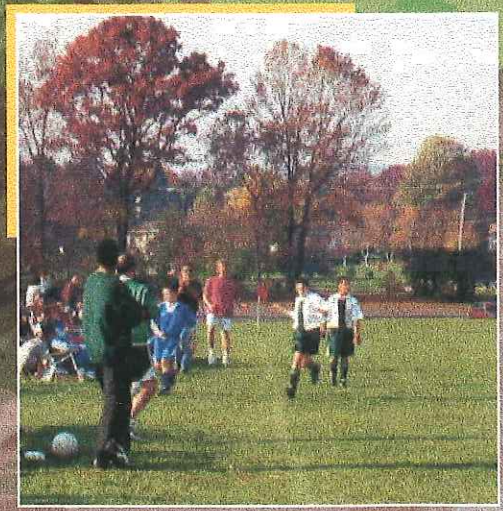
Park and Recreation Plan

East Whiteland Township
Chester County, Pennsylvania



2003

East Whiteland Township

Chester County, Pennsylvania

PARK AND RECREATION PLAN

Urban Research & Development Corporation
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Acknowledgments

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Board of Supervisors, 2003

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PURPOSE

PURPOSE

WHAT IS THIS PLAN ABOUT?

East Whiteland adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2001 that identifies the Township's policies on future preservation and development. The new Comprehensive Plan has led to a Zoning Ordinance update (now underway) and preparation of this Park and Recreation Plan. Among the policies in the new Comprehensive Plan is a commitment to providing quality park and recreation services for residents, workers and visitors to East Whiteland. This plan identifies how to improve park and recreation opportunities in the Township, including recommendations on creating a multi-use trail system. Ideas are also described for enhancing existing parks, adding new parks and refining how East Whiteland manages its park and recreation assets.

WHY DO WE NEED A PARK AND RECREATION PLAN?

Adopting a new Park and Recreation Plan for East Whiteland is important and timely for several reasons, including the following:

- Demand for recreation-related services has increased as the Township has added many new residents and businesses since the Township's existing park and recreation plan was adopted in 1993.
- The Township recognizes that a full range of up-to-date park and recreation opportunities are needed to maintain and improve quality of life in East Whiteland.
- Public parks and trails help conserve the environmental character of the Township by protecting natural features and preserving open space from over-development.

WHAT IS IN THIS PLAN?

This Park and Recreation Plan contains the following chapters:

- *The Existing Park and Recreation System* - a summary of recreation-related resources in East Whiteland today.
- *Needs Assessment* - an assessment of why improvements to the Township's park, recreation and open space system are needed.
- *Goals and Recommendations* - an identification of the actions East Whiteland should seriously consider taking to improve its recreation resources, and why.
- *Implementation* - a strategy for prioritizing recommended actions and carrying them out efficiently.

THE EXISTING PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM

THE EXISTING PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM

The parks, recreation and open space system in East Whiteland Township has two main components:

- *Recreation Lands and Facilities* - parkland and recreation facilities owned by East Whiteland Township and others that are available for the public to use.

- *Recreation Administration and Programs* - how the Township operates, maintains and funds its recreation services, including recreation programs.

Note: East Whiteland's physical landscape is important to this plan. Local woodlands, soils, steep slopes, stream corridors, and unique environmental areas provide the natural setting for current and future recreation resources, such as active-oriented parks, passive-oriented parks and trails. The East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2001 contains an up-to-date inventory of the municipality's natural features in text and map forms. The Comprehensive Plan also describes several recommended strategies for protecting natural features, preserving open space and conserving the overall natural character of the Township. The East Whiteland Township Zoning Ordinance (now being updated), and the East Whiteland Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance help implement the Township's conservation strategies and policies. While all of these documents were consulted, the relevant analysis and applicable regulations are not repeated in this plan.

RECREATION LANDS AND FACILITIES

This section identifies the type, size and location of publicly accessible parks and other recreation sites in East Whiteland. Four categories of sites are described:

- Township-Owned Sites
- Public School Sites
- County-Owned Sites
- Major Private Sites

See the Summary Listing of Publicly Accessible Recreation Sites table on page 13, and the accompanying map for a complete listing.

Township-Owned Sites

Public recreation sites owned by East Whiteland Township encompass 118.0 acres, including community parks, neighborhood parks, a nature preserve, tot lots, and undeveloped open space.

Community Parks

Community parks are typically areas of intense recreation activity. Active-oriented community parks feature athletic fields and courts. As the name implies, community parks serve residents of the entire community. They are usually the largest parks in a municipality's park system. People who use community parks most often drive there.

Conestoga Trail Soccer Field

The Conestoga Trail Soccer Field refers to the soccer field at the 11.2-acre East Whiteland Township Building site on Conestoga Road (PA Route 401). The field is heavily used by youth soccer players of various ages from the Greater Chester Valley Soccer Association. Parking is available in the paved parking area that serves the Township Building during business hours. Unpaved overflow parking is also available. The soccer field is on the Conestoga Road side of the site but is bordered by a fence to separate it from the road.

Swanenburg Property

The Swanenburg Property is a 16.2-acre site on Swedesford Road, one-tenth of a mile west of Bacton Hill Road. The East Whiteland Township Board of Supervisors is currently reviewing a master plan that calls for developing the property into a full-fledged community athletic complex. Proposed improvements include the following:

- 1 90' baseball field
- 1 60' baseball field
- 2 soccer fields
- 1 basketball court
- 1 roller hockey rink
- Playground equipment
- Multi-use paths connecting to the adjacent Chester Valley Trail
- Picnic facilities
- Concession building
- Parking space and restrooms

The Swanenburg property is bordered on the south by the Chester Valley Trail. Improvements are being funded with the assistance of a $200,000 grant under the Chester County Heritage Parks Program.

Battle of the Clouds Park

Battle of the Clouds Park is a 10.7-acre community park on Phoenixville Pike, north of Swedesford Road. The park is East Whiteland's newest developed recreation site. Site improvements include the following:

- 2 sand volleyball courts
- 1 soccer field
- 2 fenced Little League baseball/softball fields
- Gravel parking area (110 spaces)
- A 10-station outdoor fitness center
- Wood picnic pavilion with 7 picnic tables and 2 grills
- 2 play structures
- 1 swing set
- Block restroom/snack bar building

Battle of the Clouds Park is bordered on the south by the Chester Valley Trail.

Valley Creek Park

The 32.2-acre Valley Creek Park is East Whiteland's oldest community park and largest recreation site. It is situated on Route 29, one-half mile north of Route 202. The property is along the Valley Creek and features steep slopes and rolling topography. Active recreation facilities at Valley Creek Park include four tennis courts. Other features on-site include the following:

- Historic house (rented for residential use)
- Small frame garage/barn building
- Block restroom building
- Small log/stone building
- Wood picnic pavilion with 11 picnic tables
- 9 additional picnic tables
- 9 grills
- Swing set
- Sliding boards and jungle gym
- Plastic tot climbing animals
- Catch and release fishing stream
- Paved parking area (approximately 150 spaces)
- Paved trail for walking and internal circulation
- Hiking trail and wooden crossing of creek

East Whiteland recently acquired a grant under the Chester County Heritage Parks Program in the amount of $200,000. This grant, together with East Whiteland's local match, will fund the following improvements at Valley Creek Park. Construction is planned to begin in 2003:

- Resurfaced parking lot
- Amphitheater
- Walking trail
- Restroom and pavilion renovations
- Multi-piece play structure
- New picnic area
- Conduits for future lighting

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are usually walk-to sites that serve surrounding residential areas with open fields space, playground equipment and sometimes limited sports facilities, such as a small basketball court. Each of East Whiteland's neighborhood parks is less than 5 acres in size.

Whiteland Farms Park

Whiteland Farms Park is on Birch Road in the Whiteland Farms subdivision on the south side of Swedesford Road. Facilities at this 1-acre site include the following:

- 1 very small basketball court
- 3 picnic tables
- 1 swing set
- 1 climbing structure
- Plastic tot climbing animals

A PECO electric transmission line right of way borders the south side of Whiteland Farm Park. No off-street parking is available.

Down East Park

Down East Park is a 2.5-acre neighborhood park at the end of Winding Way in the Down East residential subdivision. On-site facilities include the following:

- 1 small baseball field with no diamond
- 1 small basketball court
- 1 swing set
- 1 sliding board

- 3 picnic tables
- Plastic tot climbing animals

Down East Park is entered via a walking path from Winding Road. No off-street parking is available. A PECO electric transmission line right of way borders the south side of the property.

Spring Mill Farms Park

Spring Mill Farms Park is a 4.4-acre neighborhood park site where Flintshire Road changes names to Atterbury Drive. The site, which is adjacent to the rear of Great Valley High School and Middle School, is an open grass lot with some trees. This park contains no recreation facilities or other improvements, except for volleyball posts.

Tot Lots

Tot lots are very small open space or playground sites, usually 1 acre or smaller in area. They cater to small children, who are typically accompanied to the site by an adult. Tot lots have a very small service area, usually one-quarter mile or less.

Bryn Erin @ Kelmar

Bryn Erin at Kelmar is a 0.13-acre site on Kelmar Avenue in the Bryn Erin development. It is a fenced tot lot that features the following playground equipment:

- 1 bench
- 1 swing set
- 1 sliding board
- 1 plastic climbing structure
- Plastic tot climbing animals

Bryn Erin @ Markel

Bryn Erin @ Markel is on Markel Road in the Bryn Erin development. It is 0.2 acres in area and contains the following playground equipment:

- 1 bench
- 1 swing set
- 1 slide
- Plastic tot climbing animals

Nature Preserves

Nature preserves are ecologically interesting areas set aside to protect on-site flora and fauna. They also provide people with an opportunity to appreciate and learn about nature. Nature preserves typically do not have athletic facilities but may have trails or an indoor nature center. Nature preserves usually serve an entire municipality, and sometimes more than one.

