile radius of Pottstown, and a second would serve the Northern Chester County region, namely to lead the implementation of the Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. It was envisioned that these two Circuit Riders would work closely together and include related parks and recreation/education staff such as the Pottstown, Phoenixville and DARC parks and recreation directors and school district active healthy living coordinators.

The goal of the Circuit Rider positions would be to implement the regional plans, create programs and services to foster active healthy living, provide technical support on parks and recreation to the participating partners, and develop and implement an organized program to increase public awareness about parks and recreation opportunities in the area – all in line with the mission of the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation.

With guidance from PA DCNR Circuit Rider and Peer Study program managers, these discussions enabled the plan to include valuable information that would otherwise be required in a separate Peer Study, prior to Circuit Rider grant approval. This approach consolidated efforts, time and cost by addressing some of the PA DCNR requirements for Peer Study and Circuit Rider planning within the Parks, Recreation and Open Space plan work effort.

A Model Recreation Coordinator Job Description

The following job description was drafted based upon extensive interviewing, plan findings and exploration of partnerships. It can be used in future discussions about a Recreation Coordinator position and modified to best fit a future scenario when this position has support and a high likelihood of success.

Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Commission Recreation Coordinator

Position Responsibilities

The Regional Recreation Coordinator is responsible for the overall administration, leadership, finances, organizational planning, operation, staffing, outreach, facilities, programs, and projects for recreation in Northern Chester County organized as the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities and the Owen J. Roberts School District. He/She is accountable to the Chairman of the Board.

Service Area

The position is responsible for serving the nine municipalities of Northern Chester County including: the Townships of East Coventry, North Coventry, South Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, West Pikeland, Warwick, East Vincent and West Vincent, and coordinating with the region's three school districts. This area covers 118 square miles with a population of nearly 45,000 including 14,500 households (2010). Work will focus on communities within the Owen J. Roberts School District but will not exclude Phoenixville Area and Downingtown Area School Districts.

Administration, Leadership, and Responsibilities

1. Direct, manage, plan, and supervise all operations and activities of the Commission.
2. Collaborate with and serve as liaison to the participating Member Municipalities and the Owen J. Roberts School District to implement, manage, operate, and administer the Northern Chester County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
3. Develop, motivate, encourage, and expand intergovernmental cooperation, public and private partnerships, and other community collaborations to further the goals and objectives of the Commission. This includes collaboration with the Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation on active healthy living initiatives in Northern Chester County.
4. Manage, promote, and advise on all open space, greenways, trails, parks, and recreation properties and facilities assigned by the Member municipalities under the jurisdiction of the Commission. Establish, implement, recommend, and update facility development and management plans, policies, and regulations.
5. Provide direction, education, and leadership to the Board of Directors and officers of the Commission. Assist the Board in development of short and long range planning. Cast vision and provide relevant background information and industry news to the Commissioners.

Continued

Chapter 9

6. Manage all fiscal affairs of the Commission including the operating, capital, program, and grants budgets. Account for all monies received and expended in compliance with Commission-established policies; document all affairs in accordance with proper accounting techniques for annual independent audit.
7. Manage the recruitment, training, motivation, discipline, and evaluation of all Commission staff and volunteers. Ensure that all personnel comply with all established operating procedures, work ethic, Board policies, and state and federal laws; recommend updates to policies as needed.
8. Research, secure, and administer grants for development, operation, planning, program, open space, greenway, trail and special projects; develop and implement fundraising efforts to support facilities, activities, and projects of the member municipalities and the School District related to parks and recreation.
9. Assist Parks and Recreation Boards and any Friends groups that exist, or emerge, in developing organizational and fundraising capacity, community outreach, and regional influence; serve as ex officio member of the Board of Directors.
10. Work with appropriate personnel within federal, state, and county agencies in planning, developing, and administering open space, greenways, trails, park planning, and grant projects.
11. Follow and enforce all municipal procedures and regulations concerning bid specifications, purchasing, public notices, Requests for Proposals, contract agreements and their compliance by vendors, consultants, and contractors.
12. Keep current with industry and profession news, issues, techniques, and trends. Pursue professional growth and development through regular training, education, and certifications; enable and encourage the same of the professional staff, Commissioners, and associated committee members.
13. Evaluate, and recommend Regional Park and Facilities Rules & Regulations and other public use policies.
14. Hire and supervise outside contractors as needed; ensure and enforce compliance with all contracts, duties, and expectations.
15. Research, interpret, and provide direction on assessed public needs for open space, greenway, trails, and recreational programming and park facilities. Develop target markets and audiences for expanding recreational, educational, environmental, and cultural programming opportunities and partnerships.
16. Cultivate and maintain a well-rounded base of media contacts, including print, radio, TV, and online and social media sources. Oversee a continuing production of educational and informational media releases, public service announcements, and news features to establish the Commission as a valuable and knowledgeable source of information and quality facilitator of open space, parks, greenways, trails, and recreation facilities and programs.

Continued

17. Provide leadership, expertise, and assistance in creating and maintaining an ongoing schedule of public education and advocacy campaigns, seminars, conferences, events, and outreaches on the societal values and benefits of recreation, parks, and open space. As available, lend assistance of the same to outside requesting organizations.
18. Consistently and creatively promote all goals, objectives, programs, and projects of the Commission. Manage and supervise the production of all promotional materials, forms, messages, newsletters, and multimedia productions for high quality, a consistent message, and a professional public corporate identity.
19. Develop and maintain a user-friendly, relevant, timely, practical, and attractive online presence in the Commission websites, social networks, and other audio/visual/multimedia, and other electronic media technologies.

Note

Maintenance is not included, as that will remain a function of the Public Works Departments of each municipality. The Recreation Coordinator may provide technical assistance regarding maintenance but only for informational purposes.

Acknowledgement: Tim Hurd, Executive Director of the Stroud Regional Recreation Commission, provided information on his job description and the Commission's Annual Report that served as the basis for this draft position description for the Northern Chester County Regional Recreation Coordinator.

FIRST YEAR PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES (ALREADY UNDERWAY!)

