

COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION, PARK, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN Guidelines and Example Scope of Work

A. PLAN PURPOSE, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

The North Strabane Township comprehensive recreation, park, and open space plan will focus on the following areas:

1. Potential expansion of amenities offered at North Strabane Park;
2. How the 81 acres owned by the Township can best be incorporated into the parks system;
3. How to best utilize Borland Manor Parkette (a former community play-ground that is now open space);
4. How to best utilize Alexander Playground (a small community play-ground).

1. Potential Expansion of North Strabane Park

North Strabane Park was opened in 2015 and is home to the following amenities:

- McClelland Pavilion: Holds between 170-200 patrons and has an in-door kitchen;
- McDowell Pavilion: Holds between 170-200 patrons;
- Quail Acres Pavilion: Holds between 170-200 patrons;
- Borland Pavilion: Holds up to 40 patrons;
- Forman's Mill Pavilion: Holds up to 40 patrons;
- A full-size synthetic turf field;
- Four (4) Baseball Fields;
- Three (3) large playground areas;
- Two (2) outdoor basketball courts;
- 18 hole Frisbee Golf Course.

Questions:

- Should any new amenities be added?
- Do any existing facilities need to be updated or upgraded?

2. How to best develop 81 acres in Eighty-Four?

The Township owns 81 acres along Route 519 in Eighty-Four, PA. We expect to see continued growth in this area of the Township. Approximately 8 acres of the property have been utilized to construct a fire station. The residual 73 acres is presently a mixture of fields, streams, and forest.

Questions:

- Should the residual land be incorporated into the park system?
- If yes, what is the best use of the space?

3. Borland Manor Parkette

The Township owns this roughly 1.5 acre former community park. The lot was proposed to be sold in the fall of 2021. However, a large number of area residents attended a meeting and requested the land remain in the Township's possession and asking that we determine the best use of the land. The lot

has two access points to Demar Blvd, a local road with close access to I-79. This parcel is located within a block of Borland Manor Elementary School and the Canon-Mac Intermediate Unit.

Questions:

- How can this land best be utilized?

4. Alexander Playground

Alexander Playground is located on a 0.5 acre lot in the village of Strabane at the corner of Alexander Ave. and Selwyn St. Current amenities include a swing set and outdoor basketball court.

Questions:

- What improvements can be made at this location?
- Should existing amenities be updated?

B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATON

Public participation is required throughout the planning process to help determine and prioritize community needs. Public participation techniques are outlined in the Bureau's *Public Participation Guide* and below. Community involvement and engagement must prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure feedback and recommendations that are comprehensive, appropriate, and accountable. The narrative must include a detailed summary of the public participation methods, results, and conclusions (i.e. areas of consensus and/or contention); raw data should be included in the appendix.

1. Public Participation shall include the following:
 - a. Study Committee– The study committee will meet a minimum of monthly with the consultant and will include the following individuals:
 - Lisa Sheehan, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Board
 - Michelle Quinn, Member of the Parks and Recreation Board
 - Matthew Cunningham, Director of Parks and Recreation
 - Emily Holmes, Elected Township Supervisor
 - Donald Progar, Community volunteer and long-time resident
 - Josh Hickman, resident, geologist, and local boy scout troop leader
 - Davis Garner, local High School student
 - Steve Glancy, Canon-Mac Youth Soccer, Past President
 - Jill Motzer, Community volunteer
 - b. Public Meetings – A minimum of two public work-shops will be held to interface the planning process with the public. Additionally, the consultant will submit the final Plan to the Parks and Recreation Board at one of their public meetings, before also presenting the Plan during a public meeting of the elected Board of Supervisors.
 - c. Key Person Interviews– The study committee will identify 15-20 individuals for key person interviews in consultation with the chosen consultant.
 - d. Citizen Survey – The chosen consultant shall conduct a citizen survey of residents seeking their perspectives on the four focus areas. The study committee will work with the chosen consultant to determine the most effective form of obtaining citizen surveys, as well as, an appropriate expected percentage of return.
 - e. Planning Document Review – The chosen consultant will be expected to review previous planning documents and consider the results of recent public participation efforts regarding parks, recreation, and open space. These must include the 2016 Comprehensive Plan.

C. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The background information provides an overview of the community and the recreation, park, and open space system. Analyzing this data helps develop a future system that reflects the needs of

present and future residents as well as conserves the natural, cultural, and historic elements that contribute to the uniqueness and cohesiveness of the community. Provide the following information:

1. Community Background
 - a. Geographic location, size, regional context, character, history, etc.
 - b. Type of government.
 - c. History of the agency's recreation and park functions.
2. Socioeconomics (use of U.S. Census data is required)
 - a. Demographic trends including population, age, gender, race & ethnicity, households, income, education, and visitors.
 - b. Population projections for at least the next 10-20 years.
 - c. Economic trends including economic conditions, major employers, and fiscal health.
3. Physical Characteristics
 - a. Updated version of the existing municipal land use map.
 - b. Inventory and discussion of natural features and ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, waterways, farmland, critical habitats, etc.
 - c. Inventory and discussion of cultural and man-made features such as historic sites, transportation corridors, housing, utilities, etc.
 - d. Inventory and analysis of environmental issues such as stormwater and brownfields.
4. Provisions of existing planning documents (i.e. Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Watershed or Rivers Conservation Plan, Greenway Plan, [2020-2024 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#), etc.).

D. AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

The agency mission statement provides a clear definition of the agency's purpose and responsibilities. Goals address what the agency hopes to achieve in the next ten years. Agencies that have already developed a mission statement and goals should analyze them to determine if they clearly focus the agency's direction and purpose, are reasonable and achievable, and reflect the needs of their constituents. For agencies initiating a parks, recreation, and open space program, completion of this task may be best accomplished at the end of the project.

1. Discuss the purpose and use of a mission statement, goals, and objectives. They should have long-term applicability beyond the planning process.
2. Develop a draft mission statement, goals, and objectives. They should be re-evaluated at the end of the planning process to ensure that they are still appropriate for the agency.

E. AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

Analyze how effectively the agency administers recreation, park, and open space services. Agency practices are compared to accepted administrative practices. Agency practices include the ability to involve the public with long-range planning efforts; the ability to work cooperatively with other public agencies, community groups, and businesses; and the effectiveness of existing office procedures and policies.

Describe and analyze the following:

1. Enabling legal document from which the agency receives authority and responsibility.
2. Relationships between the agency and community organizations and agency involvement with regional initiatives.
3. Public relations and marketing efforts to promote agency functions, services, and programs.
4. Cooperative efforts and established agreements between the agency and other municipalities, schools, recreation providers, conservation groups, support groups, area businesses, etc.
5. Policies and procedures that govern the general operation of the agency recreation, park, and open space functions (use of facilities, non-resident participation, policy manuals, risk management program, record keeping, etc.).
6. Opportunities for public involvement in planning efforts including use of program evaluation forms, distribution of surveys, public meetings, etc.
7. Record-keeping procedures.
8. Administrative challenges.

F. AGENCY PERSONNEL

Describes who is responsible for providing the agency recreation, park, and open space programs and services and analyze the effectiveness of each involved entity. For most agencies, at least one entity is responsible for developing programs and services. Agency personnel may include the governing body, municipal manager; public works department; paid recreation and park staff, maintenance staff, program staff, and/or volunteers such as recreation and park board members.

1. Analyze the organizational chart for accuracy with current conditions and procedures.
2. Describe and analyze the following:
 - a. Number, type, roles, and responsibilities of agency personnel currently responsible for providing recreation, park, and open space programs and services.
 - b. Number, type, roles, and responsibilities of volunteers, such as the recreation and park board or arts council, that are responsible for maintaining recreation, park, and open space and assisting with programs, services, etc.
 - c. How new staff/volunteers are hired/appointed and trained for new positions.
 - d. Existing personnel policies including manuals, appraisal systems, continuing education, etc.
 - e. Staffing level (paid or volunteer) needed to effectively administer and maintain the agency facilities, programs, and services. Compare with existing conditions.

G. FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Analyze existing recreation, park, and open space resources, regardless of ownership, and compare to standards based on population and service areas. The general locations and types of new recreation, park, and open space facilities and development priorities are identified with strong public participation and input.