Ecology Park

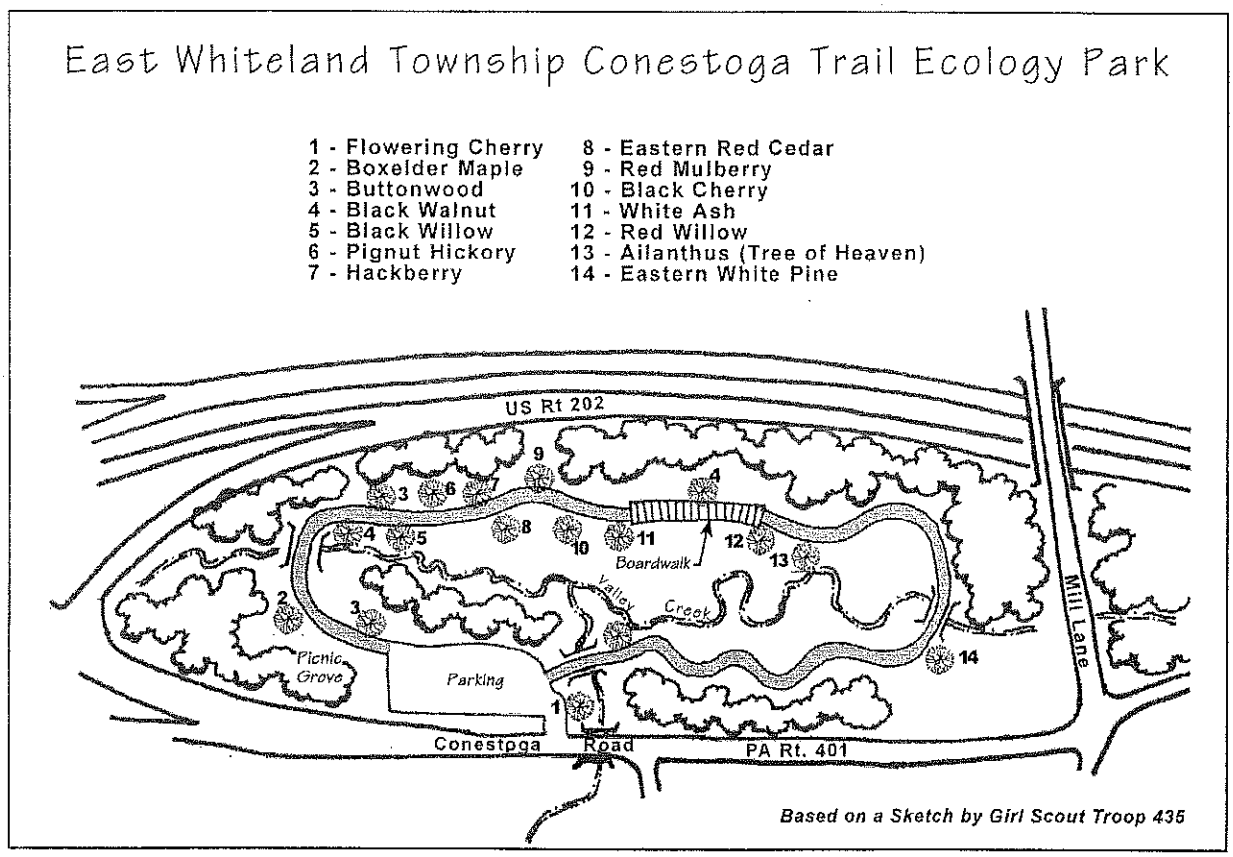
Ecology Park is on Conestoga Road (PA Route 401) across from the East Whiteland Township Building. The property includes 15.0 acres, about 60% of which is in Valley Creek floodplain. Valley Creek is an Exceptional Value Waterway, a Pennsylvania state designation for streams that are protected by special effluent discharge restrictions because of their high water quality. Since Ecology Park opened in 1998, East Whiteland has established a walking path and a wildflower meadow there. Improvements on-site include the following:

- 4-foot wide, crush stone loop trail (1/3-mile in length)
- Picnic area along trail (includes 5 picnic tables and 2 grills)
- Gravel parking (approximately 30 spaces)
- 3 wood benches
- Wood boardwalk over wetlands
- 3 pre-fab stream crossing bridges on trail
- 1 portable toilet
- 1 information box with park brochures
- "Bicycles Prohibited" signs at each end of the loop trail

East Whiteland Township is planning stream bank stabilization activities along Valley Creek within the park to reduce erosion and sedimentation. Ambient noise levels will be reduced when PennDOT constructs sound barriers adjacent to the park as part of the Route 202 improvement project.

Open Spaces

Open spaces are Township-owned sites that East Whiteland acquired to set aside for resource conservation or storm water management. In most cases, these small properties were dedicated to the Township by residential developers in accordance with East Whiteland's mandatory dedication requirements. The Township has no current plans to develop any of these sites for active recreational use, although it is conceivable that one of more of these open spaces could become part of a Township trail system in the future. Open space locations are shown on the Publicly Accessible Recreation Sites map.



Open Spaces

• Chester Valley Knoll	2.1 acres
• Oakhill Circle	2.4 acres
• Brooklands	1.8 acres
• Glenoch Way	1.4 acres
• Bryn Erin Moores Road Basin	2.5 acres
• Bryn Erin Kelmar Avenue Basin	1.1 acres
• Aston Woods	3.6 acres
• Wyckfield Subdivision	2.4 acres
• Rubino Property	7.0 acres

Public School Sites

The Great Valley School District serves Charlestown Township, East Whiteland Township, Malvern Borough and Willistown Township. East Whiteland Township is home to the Great Valley High School and Middle School complex, and the K. D. Markeley Elementary School property, which is adjacent to the Great Valley School District Administration Building.

Great Valley High School and Middle School

The Great Valley High School and Middle School complex is a 75.0-acre site on Phoenixville Pike north of Conestoga Road (PA Route 401). The property contains two separate school buildings. There are both indoor and outdoor athletic facilities on-site, as listed below. Some of these facilities are available for community use with approval by the School District. However, school functions have priority in all scheduling.

- 2 outdoor basketball courts
- 1 rollerblade/street hockey court
- 11 tennis courts
- 2 full-size baseball/multi-purpose fields
- 1 varsity softball field
- 1 football/track and field facility (2,500 seating capacity)
- 1 practice track
- 5 soccer/multi-purpose fields
- 1 indoor High School gym/basketball court (1,500 seating capacity)
- 1 indoor High School gym/basketball court with a climbing wall
- 1 indoor Middle School gym
- 1 outdoor tot lot for the pre-school/day care
- 2 conference/training rooms (100 seats each)
- 2 cafeterias (one in each school building)
- 1 auditorium (675 seats)
- Paved parking (775 spaces)

The Great Valley School District recently acquired two adjacent properties totaling 4.5 acres to use as a construction staging ground for school renovations, and then for new athletic fields. In addition, the School District has an agreement with the Pickford Run homeowners association to use two multi-purpose practice fields on Flat Road east of Sidley Road.

K. D. Markeley Elementary School, including the Great Valley School District Administration Building

The K. D. Markeley Elementary School and Great Valley School District Administration Building complex occupies 52.2 acres on both sides of Swedesford Road east of Church Road. The elementary school and administration building are on a 42.2-acre tract on the south side of Swedesford Road. The School District recently purchased 10 acres on the north side of Swedesford Road to construct two full-size soccer fields and one full-size baseball field. Existing facilities on the south side of Swedesford Road include the following:

- 1 youth soccer field
- 1 outdoor basketball court
- 1 indoor gym/basketball court
- 1 large, multi-piece playground

- 1 cafeteria at the elementary school
- 1 large meeting room at the administration Building
- 6 conference/training rooms at the administration Building
- Paved parking (316 spaces)

School sites are available for community use with approval by the Great Valley School District. Please see the Appendix for a description of pertinent policies and application procedures.

Bacton Hill Road Property

Great Valley School District also owns a small property on the east side of Bacton Hill Road north of Swedesford Road. This recently acquired site contains 5.7 acres.

County-Owned Sites

The Chester Valley Trail

The Chester Valley Trail is the only recreation land in East Whiteland Township owned by Chester County. The Chester Valley Trail is proposed on former railroad right of way between Chester County's Struble Trail in Downingtown Borough and the Chester County/Montgomery County line in King of Prussia. From that point, Montgomery County hopes to establish a link over the Schuylkill Expressway to the Schuylkill River Trail, which currently connects Philadelphia with Valley Forge Park and points west.

Chester County's focus right now is on the 14-mile segment of the trail from the Exton Park site (on Ship Road in West Whiteland Township) to the Montgomery County line. This trail segment crosses three Chester County townships: West Whiteland, East Whiteland and Tredyffrin.

Planning, design and construction for the Chester Valley Trail are proceeding in four phases:

- Pre-Engineering
- Preliminary Design
- Final Design
- Construction

The Chester Valley Trail is now in the Preliminary Design phase, which Chester County expects to complete in the latter half of 2003. The County hopes to begin constructing major portions of the trail in 2005. A small portion in Tredyffrin Township has already been built by a private developer. The route for the 14-mile trail segment now under design will utilize the following:

- 9 existing railroad bridges
- 3 bridges to carry the trail over existing roads
- 3 box culverts to carry the trail beneath existing bridges

- 13 at-grade road crossings
- 1 stream crossing

In East Whiteland, the Chester Valley Trail will involve the following ten road crossings, from east to west:

• Route 29	at-grade
• Swedesford Road	box culvert underpass beneath an existing bridge
• Malin Station	at-grade
• Route 401	at-grade
• Mill Lane	at-grade
• Church Road	new overpass
• Route 202	box culvert underpass beneath an existing bridge
• Phoenixville Pike	at-grade
• Bacton Hill Road	at-grade
• Swedesford Road	box culvert underpass beneath an existing bridge

Chester County estimates the Exton Park to Montgomery County segment of the Chester Valley Trail (the part now under design) will require nearly $6 million to construct. Federal Transportation Enhancement grants administered by PennDOT have provided approximately $4 million to date. In 2000, Chester County opened a demonstration section of the trail to the public. It extends from the Exton Park site in West Whiteland to Battle of the Clouds Park in East Whiteland. This demonstration section has a stone surface. But the entire trail will be paved when it is completed to avoid the maintenance problems associated with unpaved trails. Chester County will be responsible for all trail maintenance and administration. The County hopes that local police will assist the County Ranger based at Springton Manor in providing security along the trail corridor.