As the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan recommendations were drafted, it was apparent that many ideas for creating a regional parks, recreation and open space system had community support. However, as shown by the management and financing assessment, our nine municipalities have limited staff and budget available for plan implementation. And while the Federation has led the preparation of at least seven regional plans, implementation has been relatively sparse. The Steering Committee expressed a sincere desire to achieve real benefits for the region's residents and improve the Federation's implementation track record. To meet this goal, the planning process included a task to organize and initiate a few recommendations that emerged as priorities by way of local support. These include:

- Organization of Volunteer Committees
- Advancing Parks, New Parks and School-Parks
- Identifying Potential Sports Complex Locations
- Extending Trail Systems
- Creating a Common Activities Calendar

Chapter 9

Organization of Volunteer Committees

By the end of the planning process, volunteers were enthusiastic about the plan's potential. At public meetings, they expressed a willingness to organize as small groups to begin working on the plan's implementation. As noted above, there are many recommendations that municipal volunteers from park and recreation boards, open space committees, environmental advisory commissions, and historical commissions, can accomplish or contribute significant progress. Committees, sub-committees, and a reporting structure to the Federation Board of Directors should be defined so that volunteer efforts can be coordinated, where appropriate, and recognized. The Federation intends to devote a Spring 2012 meeting to the overall committee and sub-committee structure, such as but not limited to:

- Land Conservation
- Public awareness
- Sports
- Community School Parks (or Active Healthy Living)
- Trails
- Heritage
- Events and Programs

Once the date for this meeting is established, the Federation will circulate an announcement to all member municipalities requesting attendance by any and all interested volunteers.

Advancing Parks, New Parks and School-Parks

A handful of existing and potential future parks have received attention concurrent with this planning process.

- The **Woody's Woods Master Site and Conservation Plan**, a draft document to be finalized and appended to the South Coventry Township Open Space Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan) calls for expansion and select closure of trails, emergency access to the trail system, and forest stewardship practices to sustain the woodland of this popular hiking destination located in South Coventry. The recommendations are phased over three periods and total \$63,000 in probable costs, according to the plan.
- Norchester Youth Athletic Association (NYAA) has proposed to construct a **baseball stadium on the Heyser Tract** in East Coventry. Bear Stadium in Boyertown and Owls Field at Ted Palka Park in West Lawn has been identified as reference stadiums. NYAA has outlined a four phase design and construction process: site use agreement and feasibility determination, design and fundraising and phase 1 field construction, "go-live" operation and management procedures, and phase 2 construction of a concession stand, additional sports fields, if space allows, and expanded programming. Phase 1 construction of the baseball field has been estimated at a cost of \$500,000. Phase 2 construction to complete the stadium to host tournaments has been estimated at \$1 million. NYAA has begun exploring funding and partnership options.

- The **future Snyder Avenue Park** is an anticipated 53-acre land dedication and \$1 million improvement contribution associated with a 250 -home development in East Pikeland. A master site plan outlining \$4 million in active and passive recreation facilities and natural areas has been prepared. Once the land and improvement fund are transferred to the township, the first phase will construct utilities and stormwater management facilities.
- Recreational planning for **Windolph Knoll** in West Pikeland has been on hold while the township completed sewage facilities planning. As of December 2011, the township does not anticipate the need for this property for sewage facilities and continues to reserve this 23.8-acre site at the intersection of Route 401 and Upper Pike Creek Road for recreational facilities, including one or more sports fields.
- A field visit to Springfield-Greene County, Missouri to meet with the School-Park Board and view their exemplary school-park facilities and program would be an ideal first step in further exploring this partnership concept. A field visit by no means precludes local discussions but could provide valuable best practices and lessons learned for this young initiative.

Identifying Potential Sports Complex Locations

In determining the preliminary feasibility of one or more future sports complexes to support vibrant sports league participation, the planning process initially screened the Region for open space parcels of at least 50 acres with minimal environmental constraints. This inquiry and the documented need for sports field in the Region raised interest in further exploring potential sports complex locations, and the Steering Committee reviewed the site screening map for parcels that should be removed from consideration, due to easements or other known factors, and for other parcels that should be considered. Once all sites for consideration are identified, the Federation should narrow the list of sites to one per the northern sub-region and one for the southern sub-region (East Pikeland, West Pikeland and West Vincent) for detailed feasibility study.

A completed sports complex will take several years to complete. In the meantime, municipalities should explore the planning, development and maintenance of single or multiple sports fields in existing parks or by securing access to private fields to serve the immediate needs of the many community sports leagues and the general public.

Extending Trail System

Public trails, as places to walk and enjoy nature, for exercise and leisure, are clearly a priority need. Several regional trails are under development. The French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust is leading the French Creek Trail effort; Chester County, the Schuylkill River Trail effort; the Hopewell Big Woods Partnership, the Boars Back Trail effort; and the Schuylkill Highlands, the Hopewell Big Woods Connector effort. The Federation and municipalities should continue their supporting roles as advocates for the completion of these regional trails as these will form the primary routes of a future regional trail network.

Chapter 9

In addition, trail systems in Coventry Woods and Woody's Woods should continue to be expanded and improved with trailheads and amenities. Connector trails to nearby parks, e.g. Warwick County Park and French Creek State Park, should be a second priority.

Creating a Common Activities Calendar

Analysis of the public opinion survey found that a lack of awareness for recreation programs, activities and self-directed opportunities was the greatest barrier to regular recreation participation. A common calendar of scheduled events that coordinates similar activities and prevents conflicts would also allow municipalities to share advertising costs. This would be a significant first step in increasing awareness of recreation opportunities. Over time, this coordination could evolve into a website listing scheduled events, then a searchable calendar website, then expanded to list and link to parks, trails, and self-directed recreation activities.

ANNUAL PLAN REVIEW

Each year the Federation should review, report and publish its progress. This activity should occur at a convenient time of year (it need not be in December or January) when summary figures for the number of projects, dollars of investment, acres protected, and miles of trail planned or completed can be summarized. Every incremental success, no matter how small, will advance our vision for the future. Demonstrating success with pilot projects that meet public needs for outdoor recreation and working to increase public awareness about them can have a domino effect, increasing public support for cooperative enhancement of parks, recreation, and open space.