1. On a map broken down by census tract or neighborhood, identify the location of indoor and outdoor facilities and open space owned/operated by:
 - a. Public agencies
 - b. Schools (public and private, all levels)

- c. Major non-profits and quasi-public organizations (athletic associations, scouts, conservancies, service clubs, YMCA/YWCA's, etc.)
 - d. Major private businesses (health clubs, bowling alleys, etc.)
2. Provide the following information in chart form for the indoor and outdoor facilities and open space identified on the map:
 - a. Facility or open space name
 - b. Ownership
 - c. Number and type of facilities
 - d. Acreage
 - e. General condition and use
3. Provide the following information for the indoor and outdoor facilities and open space owned or managed by the agency:
 - a. Condition and required upgrades and/or major repairs.
 - b. Obsolete, underutilized, and/or inappropriate.
 - c. Compliance with current safety guidelines such as those developed by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (Playgrounds).
 - d. Compliance with accessibility standards (Americans with Disabilities Act).
 - e. Compliance with inclusive design standards.
 - f. Connectivity to transportation network (walk, bike, vehicle, public transit, etc.).
4. Determine local access to outdoor recreation using the following resources:
 - a. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) [Park Metrics](#) is a comprehensive source of data benchmarks and insights for the effective management and planning of operating resources and capital facilities.
 - b. The Trust for Public Land (TPL) [ParkServe](#) interactive platform tracks park access in urban areas. The web-based tool identifies local parks and open space, determines the percentage of residents who live within a 10-minute walk, and identifies the neighborhoods most in need of new parks.
 - c. DCNR Partnered with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and WeConservePA to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to understand access to outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania. TPL's Research and Innovation Team used the data analysis methods to assist DCNR in identifying [areas with the greatest need and opportunity](#). This [interactive map of outdoor recreation access in Pennsylvania](#) shows the results of the analysis. Data is available for a 10-Minute Walk by Municipality & County and a 10-Minute Drive for Trails and Water.
5. Compare public input with existing facilities and conditions.
6. Analyze the condition of existing greenways and riparian forest buffers and the development of additional resources in coordination with statewide initiatives and goals.
7. Analyze open space preservation techniques such as mandatory dedication, overlay zoning, conservation easements, etc.
8. Additional items for Greenways:
 - a. Prepare a base map of the proposed greenways.
 - b. Determine land ownership along corridor and contact non-agency owners to gauge potential support.
 - c. Identify corridor boundary, topography, geology, significant natural features and historic/cultural resources.

- d. Conduct a wildlife analysis and document negative impacts of corridor development.
- e. Determine demand and profile of potential user groups (walkers, bikers, etc.)
- f. Determine potential connections to neighborhoods, businesses, transportation networks, etc.

H. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

For agencies that are currently maintaining facilities, analyze the effectiveness of the maintenance program. Agencies without any facilities are provided with an overview of recreation and park maintenance requirements and how they can develop effective maintenance programs to ensure the protection of future capital investments.

- 1. Describe the current maintenance program and analyze its effectiveness. This includes record keeping, preventive maintenance, use of a maintenance management plan, etc.
- 2. List major maintenance equipment including age and purpose.
- 3. Describe existing risk management efforts including inspection of park facilities, specifically playground equipment.
- 4. Analyze the adequacy of maintenance in relation to the condition of the recreation and park facilities and open space areas.

I. RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

For agencies that currently provide programs and services, compare existing offerings to those provided by other entities, the needs/wants of constituents, and professional standards. This comparison helps to determine if the agency provides a sufficiently broad range of cost-effective programs and services that constituents need/want. For agencies interested in providing programs and services, identify new programming areas and discuss an implementation strategy.

- 1. Provide a list of programs and services sponsored by public, non-profit, and private entities that include:
 - a. Sponsoring group
 - b. Program name
 - c. Participant target age and gender
 - d. Program fee (if any)
- 2. For agency or publicly sponsored programs and services, provide information about participation trends for the previous five years.
- 3. Determine availability of programs and services for:
 - a. Active and passive
 - b. Competitive and noncompetitive
 - c. Individuals and groups
 - d. All gender identities
 - e. All ages and abilities
 - f. All races and ethnicities
 - g. All income levels
 - h. All education levels
- 4. Analyze accessibility and inclusiveness of agency programs and services.

5. Identify program and service deficiencies and develop a strategy for the agency to address them.

J. FINANCING

Identify and analyze current and previous agency funding levels and sources, including tax and non-tax support, and compare to other municipal departments and similar agencies.

1. Compare tax support for recreation and parks in relation to the overall municipal budget and to other departments from the same municipality for the previous 5-year period.
2. Describe the agency philosophy for providing tax support to finance recreation and parks.
3. Compare agency capital and operating expenditures with agencies from municipalities that have similar populations and socio-economic characteristics.
4. Identify and analyze the major revenue sources (taxes, fees, donations, grants, etc.) and amounts used to finance recreation and parks.
5. Describe and analyze the current agency (recreation and park) budget process.
6. Identify new sources to finance recreation and parks and provide examples of their application.