Major Private Sites

The last category of recreation sites in East Whiteland Township is Major Private Sites. The largest is Chester Valley Golf Club, a private membership golf course. The Great Valley Little League field is owned by Great Valley Little League, a non-profit youth sports provider. The Siemens and Liberty Property ballfields are owned and utilized by private corporations. Immaculata College has some recreation facilities that have been used in the past by the public. However, these facilities primarily serve the school's students. Open space owned by the Pickford Run Homeowners Association is leased by Great Valley School District.

SUMMARY LISTING OF PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE RECREATION SITES EAST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP 2003

Township-Owned Sites	**Acres**
Community Parks	
Conestoga Trail Soccer Field	11.2
Swanenburg Property	16.2
Battle of the Clouds Park	10.7
Valley Creek Park	32.2
	70.3
Neighborhood Parks	
Whiteland Farms Park	1.0
Down East Park	2.5
Spring Mill Farms Park	4.4
	7.9
Tot Lots	
Bryn Erin @ Kelmar	0.3
Bryn Erin @ Markel	0.2
	0.5
Nature Preserves	
Ecology Park	15.0
	15.0
Open Spaces	
Chester Valley Knoll	2.1
Oakhill Circle	2.4
Brooklands	1.8
Glenoch Way	1.4
Bryn Erin Moores Road Basin	2.5
Bryn Erin Kelmar Avenue Basin	1.1
Aston Woods	3.6
Wyckfield Subdivision	2.4
Rubino Property	7.0
	24.3
Total Township-Owned Acreage	**118.0**

Public School Sites

Great Valley High School and Middle School
K. D. Markeley Elementary School and District Administration Building
Bacton Hill Road Property

Major Private Sites

Chester Valley Golf Club
Great Valley Little League Field
Immaculata College
Siemens SMS Fields
Liberty Property Fields
Pickford Run (leased by the School District)

County-Owned Sites

Chester Valley Trail

East Whiteland Township Park & Recreation Plan

PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE RECREATION SITES

TOWNSHIP - OWNED SITES

COMMUNITY PARKS
1. Conestoga Trail Soccer Field (Township Bldg.)
2. Swanenburg Property
3. Battle of the Clouds Park
4. Valley Creek Park

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
5. Whiteland Farm Park
6. Down East Park
7. Spring Mill Farms Park

TOT LOTS
8. Bryn Erin @ Kelmar
9. Bryn Erin @ Markel

NATURE PRESERVES
10. Ecology Park

OPEN SPACES
11. Chester Valley Knoll
12. Oakhill Circle
13. Brooklands
14. Glenoch Way
15. Bryn Erin Moores Road Basin
16. Bryn Erin Kelmar Avenue Basin
17. Aston Woods
18. Wyckfield Subdivision
19. Rubino Property

PUBLIC SCHOOL SITES

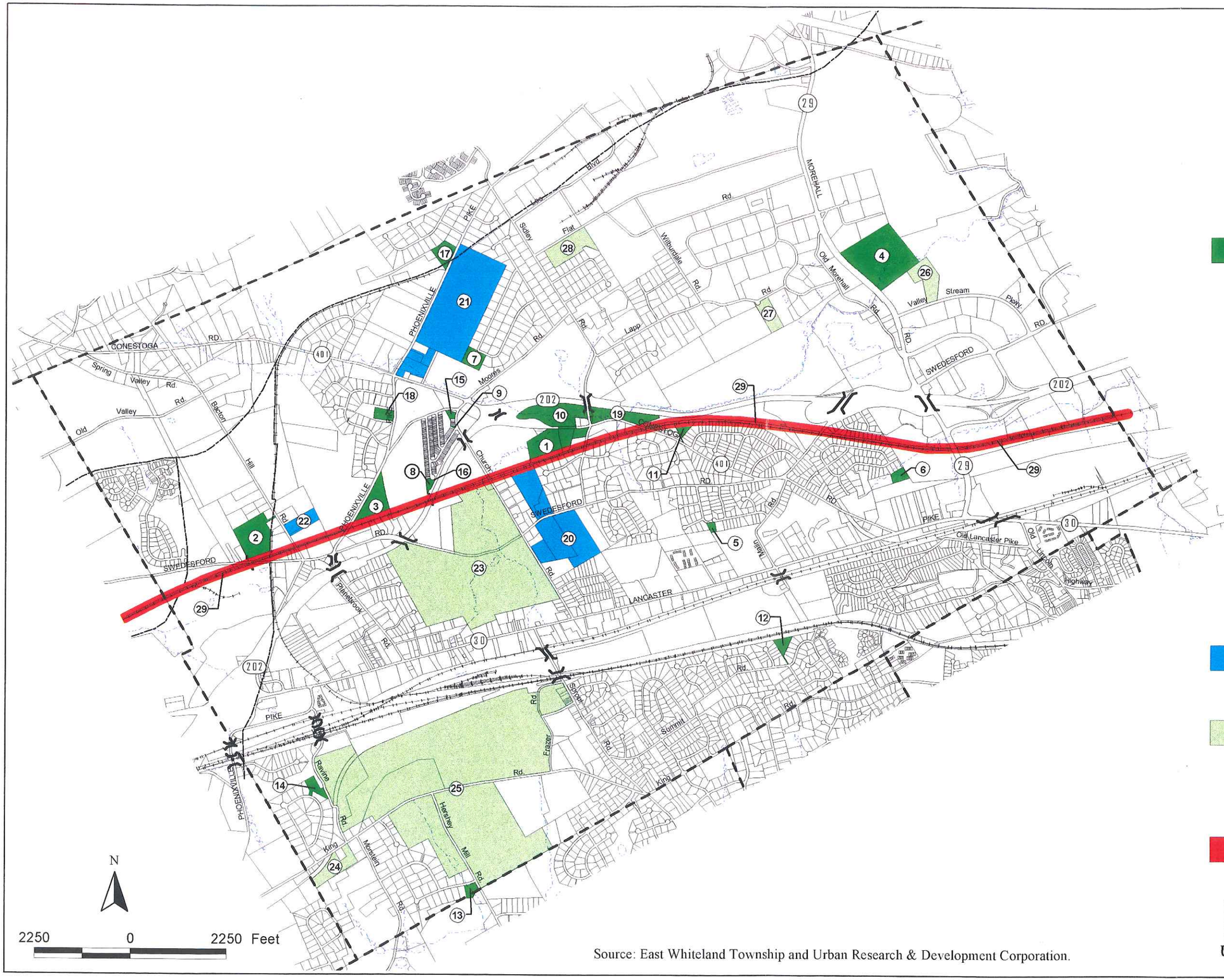
20. K.D. Markley Elementary School
21. Great Valley High School and Middle School
22. School-Owned Property

MAJOR PRIVATE SITES

23. Chester Valley Golf Club
24. Great Valley Little League Field
25. Immaculata College/Convent
26. Siemens Fields
27. Liberty Property Fields
28. Pickford Run (leased by School District)

COUNTY - OWNED SITES

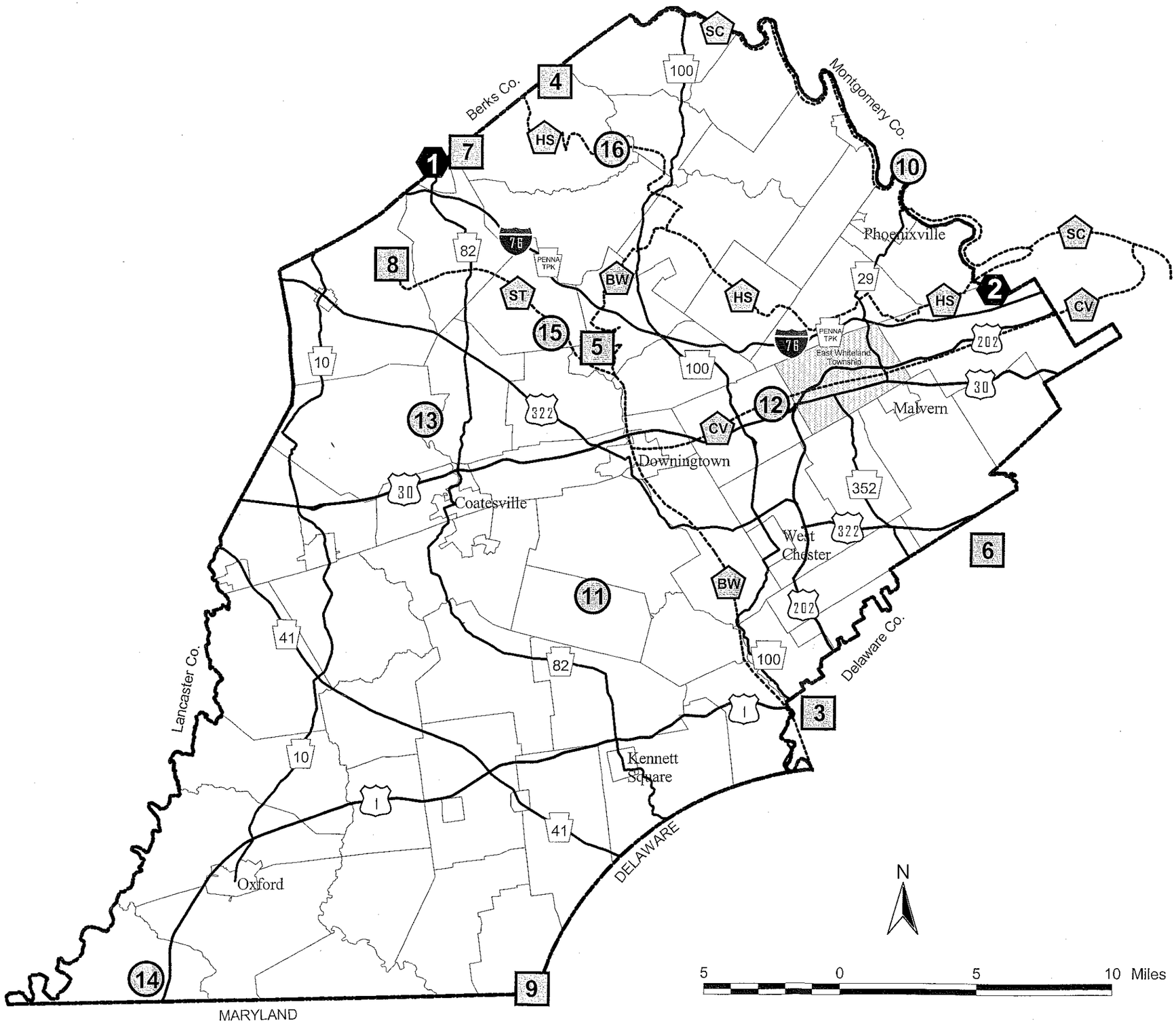
29. Chester Valley Trail



Source: East Whiteland Township and Urban Research & Development Corporation.