As projects and initiatives are completed, or as new leaders and resources become available, the Federation should review the remaining recommendations to prioritize those that:

- have public support or timely interest from partners
- include a low cost and a high return
- plant seeds for future opportunities, or
- create or expand capacity for enhancing parks, recreation, and open space services.

The completion of this plan is not the end. It is the beginning of the real work: adjusting, revising, and transforming the way parks, recreation and open space are provided in our region. As we implement our plan, we take steps to ensure the health and well-being of our citizens and our environment. Each step will take us closer to a network of connected open spaces that sustains us physically and culturally. Each step will reward present and future generations with a legacy of parks, recreation, and open space in Northern Chester County.

Adopting Resolutions

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**East Pikeland Township
Chester County, Pennsylvania**

RESOLUTION 2012-06

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 3rd day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of East Pikeland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a the Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Pikeland continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities ("PROS Plan") was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

- Chapter 1: About the Plan
- Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region
- Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities
- Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision
- Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System
- Chapter 6: Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes
- Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness
- Chapter 8: Strategies and Recommendations for Management and Financing
- Chapter 9: Implementation
- Plan Maps
 - Map A Service Zones Map
 - Map B Potential Sports Complex Locations Map
- Appendix Cover
- A1 Regional Background
- A2 Parks and Recreation Lands
- A3 Recreation Facilities
- A4 Trail Network
- A5 Open Space Resource Protection
- A6 Recreation Programs and Services

**EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

CHESTER COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-10

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 10th day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of East Coventry Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a the Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Coventry continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities ("PROS Plan") was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

- Chapter 1: About the Plan
- Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region
- Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities
- Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision
- Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System
- Chapter 6: Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes
- Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness
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- A1 Regional Background
- A2 Parks and Recreation Lands
- A3 Recreation Facilities
- A4 Trail Network
- A5 Open Space Resource Protection
- A6 Recreation Programs and Services
- A7 Organization, Management and Financing
- A8 Mandatory Dedication of Parkland
- A9 Sports Field Analysis

- A10 Level of Service Analysis
- A11 Public Involvement Summary
- A12 Survey Report
- A13 Tools and Resources
- Appendix Maps
- Map 1 Land Use
- Map 2 Community Hubs
- Map 3 Water Resources
- Map 4 Natural Areas
- Map 5 Working Landscapes
- Map 6 Scenic Features
- Map 7 Protected Lands
- Map 8 Recreation Features
- Map 9 Trails
- Map 10 Historic Sites; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation's tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated April 10, 2012, is hereby adopted by the Township of East Coventry, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code.

Adopted as a resolution this 10th day of April, 2012.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP
Chester County, Pennsylvania

Ray Kolb
Ray Kolb, Chair

Marjea Geho
Marjea Geho, Vice Chair

Absent
W. Atlee Rinehart, Supervisor

MOYER VOTES NO!
Michael Albert Moyer, Supervisor

Karen Nocella votes
Karen Nocella, Supervisor

ATTEST:

Bernard A. Rodgers
Bernard A. Rodgers, Secretary

Yes

RESOLUTION 2012- 9

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF EAST NANTMEAL TOWNSHIP
ADOPTING THE REGIONAL PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN
FOR THE FEDERATION OF NORTHERN CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITIES AND
AN ADDENDUM THERETO

WHEREAS, Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code authorizes municipalities to adopt a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, Article III requires that municipal comprehensive plans include a plan for community facilities, including recreation facilities; and a plan for protection of natural resources, including open space; and

WHEREAS, East Nantmeal Township has adopted the *Comprehensive Plan of East Nantmeal Township, adopted 2002*, and the *Open Space and Recreation Plan for East Nantmeal Township, adopted 1993* which include planning for recreation and open space in East Nantmeal Township; and

WHEREAS, East Nantmeal Township has participated in the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a regional organization that has developed a Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan proposed to be adopted by the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland and West Vincent; and

WHEREAS, a final draft of the Regional Plan has been prepared titled "Revised Final Draft April 3, 2012" ("Regional Plan"); and

WHEREAS, the East Nantmeal Township Planning Commission, by motion adopted at a public meeting on April 12, 2012, made a recommendation that the Board of Supervisors of East Nantmeal Township adopt the Regional Plan subject to conditions that the Board adopt a resolution in the form of this Resolution and the Board approve the Addendum attached to this Resolution as an integral part of the Regional Plan as applicable in East Nantmeal Township; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on May 2, 2012 to receive comment on the Regional Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Plan consists of a document titled "Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Revised Final Draft -- April 3, 2012 Comprehensive Plan consisting of nine chapters, thirteen appendices and ten maps.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT HEREBY IS RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. The Board of Supervisors of East Nantmeal Township hereby adopts the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Revised Final Draft – April 3, 2012, as referenced in this Resolution, (“Regional Plan”) a true and correct copy of which is on file in the Office of the Township Secretary of East Nantmeal Township.

2. The Board of Supervisors hereby further adopts the Addendum to the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Revised Final Draft – April 3, 2012 (“Addendum”) attached hereto as an integral part of the Regional Plan as applicable in East Nantmeal Township.

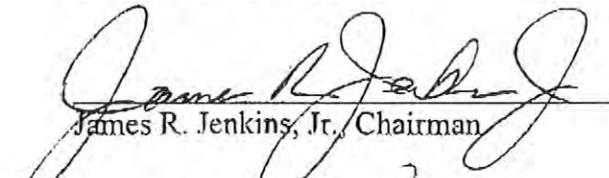
3. The intent of the Board of Supervisors is that the Regional Plan would not have been adopted without the inclusion of the Addendum and that the adoption of the Regional Plan is of no force and effect without the Addendum.

4. The Regional Plan and the Addendum are not severable and if a court of competent jurisdiction declares part or all of the Regional Plan and/or the Addendum illegal or invalid on procedural or substantive grounds, the Regional Plan and Addendum as adopted by East Nantmeal Township shall be invalid in its entirety and of no force and effect.