K. RECOMMENDATIONS AND COST ESTIMATES

Outline specific agency priorities and actions to improve recreation and park facilities, programs, and services to meet community needs. Recommendations supported by data analysis and public input must be provided for scope of work elements. Cost estimates must be provided when appropriate.

1. Describe the recommended changes for administration, personnel, facilities, maintenance, programs, services, and financing and provide supporting data to justify the recommendations.
2. Provide a cost estimate to implement each recommendation and discuss potential implementation opportunities and challenges.
3. Additional items for Greenways:
 - a. Provide options for the development of different types of greenways (active, passive, resource protection, etc.).
 - b. Develop a greenway concept plan.
 - c. Phase acquisition and development and identify appropriate protection measures.
4. Each plan component must include:
 - a. An inventory of existing conditions.
 - b. A comparison of existing conditions with local or national standards.
 - c. Recommendations with priorities, timetables, and cost estimates.

L. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The cohesive and easy to follow five-year implementation plan must:

1. Prioritize the operating-related recommendations

2. Identify the following information for each recommendation:
 - a. Roles and responsibilities of public and non-public agencies.
 - b. Appropriate organizational structure to establish and maintain the facility.
 - c. Target dates for implementation.
 - d. Potential costs.
 - e. Potential funding source(s).

3. Prioritize capital improvement recommendations and provide a multi-year year Capital Development Program organized by short-term (1-3 years), medium-term (4-7 years) and long-term (8 plus years) projects. Identify the following information for each project:
 - a. Facility/area name.
 - b. Description of proposed improvements.
 - c. Total estimated development costs of proposed improvements, including engineering and design costs, project administration costs, acquisition and/or construction costs, and at least a 10% contingency.
 - d. Potential funding source(s).

4. Provide a five-year summary of the projected fiscal impact on the operating budget for operating-related costs associated with administration, personnel, programs, services, and maintenance.

M. ADDITIONAL SOW ELEMENTS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS (*optional*)

Include additional SOW elements and/or recommendations, as appropriate. These may include, but are not limited to:

1. Greenway Plan
2. Trail Network Plan
3. Pool Feasibility Study
4. Playground Safety Study
5. Concept Designs for Neighborhood Parks
6. Maintenance Management Plan
7. Customer Service and Marketing Plan

Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan (CRPOS)
Final Products

NARRATIVE REPORT

A draft final CRPOS Plan must be reviewed and approved by the Grantee and Bureau before it is officially adopted by the Grantee. Typically, the review process consists of reviewing a complete draft plan, providing comments, and reviewing a revised draft plan to ensure comments are adequately addressed.

The final CRPOS Plan must be a narrative, bound report beginning with an executive summary and followed by clearly labeled sections for each of the plan components in logical order. All supporting documents and information should be included in the appendix and not in the body of the report.

Executive Summary – Briefly describe the process, priorities, and final recommendations.

- A. Purpose, Goals, and Objectives
 - B. Public Participation
 - C. Background Information
 - D. Agency Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives
 - E. Agency Administration
 - F. Agency Personnel
 - G. Facilities and Open Space Inventory and Analysis
 - H. Facilities and Equipment Maintenance
 - I. Recreation Programs and Services
 - J. Financing
 - K. Recommendations and Cost Estimates
 - L. Plan Implementation
 - M. Additional SOW Elements and/or Recommendations (optional)
- Appendix

REQUIRED DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

The Grantee should determine the exact number of printed and electronic copies of the CRPOS Plan and state the requirement in the RFP.

The following documents must be submitted to DCNR:

- Two (2) printed and bound copies of the final CRPOS Plan with the cover signed, sealed, and dated by the design consultant.
- One (1) electronic PDF of the final CRPOS Plan (as a single document) with the cover signed, sealed, and dated by the design consultant.
- Two (2) printed and one (1) electronic PDF of other deliverables, as applicable.

Comprehensive Recreation, Park, and Open Space Plan (CRPOS) **DCNR Grant Application Cost Estimate Checklist**

Provide this checklist to a qualified design consultant to develop a detailed cost estimate to be submitted with the DCNR Grant Application. The cost estimate must be detailed for the project to be considered Ready-to-Go during the application review process.