Urban Research & Development Corporation
URDC
28 W. Broad Street Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

East Whiteland Township Park & Recreation Plan



Chester County Regional Recreation Sites

NATIONAL PARKLAND

1. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
2. Valley Forge National Historic Park

STATE PARKLAND

3. Brandywine Battlefield State Park
4. French Creek State Park
5. Marsh Creek State Park
6. Ridley Creek State Park
7. State Game Lands No. 43
8. Struble Lake State Recreation Area
9. White Clay Creek Preserve

COUNTY PARKLAND

10. Black Rock Preserve (proposed)
11. Embreeville Park (proposed)
12. Exton Park (proposed)
13. Hibernia Park
14. Nottingham Park
15. Springton Manor Farm
16. Warwick Park

TRAILS

BW Brandywine Trail
CV Chester Valley Trail (proposed)
HS Horseshoe Trail
SC Schuylkill Trail (portions existing)
ST Struble Trail

Municipal Boundaries

Source: Chester County Parks & Recreation and URDC

Urban Research & Development Corporation
URDC 28 Bethlehem Plaza • Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018 • 610-865-0701

RECREATION ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAMS

Recreation Administration

Recreation Administration refers to how the Township operates its park and recreation services. Sub-topics include management, funding, public communications, security, maintenance and personnel, as summarized below.

Management

The East Whiteland Township Board of Supervisors created the East Whiteland Township Park and Recreation Board by ordinance in 1960. The Park and Recreation Board contains seven members. Appointments are for five-year terms. The Board makes recommendations on policy and administrative matters to the Board of Supervisors and Township Manager, as appropriate. Official communications between the Park and Recreation Board and the Supervisors are handled via written minutes. Duties of the Park and Recreation Board have mainly evolved from convention and tradition. The East Whiteland Township Park and Recreation Board meets each month. The Board plans, develops and implements the recreation activities offered by East Whiteland Township.

Funding

The Park and Recreation Board presents an operating budget request and description of proposed activities to the Township Board of Supervisors each year. The Supervisors work with the Park and Recreation Board to try to accommodate park and recreation spending requests within the the overall annual municipal operating budget. Fees from the Park and Recreation Board's Summer Recreation Program contribute to this budget.

Capital spending for parks and recreation is part of the Township's overall capital budget. East Whiteland has been successful in acquiring matching grants for selected park improvements from both the Chester County Heritage Park Program and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Public Communications

East Whiteland communicates information about its recreation programs and facilities through the Township's newsletter, The Index. The newsletter is published once in the spring and once in the

fall. East Whiteland also has an extensive web site with sections devoted to park facilities and recreational events.

Security

The East Whiteland Township Police Department provides security at all the public recreation areas as part of its regular patrols. Vandalism is not reported as a significant problem at any recreation areas in the Township.

Maintenance

The East Whiteland Township Public Works Director is in charge of all park maintenance in the Township. He is assisted by the seven-person Highway Division of the Public Works Department. Part-time seasonal workers augment this staff during summer months. All maintenance equipment is stored in East Whiteland's maintenance garage on Planebrook Road. The Township replaces maintenance equipment on an as-needed basis. The Township pays close attention to risk management issues. Public Works personnel continually observe Township recreation areas for safety hazards. However, Township personnel currently do not hold formal safety inspections; nor do they use a standardized safety checklist to evaluate playground equipment and play areas.

Personnel

Recruitment, hiring, orientation, training and performance evaluation for East Whiteland Township personnel are supervised by the Township Manager. On these matters, the Township manager works with the Police Chief where police are involved, the Public Works Director, where maintenance personnel are involved, or the Park and Recreation Board in the case of the part-time recreation counselors hired for the Summer Recreation Program..

Recreation Programs

The Township, local athletic organizations and an assortment of other organizations each sponsor recreation programs and activities available to East Whiteland residents. The Township has responsibility for planning and implementing only its own Township-sponsored offerings.

Township Recreation Programs

Summer Recreation Program

East Whiteland sponsors a summer recreation program for children ages 5 to 12 at K. S. Markeley School. Activities include arts, crafts, sports, games, and field trips. The program runs weekday mornings from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m, from late June to late July. Children in grades K through 6 are eligible to participate. The fee was $75 in 2002. Specific program information is available at the Township Building and published in the spring edition of the Township newsletter.

East Whiteland Community Weekend

East Whiteland Community Weekend is a two-day celebration in May that features Super Saturday and Spectacular Sunday. In 2002, Super Saturday included community-wide garage sales and the Township's third annual road rally. Spectacular Sunday featured a restaurant festival, live entertainment, softball (the Police vs. the Fire Department), a clown, a petting zoo, and safety demonstrations.

East Whiteland Community Health Day

East Whiteland Township sponsored a Community Health Day in 1999, 2000 and 2001. The Township plans to hold another Community Health Day in 2003. Held in cooperation with Paoli Memorial Hospital, Community Health Day offers free blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar level checks. Underprivileged women are also eligible for free mammagram tests.

Ecology Park Tour

Ecology Park has a self-guided tour that offers excellent examples of indigenous trees and bushes. Tour brochures are available at the park and the Township Building.

Fireworks Display

East Whiteland sponsors an annual fireworks display to celebrate July 4th. The fireworks, which started in 2001, are held at Great Valley High School.

Youth Sports Programming

There are a variety of sports programs available to East Whiteland youth. Most of these are regional programs open to registration from municipalities in and around the Great Valley School District. The following are the sponsors of the area's major youth sports programs:

- Great Valley Little League
- The Greater Chester Valley Soccer Association
- Biddie Basketball
- Great Valley Wrestling
- Great Valley School District Community Basketball Program
- Great Valley Youth Lacrosse

Other Recreation Programs and Activities

The following are some of the major additional public recreation, adult education, and civic-oriented activities open to residents of East Whiteland Township:

- East Whiteland Township Historical Commission
- East Whiteland Township Environmental Advisory Commission
- Adult School Night of Chester County
- Main Line Adult School Night
- Adult education available through the Immaculata College Business Development and Training Center
- Chester County Intermediate Unit Adult Education
- Boy Scouts of America
- Girl Scouts of America
- Programs at the Malvern Library, Paoli Library, and Chester County Library (Exton Branch)
- Upper Main Line Senior Center
- Great Valley School District allows public walking at certain school facilities before and after school hours

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The best way to evaluate park and recreation needs is to use a combination of techniques. One technique is to refer to population-based guidelines that were developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association. Surveying the opinions of residents who use the system is another valid approach. A third method is to form and gather input from a task force, and a fourth method is to gather input directly from residents at public meetings. East Whiteland used all three of these techniques as part of preparing this plan.

NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION GUIDELINES

How much parkland is enough? The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has traditionally recommended that municipalities provide up to 10.5 acres of active recreation land per 1,000 residents. "Active recreation land" as it applies to these guidelines means parks with athletic facilities and/or playground equipment, as opposed to land preserved primarily for its environmental amenities.

Counting the Swanenburg property where ballfields are planned but not yet constructed, East Whiteland Township contains the following areas available for publicly accessible active recreation. In accordance with NRPA procedures, adjusted acreages for each site are noted below. To estimate the proportion of each site devoted to publicly accessible recreation, only 25% of each school site is counted and only 50% of the Township building site is counted.

• Conestoga Trail Soccer Field	5.6 (50% of the site)
• Swanenburg Property	16.2
• Battle of the Clouds Park	10.7
• Valley Creek Park	32.2
• Whiteland Farm	1.0
• Down East Park	2.5
• Great Valley Little League Field	9.1
• Great Valley High School and Middle School	18.8 (25% of the site)
• K. D. Markeley Elementary School and Admin. Bldg.	13.1 (25% of the site)
	109.2 acres

East Whiteland's 2000 population was 9,333, according to the U.S. Census. At 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents, NRPA's guidelines suggest East Whiteland should have a minimum of 98 acres of active parkland. The Township's 109.2 adjusted acres of active parkland compares favorably with the NRPA standard.

The East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan states that " A likely year 2020 population for East Whiteland Township is somewhere between 10,500 and 12,500 residents" According to NRPA's per capita guidelines (10.5 acres per 1,000 residents), East Whiteland should have between 110 and 131 acres of active parkland by this time.

NRPA no longer relies strictly on these guidelines because of the growing use of many parks by residents of two or more municipalities and the importance today of greenways and other non-sports oriented facilities. Statistical guidelines are just one indicator. *They should never be considered definitive.* NRPA parkland guidelines should be used only as part of a more comprehensive needs analysis that considers local perceptions and preferences. This is especially true in East Whiteland where: a) residents use recreation facilities throughout the region, not just those in their own municipality; and b) interest is strong in establishing open spaces for non-athletic purposes (e.g. trails).