5. This Resolution and the Plan and Addendum adopted hereby shall take effect immediately.

RESOLVED AND ADOPTED this 2nd day of May, 2012.

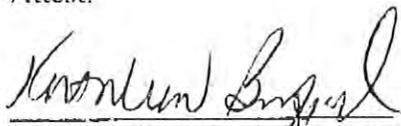
EAST NANTMEAL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS


James R. Jenkins, Jr., Chairman


Tylee E. Wren, Vice Chairman

William J. Cochrane, Member

Attest:


Kathleen Brumfield, Secretary

ADDENDUM TO THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN
FOR THE FEDERATION OF NORTHERN CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITIES
REVISED FINAL DRAFT – APRIL 3, 2012

This ADDENDUM adopted and approved by the Board of Supervisors of East Nantmeal Township this 2nd day of May, 2012.

The Board of Supervisors of East Nantmeal Township hereby adopts the following provisions as an Addendum to the PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR THE FEDERATION OF NORTHERN CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITIES, REVISED FINAL DRAFT – APRIL 3, 2012 (“Regional Plan”) which are incorporated into the Regional Plan as additions and amendments thereto applicable to and in East Nantmeal Township:

1. Chapter 1 of the Regional Plan is amended and revised by inserting the following at the end of the Subchapter titled “About this Plan”:

East Nantmeal Township has duly adopted and effective comprehensive plans entitled the Comprehensive Plan of East Nantmeal Township, adopted 2002, and the Open Space and Recreation Plan for East Nantmeal Township, adopted 1993 (collectively “ENT Comprehensive Plans”). The ENT Comprehensive Plans include planning for recreation and open space in East Nantmeal Township. The Regional Plan does not and is not intended by East Nantmeal Township to replace or override the ENT Comprehensive Plans, but rather to supplement the ENT Comprehensive Plans by providing information as to goals, strategies and recommendations with respect to those aspects of open space and recreational planning which may or may not be undertaken by East Nantmeal Township in the future on a regional basis. (By adoption of this Regional Plan, East Nantmeal Township does not indicate acceptance of or agreement with all of the goals, strategies, recommendations or other elements set forth in the Regional Plan. (The ENT Comprehensive Plans, as amended, updated or re-adopted from time to time, remain effective and may be pursued and implemented by East Nantmeal Township, as to any particular plan elements, either independently and/or in conjunction with the Regional Plan elements and goals.)

2. Chapter 5 of the Regional Plan is amended and revised by inserting the following after Table 5:

“Note: The standards set forth in the table above for open space set asides are optional and discretionary only, and are included for further study and consideration by East Nantmeal Township which does not presently regulate the subject by its Zoning Ordinance or otherwise. East Nantmeal Township is not required to adopt or implement residential, commercial, institutional or industrial open space set aside policies and standards in its ordinances or regulations now or in the future.

3. Chapter 5 of the Regional Plan is amended and revised by inserting the following before the last sentence of Recommendation 1.4:

It is intended that any such inter-township assignment of fees in lieu of open space paid by a developer would be at the prerogative of the East Nantmeal Township if the planned subdivision or land development is located in East Nantmeal Township and that determinations as to whether to accept such fees in lieu of dedicated open space or to transfer same to a fund for regional facilities or another township's facilities would likewise be under the sole control of East Nantmeal Township. East Nantmeal Township is not and will not be obligated to “pool” open space fees absent its voluntary future participation, as may or may not be the case, in an intergovernmental cooperation agreement detailing the terms and conditions for the sharing of such fees in general or in specific cases.

4. Chapter 9 of the Regional Plan is amended and revised by inserting the following as the third introductory paragraph titled "Implementation":

In adopting the Regional Plan, East Nantmeal Township is affirming its intent to consider cooperative efforts toward achievement of the Plan's regional goals. At the same time, however, East Nantmeal Township recognizes that East Nantmeal Township is distinct with population and growth levels, available lands and facilities, financial bases, individual open space planning goals, and other factors which are different from other municipalities and which may uniquely affect East Nantmeal Township's ability or desire to act upon, or contribute to, the implementation of a given Regional Plan program or feature at a given point in time. For this reason, before East Nantmeal Township will be bound to undertake or participate in any particular Plan element requiring contribution of funds, land, or other resources, the terms of such participation and contribution will be set forth in an intergovernmental cooperation agreement to which East Nantmeal Township has voluntarily become a party. No park, trail, athletic field or any other recreational facility contemplated or implemented by this Plan will be planned or created in East Nantmeal Township without the express future consent of the Board of Supervisors of East Nantmeal Township.)

5. The Regional Plan is amended and revised by adding the following at the end of the statement titled "A FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION AMONG WILLING PARTNERS" on page vi:

For purposes of Section 603(j) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code which provides in part that "[z]oning ordinances adopted by municipalities shall be generally consistent with the municipal or multimunicipal comprehensive plan . . ." the Regional Plan shall not be considered part of the ENT Comprehensive Plans or any amendment thereto or considered a multimunicipal comprehensive plan to which East Nantmeal Township is a party. East Nantmeal Township shall not be required to amend its Zoning Ordinance to be generally consistent with any part of or all of the Regional Plan.

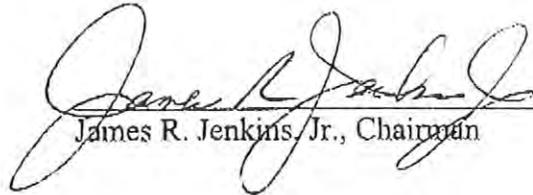
6. The intent of the Board of Supervisors of East Nantmeal Township is that the Regional Plan would not have been adopted by East Nantmeal Township without the inclusion of this Addendum and that the adoption of the Regional Plan is of no force and effect without this Addendum.

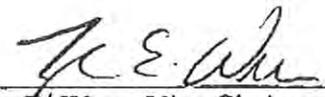
7. The Regional Plan and the Addendum are not severable and if a court of competent jurisdiction declares part or all of the Regional Plan and/or the Addendum illegal or invalid on procedural or substantive grounds, the Regional Plan and Addendum as adopted by East Nantmeal Township shall be invalid in its entirety and of no force and effect.