THE PUBLIC SURVEY

To obtain direct public input into the Park and Recreation Plan, East Whiteland Township mailed public surveys to Township households and posted the survey on the Township web site. While not every respondent answered every question on the survey, the following are the tabulations and highlights of the survey returns.

1. How long have you lived in East Whiteland Township?

	No. of Responses	Percent of Responses
• Less than 5 years	24	(21.6%)
• 5-9 years	18	(16.2%)
• 10-14 years	20	(18.0%)
• 15-19 years	12	(10.8%)
• 20 years or more	37	(33.3%)

People who have lived in East Whiteland Township for over 20 years accounted for one third of the surveys returned. Residents of less than 5 years comprised over 21%, and those residing in the Township for between 5 and 9 years accounted for another 16.2%. This is very typical for public surveys. Long-term residents nearly always account for the most survey returns.

2. Do you believe East Whiteland Township needs more public parkland? If yes, what type?

	No. of Responses	Percent of Responses
• No	10	(10.4%)
• Yes	86	(89.6%)
• Larger, centrally located parks	42	(48.8%)
• Smaller, neighborhood-oriented parks	23	(26.7%)
• Expand existing parks	21	(24.4%)

Township residents show strong support for the creation of additional parkland. Of those who favor more parkland, nearly half would prefer larger, centrally-located parks. The remainder of park proponents are nearly split between the expansion of existing parks and the creation of small neighborhood parks.

3. Check the three types of additional recreation facilities that you feel are most needed in East Whiteland Township.

Item	Number and %	Item	Number and %
Football/ soccer fields	20 (5.9%)	Swimming pool	29 (8.6%)
Outdoor basketball	15 (4.4%)	Baseball / softball fields	4 (1.2%)
Volleyball courts	2 (0.6%)	Indoor ice skating facility	5 (1.5%)
Preserved natural areas	36 (10.7%)	Children's playgrounds	15 (4.4%)
In-line skating/ skateboard facilities	27 (8.0%)	Picnic areas and pavilions	20 (5.9%)
Performing arts space	15 (4.4%)	Street hockey area	6 (1.8%)
Jogging/ walking/ in-line skating/ bike trails	68 (20.1%)	Greenway corridors	33 (9.8%)
Tennis facilities	3 (0.9%)	Teen center	16 (4.7%)
Golf course / driving range	13 (3.8%)	Senior center	5 (1.5%)
Other (see comments)	5 (1.5%)		

Preserving nature and establishing a trail network should be the Township's highest priorities, according to the results of this survey. The most common response (at more than 20%) was the desire for an exercise trail. Preservation of natural areas and the establishment of greenway corridors were the second and third most common responses, respectively, each comprising about 10% of survey results. Among the remaining recreation options, the most requested item was a public swimming pool. Of the six respondents who chose "other" in the survey, four would like to see a dog recreation area, while two remaining suggestions mentioned the addition of sidewalks and larger shoulders for bikers, as well as bike and pedestrian trails to commercial areas.

4. Would you be likely to use a continuous, inter-connected township-wide trail system in East Whiteland designed for pedestrians, runners, skaters and bikers?

	No. of Responses	Percent of Responses
• Yes	77	(81.1%)
• No	10	(10.5%)
• Not sure	8	(8.4%)

A strong majority of Township citizens (81%) support a multi-use trail system, while only 10% disagree and 8% are not sure. Several comments indicated that the Township should finish in a timely fashion those trail projects that have already been initiated, referring presumably to The Chester Valley Trail.

5. What group(s) in East Whiteland Township do you believe **most** need(s) more recreation opportunities?

Group	Number and %	Group	Number and %
Preschoolers	3 (2.5%)	Children (6-12)	10 (8.4%)
Young teens (13-14)	33 (27.7%)	Teens (15-19)	34 (28.6%)
Adults	14 (11.8%)	Seniors (55+)	15 (12.6%)
Disabled persons	4 (3.4%)	Others:	* see comments

The groups most in need of additional recreation opportunities, according to Township residents, are teens and young teens. Each group was cited by over 27% of survey respondents, resulting in a popular majority. Senior citizens are seen as the group most in need of additional recreation opportunities after teens, followed closely by adults.

6. What is the single most important improvement which could be made to our Township's parks, recreation facilities or recreation program offerings? (The following are the responses that occurred most frequently on returned surveys.

- *Use East Goshen Township's exemplary community park on Paoli Pike as a model*
- *Link existing parks with a trail system*
- *Balance township development with open space and recreation*
- *Improve public transportation to and from parks*
- *Create more paths and improve roads for recreation*
- *Create a system of interconnected bicycle trails and greenways*
- *Preserve open space*
- *Consider extending park hours to 24 hours per day*
- *Preserve natural space, as opposed to open space*
- *Plant trees or other greenery around "the box" on Swedesford Road near Route 29*
- *Provide an unlimited budget for maintenance of parks*
- *Improve picnic and barbeque facilities for families*
- *Provide more organized recreation opportunities, similar to West Goshen Township*
- *Secure a large area for league sports and concession stands*
- *Increase size of parks*
- *Increase quantity and quality of playground equipment*
- *Discourage separation of neighborhoods to improve Township-wide park access*
- *Rework lot occupation restrictions to preserve more open space on residential lots*

7. Would you support spending additional funds for the following:

a) Sports programs

	No. of Responses	Percent of Responses
Yes	27	(33.3%)
No	39	(48.1%)
Not sure	15	(18.5%)

b) Parks primarily dedicated to sports facilities

Yes	18	(25.4%)
No	44	(62.0%)
Not sure	9	(12.7%)

c) Open space intended to preserve undeveloped land and protect natural areas

	No. of Responses	Percent of Responses
Yes	54	(84.4%)
No	6	(9.4%)
Not sure	4	(6.3%)

d) A multi-purpose paved trail system

Yes	67	(90.5%)
No	5	(6.8%)
Not sure	2	(2.7%)

e) Greenway corridors intended to protect streams and other natural areas and wildlife habitats

Yes	69	(79.3%)
No	7	(8.1%)
Not sure	11	(12.6%)

Respondents show strong support for spending additional funds on open space and trails. Multi-use paved trails received the most support at 90%, with open space preservation and greenway corridor establishment not far behind. Respondents would rather not spend additional funds on organized sports and sports facilities. This received weak support, at 33.3% and 25.4%, respectively.

8. What cultural activities do we need more of in our community?

Activity	Number and %	Activity	Number and %
Music	26 (16.8%)	Dance	11 (7.1%)
Library	23 (14.8%)	Arts and Crafts	9 (5.8%)
Fine Arts	18 (11.6%)	Other *see list	(3.2%)
Legitimate Theater	14 (9.0%)	None	12 (7.7%)
Adult Education	14 (9.0%)	Not sure	12 (7.7%)
Historic Preservation Tours	11 (7.1%)		

The cultural activity seen as most deficient in East Whiteland Township is music. Nearly 17% of respondents thought this was the case. This need will be partially addressed through planned improvements at the township amphitheater. The need for additional library facilities ranked next highest at 14.8%, followed by fine arts at 11.6%. Two equal sets of respondents were either not sure about adding cultural activities, or felt that no additional activities are necessary. Each constituted 7.7% of the sample population. Many respondents suggested additional cultural activities not appearing in the questionnaire. They are as follows:

- *Environmental awareness education*
- *Outdoor concerts*
- *Fireworks*
- *Ethnic / multi-cultural festivals and celebrations*
- *Free concert series in Spring / Summer*
- *Teen programs*
- *Teen gathering facility*

- *Summer music and local crafter fairs*
- *Ecology park with teaching resources*
- *Guided hikes for different age groups*
- *Sports parks with sport clinics*
- *Weekly activities for pre-school ages at playgrounds*
- *Community events*
- *Comunity center for cultural and educational events*

In addition to these suggestions for additional cultural activities, Township residents provided more general comments with regard to recreation and open space as a whole. The suggestions are as follows:

- *Build a skate park (7 respondents mentioned this, one of which suggesting accessibility to the high school and middle school))*
- *Finish the bike trail that was started 5 years ago (2 respondents added this)*
- *Provide an area for skateboarding and rollerblading*
- *Keep parks clean to avoid trash accumulation and bee problems*
- *Preserve more open space and undeveloped space*
- *Create more trails*
- *Develop the Tabas property with a trail system, opportunities for all-terrain vehicles, and a cement area for basketball*
- *Locate parks closer to the Bryn Erin development*
- *Build pedestrian bridges over busy roads*
- *Create more parks for athletic sports*
- *Create a family pool club*
- *Add restroom facilities to parks*
- *Establish a trail system for active groups of all ages, easily accessible from schools and businesses*
- *Work with neighboring townships to connect with existing trails*
- *Provide better access to trails*
- *Create a dog walking area*
- *Designate one or more recreation areas to be available at night and on weekends*
- *Force developers to include open space in sprawling areas*
- *Use the K. D. Markeley school for baseball, soccer and other sports*
- *Create small local parks where teens can walk and ride bikes*
- *Plant trees throughout the township*
- *Add parking lots and milage markers to rail-trails*
- *Encourage more effective use of the Township's current recreation facilities*
- *Preserve natural areas and reduce the number of planned recreation programs*
- *Bury electric transmission lines and plant trees*
- *Create golf facilities*
- *Build a community swimming pool*
- *Finish the Exton trail from Phoenixville Pike, eastward*

THE TASK FORCE

East Whiteland appointed a Park and Recreation Plan Task Force to oversee development of this plan. The Task Force was chaired by Ms. Michele Vaughn, a member of the Board of Supervisors, and included Ms. Terry Woodman, the Township Manager. Eight residents were appointed, including the Director of Business Affairs for the Great Valley School District, Mr. Charles Linderman. In addition, three special representatives from the East Whiteland Township Park and Recreation Board attended Task Force meetings.

The Task Force worked with the consultant to identify important issues, evaluate needs, confirm priorities, and review report drafts. The Task Force participated in a field trip to Township recreation sites and hosted public meetings related to preparing and adopting this plan. At the Township's invitation, two representatives of the Chester County Parks & Recreation Department participated in a special Task Force meeting on January 8, 2003 to discuss and answer questions about the progress of the Chester Valley Trail project.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

East Whiteland held two public meetings for Township residents to offer input into this plan. The first public meeting was on November 13, 2002. It included an introduction to the topics that the plan was intended to cover and a discussion of initial policies and recommendations under consideration by the Task Force. A second opportunity for public comment was provided on March 12, 2003. This meeting included a review of the Draft Plan prior to the East Whiteland Township Board of Supervisors considering official plan adoption.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOALS

Existing conditions plus current and future needs examined by the Task Force are the basis for the following goals. These goals describe East Whiteland's ambitions for:

- Expanding and improving the park system
- Developing a Township-wide trail system
- Creating new recreation program opportunities
- Refining how East Whiteland administers its park, recreation, and open space system

Goals for expanding and improving the park system

- Continue establishing new public parkland to meet existing and emerging demands in all parts of the Township.
- Ensure all of East Whiteland's parks offer a variety of safe, attractive and up-to-date recreation facilities and equipment.

Goal for developing a Township-wide trail system

- Construct a multi-use, non-motorized, public trail system over time in East Whiteland Township.

Goal for creating new recreation programs

- In partnership with local recreation providers, expand recreation program opportunities for people of both genders and all ages that live or work in East Whiteland.

Goal for refining how East Whiteland administers its park, recreation and open space system

- Improve the ways that East Whiteland manages, maintains, funds, and publicizes its park, and recreation resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are the heart of this Park and Recreation Plan. These are the actions East Whiteland hopes to take to address the needs, and help fulfill the goals identified above. Like the goals, the recommendations are grouped in the following categories:

- Expanding and improving the park system
- Developing a Township-wide trail system
- Creating new recreation program opportunities
- Refining how East Whiteland administers its park, recreation, and open space system

Expanding and Improving the Park System

1. Establish additional neighborhood parks in under-served areas of the Township.

East Whiteland Township has three neighborhood parks, which together total 7.9 acres. However, there are older residential areas in East Whiteland not served by any convenient pedestrian-oriented recreation sites. General Warren Village and Summit Ridge are two such neighborhoods. Each is located south of Route 30 and south of Norfolk Southern railroad tracks that bisect the Township in the east-west direction.

East Whiteland should establish walk-to parks in each of these two neighborhoods that provide recreational space for residents of the immediate vicinity. The Township should investigate the status of vacant land in and around General Warren Village and Summit Ridge. If it proves impractical to buy the necessary land, parcels could be leased instead. Major athletic fields are not needed at these locations.

The following Neighborhood Park Guidelines should help in evaluating the potential of specific properties to make good neighborhood park sites:

- the site should be 2 to 5 acres in area
- the site must be well drained - no wetlands or other floodprone areas
- no steep topography - maximum 5 to 8% slope
- the site should be accessible by walking
- the park should contain mostly open land, with some trees for at least one shaded area
- the park should be highly visible from the adjacent road(s)
- basic facilities at the park should include playground equipment, mowed fields for informal games/sports, a small basketball court, park name and rules signs, landscaping improvements, and perhaps a small walking track

After establishing control over a future neighborhood park site, the next steps for the Township would be to: a) prepare a master plan, with input from local residents; b) prepare engineering drawings and bid specifications; c) select a contractor; and d) construct the desired park improvements on-site. In the future, there may be opportunities to connect neighborhood parks in General Warren Village and Summit Ridge to Malvern Borough via walking paths.

2. ***Refurbish selected existing neighborhood parks.***

In addition to addressing the need for more neighborhood parks, East Whiteland should upgrade neighborhood parks that already exist in the Township. While East Whiteland has very modern community parks, its neighborhood parks generally contain the Township's oldest recreation equipment and facilities. Down East Park, a 2.5-acre neighborhood recreation site off Winding Way, contains an old baseball backstop, a small basketball court and several pieces of older-era playground equipment. Similar conditions prevail at Whiteland Farm Park, a 1.0-acre site on Birch Road. (Spring Mill Farms Park, the Township's third neighborhood park, is open ground only with no facilities at all, as most neighborhood residents appear to prefer it this way.)

Life cycle maintenance and replacement of recreation facilities at older sites is an important element of providing safe and up-to-date recreation opportunities. Accordingly, East Whiteland should refurbish both Down East Park and Whiteland Park with new playground equipment (including modern climbing structures), new basketball facilities, updated park benches, signage, landscaping improvements and perhaps some fencing. New equipment, site beautification and revised facility layouts will bring East Whiteland's neighborhood parks more into line with the Township's first-class community park facilities.

Concept plans should be prepared for refurbishing both Down East Park and Whiteland Farm. at the same time. Redeveloping these parks simultaneously will be more cost effective than doing each one separately. The two parks need to be evaluated closely (perhaps with assistance from a consultant) to decide what specific new facilities are needed and where they should be placed on each site. Once this task is complete, East Whiteland can determine if it is possible for Township personnel to do the work, or if one of more private contractors will also be needed.

3. ***Implement the improvements planned for the Swanenburg property and Valley Creek Park.***

The Swanenburg property is a 16.2-acre future community park site. A master plan that calls for athletic fields and other improvements has been prepared by a consultant and reviewed by the Township. East Whiteland should follow through promptly on implementing this master plan. The first step would be for the Board of Supervisors to formally adopt the proposed park master plan. Next, the Township needs to retain a consultant to prepare engineering plans, specifications and other bid documents. Then a contractor must be hired to construct the improvements. East Whiteland will need to follow a similar process to improve Valley Creek Park using Chester County grant funds the Township recently secured. Improvements to the

Swanenburg property and Valley Park. Two community park sites will complement the community-serving recreation facilities now available at Battle of the Clouds Park and the Conestoga Trail Soccer Fields.

Improvements planned for the Swanenburg property:

- 1 90' baseball field
- 1 60' baseball field
- 2 soccer fields
- 1 basketball court
- 1 roller hockey rink
- Playground equipment
- Multi-use paths connecting to the adjacent Chester Valley Trail
- Picnic facilities
- Concession building
- Parking space and restrooms

Improvements planned for Valley Creek Park:

- resurfacing the existing parking area
- installation of conduit for future lighting
- a natural amphitheater
- a packed stone walking trail
- a multi-piece play structure
- a restroom, pavilion restoration, and a new picnic area

Construction of a community park at the Swanenburg property and the improvements planned for Valley Creek Park should address East Whiteland's community park needs for the immediate future. Nonetheless, it may become necessary in the longer range future to establish one or more additional community parks. The following are community park site selection criteria the Township could use at that time.

- size and configuration of the site are suitable for the recreation facilities envisioned
- location is convenient to population centers
- site is adjacent to a school or public parkland
- site is accessible to a suitable road
- surrounding uses are compatible
- topography will accommodate athletic fields without extensive grading
- soils are well drained with no streams or wetlands in projected primary use areas
- no extensive clearing of woodlands is required
- site is convenient to public water and public sewer facilities
- owner may donate the site
- owner is a willing seller
- asking price is reasonable
- site is likely to attract development if not preserved
- there is potential to link this site to other publically accessible lands via a trail

- preserving this land will protect natural features on a portion of the site not envisioned for active recreational use

4. ***Further enhance Ecology Park.***

As identified previously, the 15-acre Ecology Park site on Conestoga Road is the Township's only nature preserve. This park features a loop trail and a map that park patrons can pick up from a box positioned at the start of the trail. East Whiteland could further enhance the experience of people who visit this park in two ways:

- Install small plaques on selected trees that explain important facts about that tree species, such as its ultimate size, favorite growing conditions, fruit and leaf characteristics, etc.

- Add a sign to the parking area that: a) welcomes people to the property; b) briefly summarizes the background of the parkland; and c) explains that the trail on-site is available for self-guided tours.

5. ***Consider providing public off-leash dog areas.***

Advocacy groups estimate up to 35% of U.S. households own dogs. However, there is a conflict between dogs' needs for exercise and socialization, and leash laws designed to protect the rights of people not to be bothered by unleashed dogs. Off-leash dog areas are a safe, legal way to help maintain a dog's health. At the same time, off-leash dog areas provide opportunities for residents to meet and socialize with their dog-loving neighbors.

Off-leash dog areas, also known as dog parks (or bark parks), can take one of several forms:

- a fenced area within a park
- a dog zone in a park created by natural barriers, not fences
- certain hours of the day when off-leash use is permitted, with few changes to the park
- an entire park dedicated for off-leash use
- any combination of the above

Facilities often provided at dog recreation areas include the following:

- fenced areas to protect the rights of other park goers and neighbors
- double gates to reduce the chances of dogs escaping
- a sandy area at entrances where dogs are encouraged (but not mandated) to do their business
- pooper scooper or mutt mitt dispensers to deal with dog waste
- garbage cans to dispose of dog waste
- a water station/water faucet for dogs
- a water fountain, rain shelter, and benches for people

- a walking trail for people and dogs
- separate fenced areas for larger and smaller dogs
- rules posted at the entrance (e.g. one dog per person; dog handlers must be at least 14 years old; no aggressive dogs, dogs in heat not welcome)

Numerous municipalities in the United States have established off-leash dog areas. The size of these areas varies considerably, depending on whether they serve a neighborhood or an entire community. Public liability can be addressed by posting signs to warn park users they are entering an off-leash dog area at their own risk. Dog owners, not the property owners, have generally been found liable for problems created by dogs who are off-leash in violation of park regulations. Many communities involve dog owners in both the planning and on-going maintenance of off-leash dog areas. This is the model East Whiteland should have in mind as the Township investigates the demand for off-leash dog areas and potentially suitable locations.