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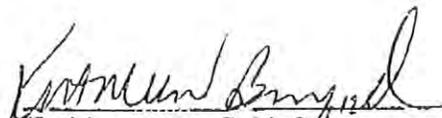
8. This Addendum shall take effect immediately.

EAST NANTMEAL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS


James R. Jenkins, Jr., Chairman


Tyler E. Wren, Vice Chairman

Attest:


Kathleen Brumfield, Secretary

William J. Cochrane, Member

**East Pikeland Township
Chester County, Pennsylvania**

RESOLUTION 2012-06

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 3rd day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of East Pikeland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a the Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Pikeland continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities (“PROS Plan”) was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

- Chapter 1: About the Plan
- Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region
- Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities
- Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision
- Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System
- Chapter 6: Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes
- Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness
- Chapter 8: Strategies and Recommendations for Management and Financing
- Chapter 9: Implementation
- Plan Maps
 - Map A Service Zones Map
 - Map B Potential Sports Complex Locations Map
- Appendix Cover
- A1 Regional Background
- A2 Parks and Recreation Lands
- A3 Recreation Facilities
- A4 Trail Network
- A5 Open Space Resource Protection
- A6 Recreation Programs and Services

- A7 Organization, Management and Financing
- A8 Mandatory Dedication of Parkland
- A9 Sports Field Analysis
- A10 Level of Service Analysis
- A11 Public Involvement Summary
- A12 Survey Report
- A13 Tools and Resources
- Appendix Maps
- Map 1 Land Use
- Map 2 Community Hubs
- Map 3 Water Resources
- Map 4 Natural Areas
- Map 5 Working Landscapes
- Map 6 Scenic Features
- Map 7 Protected Lands
- Map 8 Recreation Features
- Map 9 Trails
- Map 10 Historic Sites; and

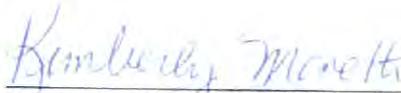
WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation’s tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated March 2012 is hereby adopted by the Township of East Pikeland, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code.

ADOPTED this 3rd day of April, 2012

Attest:



 Kimberly Moretti, Township Manager

**EAST PIKELAND TOWNSHIP
 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**



 Ronald M. Graham, Chairman



 Russell L. Strauss, Vice Chairman

 J. Benson Campbell, Member

RESOLUTION 12-04-10-01

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF EAST VINCENT TOWNSHIP,
CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE FEDERATION OF
NORTHERN CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITIES PARKS, RECREATION AND
OPEN SPACE PLAN (THE PROS PLAN)**

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a The Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Vincent continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities ("PROS Plan") was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

Chapter 1: About the Plan

Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region

Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities

Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision

Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System

Chapter 6: Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes

Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness

Chapter 8: Strategies and Recommendation for Management and Financing

Chapter 9: Implementation

Plan Maps

Map A Service Zones Map

Map B Potential Sports Complex Locations Map

Appendix Cover

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A4 Trail Network

A5 Open Space Resource Protection

A6 Recreation Programs and Services
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A9 Sports Field Analysis
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Map 5 Working Landscapes
Map 6 Scenic Features
Map 7 Protected Lands
Map 8 Recreation Features
Map 9 Trails
Map 10 Historic Sites; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, the Township of East Vincent desires to adopt a majority of the PROS Plan as an amendment to its Comprehensive Plan but accept Chapter 9 as a Technical Memorandum as the Township will garner a competitive advantage when applying for state, federal, and county grant funds if the general level of effort required to implement the Park Recreation and Open Space Plan is well documented in a Technical Memorandum; and

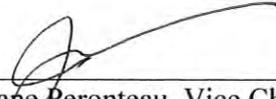
WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation's tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts.

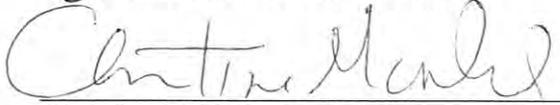
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Chapters 1-8 and all Plans, Appendices and Maps of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated March 2012, is hereby adopted by the Township of East Vincent, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code, and Chapter 9 of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated March 2012, is hereby accepted by the Township of East Vincent, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as a Technical Memorandum.

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 10th day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of East Vincent Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

EAST VINCENT TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By: 
Mark F. Dunphy, Chairman

By: 
Jane Peronteau, Vice Chairwoman

By: 
Christine McNeil, Supervisor

ATTEST:


Mary E. Flagg, Secretary

North Coventry Township

RESOLUTION 01-4/10/12

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 10th day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of North Coventry Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a the Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of North Coventry continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities (“PROS Plan”) was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

- Chapter 1: About the Plan
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- Map 9 Trails
- Map 10 Historic Sites; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

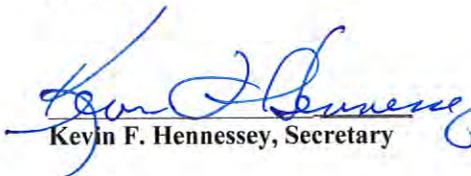
WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation’s tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated _____, is hereby adopted by the Township of North Coventry, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code.

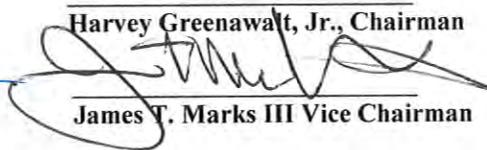
Adopted as a resolution this 10th day of April, 2012.

**NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

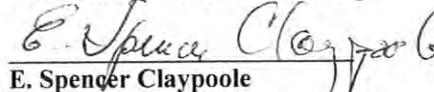
Attest:

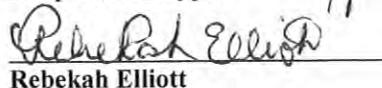

Kevin F. Hennessey, Secretary

Harvey Greenawalt, Jr., Chairman


James T. Marks III Vice Chairman

Andrew J. Paravis E. Kent High


E. Spencer Claypoole


Rebekah Elliott

RESOLUTION 2012-05-01

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 7th day of May, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of South Coventry Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a The Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent recognize the need to dialog and work together and gain insights from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities ("PROS Plan") was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

Chapter 1: About the Plan

Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region

Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities

Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision

Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System

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Map A Service Zones Map

Map B Potential Sports Complex Locations Map

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A9 Sports Field Analysis

A10 Level of Service Analysis

A11 Public Involvement Summary

A12 Survey Report

A13 Tools and Resources

Appendix Maps

Map 1 Land Use

ADDENDUM TO
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan ("PROS Plan")
for The Federation of Northern Chester County Communities
Dated March, 2012

The following provisions are incorporated into the PROS Plan in order to clarify its provisions where noted:

A. At the end of the Chapter 1, subchapter entitled "About this Plan", insert:

"The municipalities that have adopted this Plan have individual Comprehensive Plans. Certain adopting municipalities presently have existing, independent open space and recreation plans. This Plan is not intended to replace or override those existing plans, but rather to supplement the existing plans with respect to those aspects of open space and recreational planning which may be undertaken on a regional basis in accordance with the goals and strategies outlined by this Plan. Except as may be otherwise stated in any particular township's resolution adopting this Plan, the existing open space, environmental and recreation plans of any participating township remains effective and may be pursued and implemented by that township, as to any particular plan elements, either independently and/or in conjunction with the regional plan elements and goals stated herein."

B. Insert in Chapter 5, after Table 5-3:

"Note: The standards set forth in the table above for commercial and institutional development open space set asides are optional and discretionary only, and included for further study by participating municipalities who do not presently regulate same through zoning. Participating townships who do not presently require commercial or institutional open space set asides will have met the present intent of this plan by reflecting the residential open space set aside policies and standards in their ordinances. All participating townships are additionally encouraged but not required to consider and implement commercial and institutional open space set aside standards generally consistent with those set forth in this Plan."

C. Insert in Chapter 5, before the last sentence of Recommendation 1.4:

"It is intended that any such inter-township assignment of fees in lieu of open space paid by a developer would be at the prerogative of the township wherein the planned subdivision or land development is planned to occur and that determinations as to whether to accept such fees in lieu of dedicated open space or to transfer same to a fund for regional facilities or another township's facilities would likewise be under the sole control of the township(s) wherein the development or subdivision is proposed. No township would be obligated to "pool" open space fees absent its voluntary participation in an intergovernmental agreement detailing the terms and conditions for the sharing of such fees in general or in specific cases."

D. Insert as third introductory paragraph to Chapter 9, title "Implementation":

"In adopting this Plan, the participating municipalities are affirming their intent to continue cooperative efforts toward achievement of the Plan's regional goals. At the same time, however, they recognize that differing population status and growth levels, available lands and facilities, financial bases, individual open space planning goals, and other factors may uniquely affect a given township's ability or desire to act upon, or contribute to, the implementation of a given program or Plan feature at a given point of time. For this reason, before any of the Plan's partner townships will be bound to undertake or participate in implementation of any particular Plan element, the terms of such undertaking or participation will be set forth in an intergovernmental cooperation agreement or joint municipal resolution to which the municipality's governing body has voluntarily become a party. No park, trail, athletic field or any other recreational facility contemplated or implemented by this Plan will be planned or created without the consent of the governing body of the municipality where the facility is now or proposed to be located."

RESOLUTION 2012-05-01

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 7th day of May, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of South Coventry Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a The Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent recognize the need to dialog and work together and gain insights from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities ("PROS Plan") was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

Chapter 1: About the Plan

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Map A Service Zones Map

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Appendix Maps

Map 1 Land Use

- Map 2 Community Hubs
- Map 3 Water Resources
- Map 4 Natural Areas
- Map 5 Working Landscapes
- Map 6 Scenic Features
- Map 7 Protected Lands
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- Map 9 Trails
- Map 10 Historic Sites; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, an Addendum to the PROS Plan, containing Sections A through D has been prepared to clarify certain provisions therein and become an integral part of the PROS Plan;

WHEREAS, the South Coventry Township Planning Commission, by motion adopted at a public meeting on April 12, 2012, made a recommendation that the Board of Supervisors of South Coventry Township adopt the Regional Plan subject to conditions that the Board adopt a resolution, option B, with inclusion of the Addendum attached to this Resolution as an integral part of the Regional Plan as applicable in South Coventry Township; and

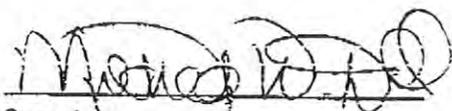
WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on April 10, continued until May 7, 2012 pursuant to public notice to receive comment on the Regional Plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Chapters 1-8 and Appendices and Maps of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated April 3, 2012, last amended April 10, 2012, together with Sections A, B, and C of the above referenced Addendum, is hereby adopted by the Township of South Coventry Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an advisory element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code, and Chapter 9 of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated April 3, 2012, together with Section D of the above referenced Addendum, is hereby accepted by the Township of South Coventry, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as a Technical Memorandum.

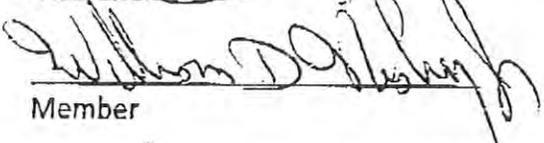
Adopted as a resolution this 7th day of May, 2012.

Attest:

South Coventry Township
Board of Supervisors


Secretary

Chair

Vice-Chair

Member

ADDENDUM TO
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan ("PROS Plan")
for The Federation of Northern Chester County Communities
Dated March, 2012

The following provisions are incorporated into the PROS Plan in order to clarify its provisions where noted:

A. At the end of the Chapter 1, subchapter entitled "About this Plan", insert:

"The municipalities that have adopted this Plan have individual Comprehensive Plans. Certain adopting municipalities presently have existing, independent open space and recreation plans. This Plan is not intended to replace or override those existing plans, but rather to supplement the existing plans with respect to those aspects of open space and recreational planning which may be undertaken on a regional basis in accordance with the goals and strategies outlined by this Plan. Except as may be otherwise stated in any particular township's resolution adopting this Plan, the existing open space, environmental and recreation plans of any participating township remains effective and may be pursued and implemented by that township, as to any particular plan elements, either independently and/or in conjunction with the regional plan elements and goals stated herein."