Developing a Township-Wide Trail System

1. Work with Chester County to complete the East Whiteland portion of the Chester Valley Trail.

A full description about the extent and status of the entire Chester Valley Trail is included in the first chapter of this plan under ***County-Owned Sites***. There are 4.3 miles of the proposed trail within East Whiteland. Chester County and the consultants the County has retained to design the trail have several issues in East Whiteland to address before the project can proceed from preliminary design to final design. These issues concern stormwater drainage, safe road crossings and right-of-way.

- At the western end of the Township, extensive stormwater discharge from the Malvern Hunt subdivision is channeled to a point directly adjacent to the proposed trail path. Consequently, there are concerns about erosion in this portion of the trail right-of-way.

- Drainage from the Swanenburg property (where East Whiteland plans to create a community park) presents similar concerns about erosion at the point near where the trail will cross Phoenixville Pike at-grade.

- A new bridge will be required to carry the trail over Church Road. Chester County is working with PennDOT to finalize approval for a bridge type and style that is compatible with pedestrians and suited to the character of the local environment.

- The trail right-of-way crosses Conestoga Road (PA Route 401) in a high-speed, high-traffic area. To compound the problem, the trail does not cross Conestoga Road at a ninety degree angle. This raises concerns about the absence of a clear site angle for both pedestrians and motorists. The County is considering acquiring alternative right-of-way to bypass this problem crossing.

- The trail crosses PA Route 29 at mid-block on a high volume state road, just south of a US Route 202 interchange. The County and PennDOT are discussing the possible need to acquire alternative right-of-way to avoid this potential hazard.

- Norfolk Southern considers the trail right-of-way east of Route 29 in East Whiteland to still be an active rail spur. Reportedly, the company does not generally favor co-existence of trails and active rails in the same right-of-way. Chester County and PennDOT are examining an alternative route in this area as well.

It will require ongoing communication between Chester County and East Whiteland to surmount these challenges to completing the Chester Valley Trail in the Township. East Whiteland has been in close contact with Chester County to date on important aspects of the project. The Township Supervisors and Township Manager need to continue this strong working relationship with the County.

2. *Develop a trail system throughout East Whiteland.*

As identified in the East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan, one of East Whiteland's important goals is to develop a multi-use, non-motorized trail system in the Township. This trail system should link Township parks with other open spaces, commercial hubs, communities, transportation hubs and office parks. The Township trail should also encourage recreation in the community and help preserve dwindling open space by creating a green network that can be added to through preservation of adjacent lands. The Chester Valley Trail should be viewed as the trunk line of the trail system.

East Whiteland's trail system also takes into consideration a trail being proposed by the Chester County Planning Commission to connect Valley Forge National Historic Site with the Paoli Massacre Site in Malvern Borough and Battle of The Clouds Park in East Whiteland Township. Under the County's concept, this trail would be owned and maintained by Tredyffrin Township in Tredyffrin, Malvern Borough in Malvern, and East Whiteland Township in East Whiteland. The project would extend along existing trail corridors, sidewalks and park property. It would be used for education, recreation, tourism, urban revitalization and traffic reduction.

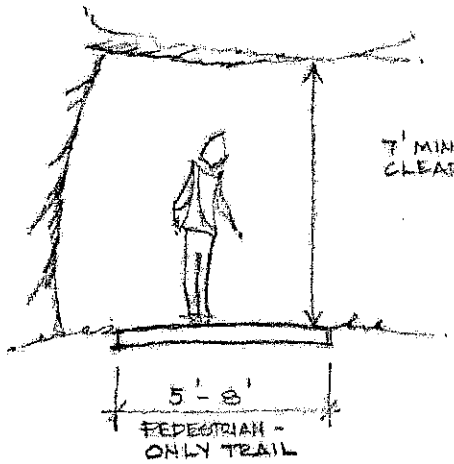
The following narrative addresses three main questions about East Whiteland's proposed trail system as described on the following pages:

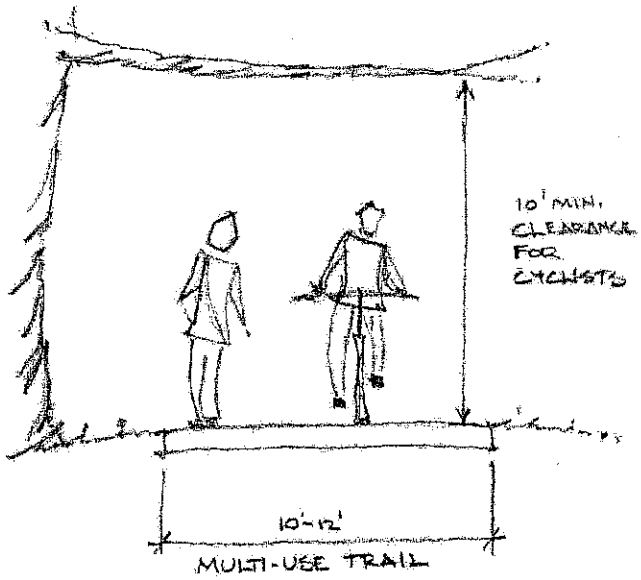
- What types of trails should be included in the trail system?
- Where should trail segments be located and in what priority should they be established?
- How should the trail system be developed and maintained?

Trail Types

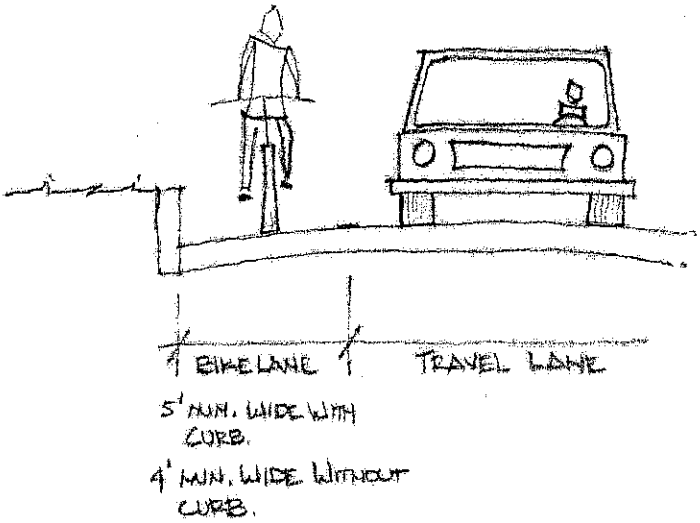
The overall trail system in the East Whiteland Township is proposed to consist of pathways, sidewalks, and on-road bike lanes. To further sub-categorize, the pathways within the system will include both off-road pathways and pathways alongside roads. Either pathway type could be designed as either a multi-use trail or a pedestrian-only trail. The following graphics illustrate various trail types.