B. Insert in Chapter 5, after Table 5-3:

"Note: The standards set forth in the table above for commercial and institutional development open space set asides are optional and discretionary only, and included for further study by participating municipalities who do not presently regulate same through zoning. Participating townships who do not presently require commercial or institutional open space set asides will have met the present intent of this plan by reflecting the residential open space set aside policies and standards in their ordinances. All participating townships are additionally encouraged but not required to consider and implement commercial and institutional open space set aside standards generally consistent with those set forth in this Plan."

C. Insert in Chapter 5, before the last sentence of Recommendation 1.4:

"It is intended that any such inter-township assignment of fees in lieu of open space paid by a developer would be at the prerogative of the township wherein the planned subdivision or land development is planned to occur and that determinations as to whether to accept such fees in lieu of dedicated open space or to transfer same to a fund for regional facilities or another township's facilities would likewise be under the sole control of the township(s) wherein the development or subdivision is proposed. No township would be obligated to "pool" open space fees absent its voluntary participation in an intergovernmental agreement detailing the terms and conditions for the sharing of such fees in general or in specific cases."

D. Insert as third introductory paragraph to Chapter 9, title "Implementation":

"In adopting this Plan, the participating municipalities are affirming their intent to continue cooperative efforts toward achievement of the Plan's regional goals. At the same time, however, they recognize that differing population status and growth levels, available lands and facilities, financial bases, individual open space planning goals, and other factors may uniquely affect a given township's ability or desire to act upon, or contribute to, the implementation of a given program or Plan feature at a given point of time. For this reason, before any of the Plan's partner townships will be bound to undertake or participate in implementation of any particular Plan element, the terms of such undertaking or participation will be set forth in an intergovernmental cooperation agreement or joint municipal resolution to which the municipality's governing body has voluntarily become a party. No park, trail, athletic field or any other recreational facility contemplated or implemented by this Plan will be planned or created without the consent of the governing body of the municipality where the facility is now or proposed to be located."

RESOLUTION 2012-4
WARWICK TOWNSHIP, CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 10th day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of Warwick Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a The Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities (“PROS Plan”) was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

Chapter 1: About this Plan

Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region

Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities

Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision

Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System

Chapter 6: Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes

Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness

Chapter 8: Strategies and Recommendations for Management and Financing

Chapter 9: Implementation

Plan Maps

Map A Service Zones Map

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A2 Parks and Recreation Lands

A3 Recreation Facilities

A4 Trail Network

A5 Open Space Resource Protection

A6 Recreation Programs and Services

A7 Organization, Management and Financing

A8 Mandatory Dedication of Parkland

A9 Sports Field Analysis

A10 Level of Service Analysis

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A12 Public Opinion Survey Report
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Map 2 Community Hubs
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Map 4 Natural Areas
Map 5 Working Landscapes
Map 6 Scenic Features
Map 7 Protected Lands
Map 8 Recreation Features
Map 9 Trails
Map 10 Historic Sites; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Warwick desires to adopt a majority of the PROS Plan as an amendment to its Comprehensive Plan but accept Chapter 9 as a Technical Memorandum as the Township will garner a competitive advantage when applying for state, federal, and county grant funds if the general level of effort required to implement the Park Recreation and Open Space Plan is well documented in a Technical Memorandum; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Warwick presently has existing, independent comprehensive, open space and recreation plans. By adopting the PROS Plan, the Township of Warwick does not intend to replace or override those existing plans, but rather to supplement the existing plans with respect to those aspects of open space and recreational planning which may be undertaken on a regional basis in accordance with the goals and strategies outlined by the PROS Plan. The existing open space, environmental and recreation plans of the Township of Warwick remain in effect and may be pursued and implemented by the Township of Warwick as to any particular plan elements, either independently and/or in conjunction with the regional plan elements and goals stated in the PROS Plan; and

WHEREAS, it is intended that any inter-township assignment of fees in lieu of open space paid by a developer, as recommended in Chapter 5 of the PROS Plan, would be at the prerogative of the township wherein the planned subdivision or land development is planned to occur and that determinations as to whether to accept such fees in lieu of dedicated open space or to transfer fees to a fund for regional facilities or another township's facilities would likewise be under the sole control of the township(s) wherein the development or subdivision is proposed. Such a transfer is also subject to a determination that it would be permitted under applicable law, including the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The Township of Warwick affirmatively states that no township would be obligated to "pool" open space fees absent its voluntary participation in an intergovernmental cooperation agreement detailing the terms and conditions for the sharing of such fees in general or in specific cases; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation's tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts and, in adopting this PROS Plan, the Township of Warwick affirms its intent to continue cooperative efforts toward achievement of the PROS Plan's regional goals. At the same time, however, the Township of Warwick recognizes that individual municipal planning and growth vision, differing population status and growth levels, available lands and facilities, available revenues, individual open space planning goals, and other factors may uniquely affect a given township's ability or desire to act upon, or contribute to the implementation of a given program or Plan feature at a given point in time. For these reasons, no participating municipality is required to undertake or participate in any particular plan element and/or appropriate or expend funds for implementation. Adoption of the PROS Plan by the Township of Warwick does not delegate or transfer any function, power or responsibility from the Township of Warwick or any of the individual municipalities to any individual or entity. No park, trail, athletic field or any other recreational facility contemplated or implemented by the PROS Plan shall be proposed, planned, modified or constructed without the consent of the governing body of the municipality where the facility is now or is proposed to be located. In adopting this PROS Plan, the Township of Warwick and the participating municipalities intend that before any of the townships which have adopted this PROS Plan will be bound to undertake or participate in any particular PROS Plan elements requiring contribution of funds, land, or other resources, the terms of such participation and contribution will be set forth in an intergovernmental cooperation agreement to which the municipality has voluntarily become a party.

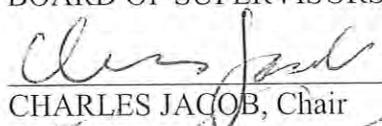
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Chapters 1-8 and all Plans, Appendices and Maps of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, Revised Final Draft as of April 3, 2012, is hereby adopted by the Township of Warwick, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an advisory element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code, and Chapter 9 of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, Revised Final Draft as of April 3, 2012, is hereby accepted by the Township of Warwick Chester County, Pennsylvania, as a Technical Memorandum.

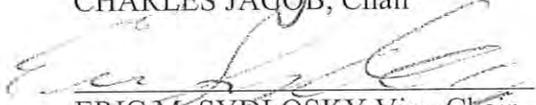
Adopted as a resolution this 10th day of April, 2012.

Attest:


JOAN GRIMLEY, Secretary

WARWICK TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS


CHARLES JACOB, Chair


ERIC M. SYDŁOSKY Vice-Chair


JASON SWINEHART, Member

**WEST PIKELAND TOWNSHIP
CHESTER COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA**

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-04-12

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 10th day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of West Pikeland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a the Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of West Pikeland Township continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities (“PROS Plan”) was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

- Chapter 1: About the Plan
- Chapter 2: About the Northern Chester County Region
- Chapter 3: Our Needs and Opportunities
- Chapter 4: Our Values and Vision
- Chapter 5: Strategies and Recommendations for a Regional System
- Chapter 6: Strategies and Recommendations for Conserving Landscapes
- Chapter 7: Strategy and Recommendations for Raising Public Awareness
- Chapter 8: Strategies and Recommendations for Management and Financing
- Chapter 9: Implementation

- Plan Maps
 - Map A Service Zones Map
 - Map B Potential Sports Complex Locations Map
- Appendix Cover
- A1 Regional Background
- A2 Parks and Recreation Lands
- A3 Recreation Facilities
- A4 Trail Network
- A5 Open Space Resource Protection
- A6 Recreation Programs and Services
- A7 Organization, Management and Financing
- A8 Mandatory Dedication of Parkland
- A9 Sports Field Analysis
- A10 Level of Service Analysis
- A11 Public Involvement Summary
- A12 Survey Report
- A13 Tools and Resources
- Appendix Maps
 - Map 1 Land Use
 - Map 2 Community Hubs
 - Map 3 Water Resources
 - Map 4 Natural Areas
 - Map 5 Working Landscapes
 - Map 6 Scenic Features
 - Map 7 Protected Lands
 - Map 8 Recreation Features
 - Map 9 Trails
 - Map 10 Historic Sites; and

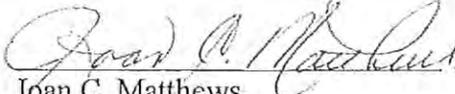
WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation’s tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated _____, is hereby adopted by the Township of West Pikeland, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code.

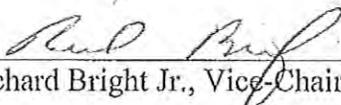
Adopted as a Resolution this 10th day of April, 2012.

Attest:

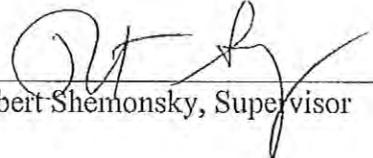

Joan C. Matthews,
Township Secretary

West Pikeland Township
Board of Supervisors


Ernie Holling, Chairman


Richard Bright Jr., Vice-Chairman

Harold M. Hallman III, Supervisor


Robert Shemonsky, Supervisor

Tom Tucker, Supervisor

RESOLUTION 9-2012

THIS RESOLUTION is made this 10th day of April, 2012 by the Board of Supervisors of West Vincent Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, the municipalities that comprise the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, a/k/a The Northern Federation, consisting of the Townships of East Coventry, East Nantmeal, East Pikeland, East Vincent, North Coventry, South Coventry, Warwick, West Pikeland, and West Vincent recognize the need to plan cooperatively from a regional perspective; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of the Northern Federation entered into a multi-Municipal Comprehensive Planning Agreement and, with the exception of West Pikeland, previously adopted the Regional Resource Protection Plan on October 26, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Township of West Vincent continues to support the efforts of the Northern Federation to plan on a regional basis; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities (“PROS Plan”) was developed by the member municipalities for the purpose of fostering active, healthy living and environmental conservation through parks, recreation, and open space and includes the following maps, charts, textual matter and other matters:

Chapter 1: About the Plan

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Chapter 9: Implementation

Plan Maps

Map A Service Zones Map

Map B Potential Sports Complex Locations Map

Appendix Cover

A1 Regional Background

A2 Parks and Recreation Lands

A3 Recreation Facilities

A4 Trail Network

A5 Open Space Resource Protection

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A7 Organization, Management and Financing

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WHEREAS, the PROS Plan has been the subject of several planning meetings, advertised for adoption, and made available for public review; and

WHEREAS, the Township of West Vincent desires to adopt a majority of the PROS Plan as an amendment to its Comprehensive Plan but accept Chapter 9 as a Technical Memorandum as the Township will garner a competitive advantage when applying for state, federal, and county grant funds if the general level of effort required to implement the Park Recreation and Open Space Plan is well documented in a Technical Memorandum; and

WHEREAS, the PROS Plan continues the Northern Federation's tradition of regional planning and serves as an example for future cooperative efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Chapters 1-8 and all Plans, Appendices and Maps of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated April 3, 2012, is hereby adopted by the Township of West Vincent, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as an element of its comprehensive plan, in accordance with Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code, and Chapter 9 of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, dated April 3, 2012, is hereby accepted by the Township of West Vincent, Chester County, Pennsylvania, as a Technical Memorandum.

Adopted as a resolution this 10th day of April, 2012.

Attest:

West Vincent Township
Board of Supervisors

Secretary

Amy Everett

Chair

Alisa J.

Vice-Chair

James Brown

Member

[Signature]