OFF-ROAD TRAILS

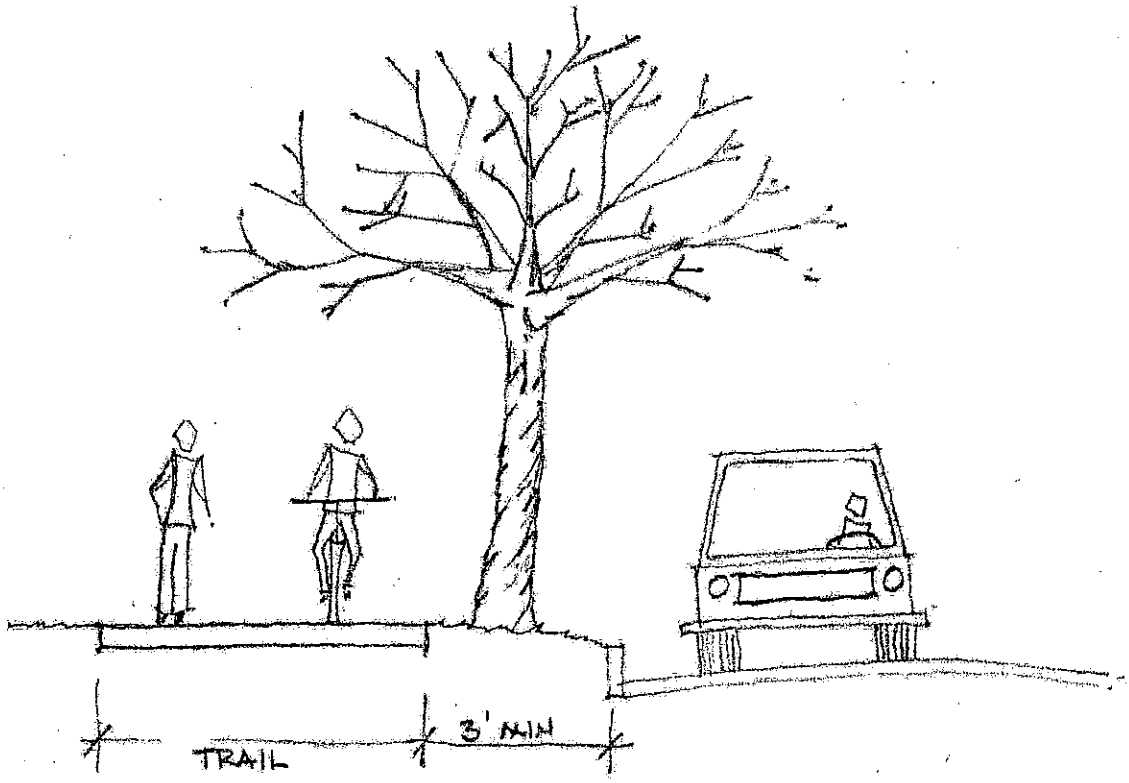




BIKE LANES

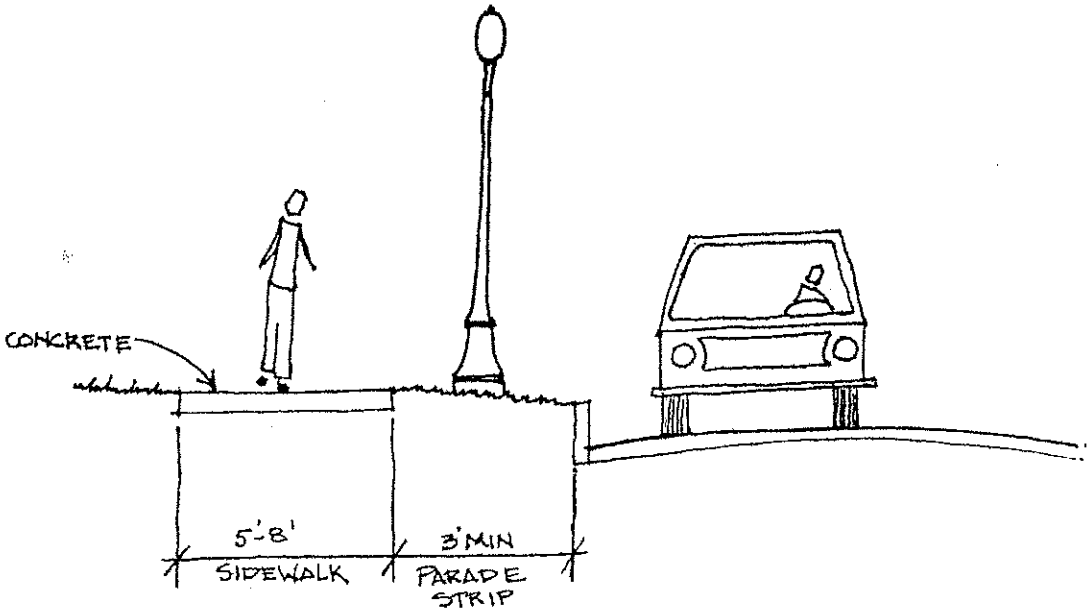


TRAILS ALONGSIDE ROADS



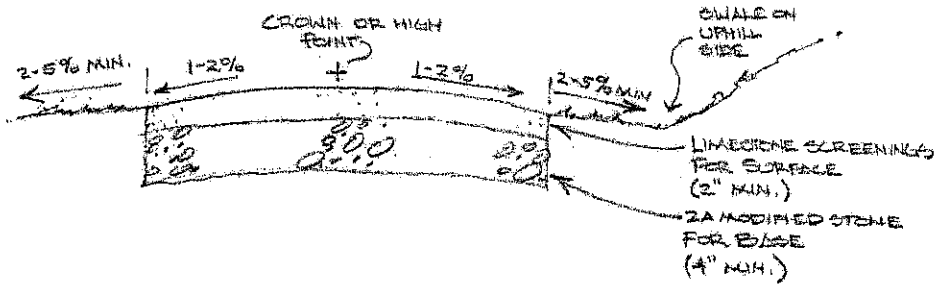
- 5'-8' FOR PEDESTRIAN-ONLY TRAIL
- 10'-12' FOR MULTI-USE TRAIL

SIDEWALKS

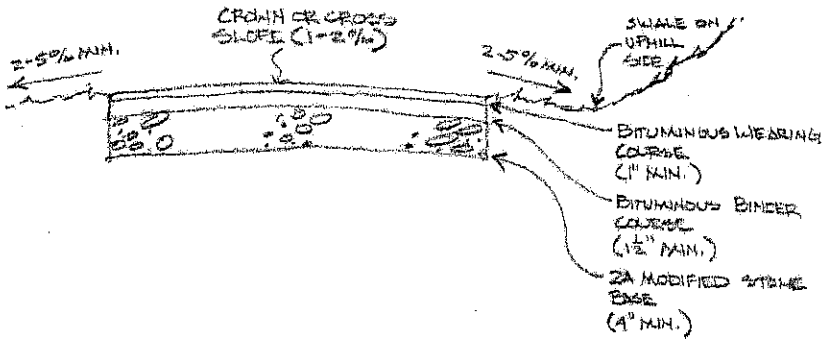


Sidewalks will be made of concrete. Bike lanes will be bituminous, just like the roads on which they are located. Depending on conditions and location, trails will be either paved (bituminous), or built of tightly packed crushed stone. The following illustrations show both of these trail construction options.

TYPICAL STONE TRAIL



TYPICAL PAVED TRAIL



Who Would Use the Trail System

The proposed Township trail system would serve a variety of users, including the following:

- Pedestrians walking between their homes and Route 30 commercial establishments,
- People who work at local office parks and other Township businesses,
- Great Valley School District students,
- Students at other schools in East Whiteland, including Immaculata College, among others,
- Residents who like to walk, jog, roller skate and/or bicycle for exercise, and
- Nature enthusiasts and other sightseers.

The width of the trail and its surface in various trail segments should vary according to location within the Township and the primary use(s) envisioned.

Locating the Trail System and Identifying Highest Priority Links

The accompanying map shows a proposed route for the East Whiteland Township trail system. The trail segments designated on this map as Highest Priority Links or High Priority Links connect two or more of the following:

- the Chester Valley Trail right-of-way
- Township-owned parks and open spaces
- Route 202 overpasses
- Great Valley School District facilities
- residential areas
- office parks

The Highest Priority Trail Links recommended to be established are in the area of the Great Valley High School and Middle School and adjacent residential and business neighborhoods where there is a large concentration of foot traffic by student walkers, student athletes and recreation-seeking residents and business persons. The Highest Priority Trail Links shown on the East Whiteland Township Park and Recreation Plan–Proposed Township-wide Trail System map accompanying this Plan, link together the Great Valley High and Middle Schools, the adjacent residential areas of Spring Mill Farms, Pickford Run, Fetter's Mill, Pine Forge, the Lapp Road and Wilburdale Road area, Aston Woods, Wyckfield, and a proposed development, the adjacent commercial businesses of Aegon Frazer Campus and Westbrook Corporate Center, the Township's Ecology Park and the Battle of The Clouds Park, and Chester County's Chester Valley Trail.

Another consideration in prioritizing trail links involves bridges and ramps PennDOT will reconstruct as part of widening Section 300 of U. S. Route 202. Walkways should be provided on all new bridges. Accommodating trails along all associated improved roadways should also be a priority.

The need to make Route 30 more pedestrian-friendly was also a significant consideration in identifying the High Priority Links. Hopefully, later trail phases will include connections to trails that exist or are being planned in the adjacent municipalities of Malvern Borough, East Goshen Township, Tredyffrin Township, Charlestown Township, West Whiteland Township and Willistown Township.

Developing and Maintaining the Trail System

The proposed trail system would utilize public right-of-way along existing roads as much as possible. This will reduce the cost of the Township having to buy or otherwise control land for the trail. The intent is to construct bike lanes and sidewalks within this right-of-way. On state roads, such as Route 30, using public right-of-way will require coordination with PennDOT–and hopefully involve PennDOT funding assistance. Where the trail system involves bike lanes

or sidewalks on Township roads, some combination of East Whiteland funds and grants(such state/federal TEA 21 monies) will be needed to construct the necessary improvements.

Off-road trails and trails alongside roads that are constructed outside the public right-of-way will be significant parts of the proposed trail system. For example, tail corridors are proposed: a) on private property along Valley Creek; b) on land through which pipelines now run; and c) along abandoned rail line. To develop these trail segments, East Whiteland will first have to secure the necessary right-of-way. Buying the required trail corridor is one option. Alternatively, East Whiteland can negotiate easements with the affected property owners that will permit trail improvements and public access. Presumably, acquiring easements will be less expensive than buying land outright. To secure certain trail links, East Whiteland can also use its mandatory dedication requirements to work with developers to preserve trail corridors during the subdivision and land development approval process.

Whatever techniques the Township uses to secure trail right-of-way, completing the trail system will be a long-range project that must be pursued over time as funding, opportunities for land, and organization resources permit. Despite the long range focus, the Township should begin now before key linkages are lost to development. Guided by a consensus on where the trail system should be located, the following are specific steps East Whiteland can take to convert the trail system concept into reality:

- The Board of Supervisors should assign responsibility for overseeing implementation of the trail system to a specific Township entity (i.e. Planning Commission or Park and Recreation Board), or to a newly-appointed Trail Committee that includes representatives from other Township agencies.

- Over a sustained period of time, East Whiteland should use a combination of acquired easements and fee simple purchases to secure public access along those portions of the proposed trail route that are not already publicly accessible. Donations and dedications through the subdivision and land development process are additional ways to get control over the necessary land corridors.

- Prior to constructing any surface improvements, trail markers should be placed in the field that show the route of what initially will be a low-impact walking trail.

- Trail segments should be addressed according to prioritized phases. Construction of ancillary facilities such as parking areas and trail heads, can be constructed at the same time as the trail path is improved. The purpose of designating property linkages within the overall trail system is to denote those linkages the Township views as most important. However, while it seems that high priority trails should be the first priority, the trail process actually takes place in six distinct phases: planning; consensus or public participation; funding; land acquisition; design and permitting; and construction. The trail segments noted on the Proposed Trail System Map are most likely in one of the different phases at any given time. To limit efforts to just the top priority trails could mean delaying or ignoring opportunities to acquire land for other trails as they become available. Trail development is really more of a scattershot approach.

- Trail segments should be designed to logical termini. A segment should be opened as quickly as possible after development. There might be disconnected trails for some time but at least the segments in place will have a logical, possibly temporary terminus at a sidewalk network, park, private open space or other location.

- Public participation will be important to gain consensus on what the trail is to accomplish with stakeholders, and to include creation of design parameters through a low tech feasibility analysis of existing physical and legal attributes underlying specific trail segments.

The following are additional guidelines and principles East Whiteland can use in developing and administering the future trail system.

Volunteer Groups / Maintenance

It may be possible to get volunteer groups to help maintain public trails. This system is used successfully to maintain the Appalachian Trail. A group, such as a hiking club, Scout troop, or a "Friends of the Trail" organization could accept responsibility for walking the trail twice a year to clear obstructions, clean up trash and perform other light maintenance. The Chester County Trail Club is an example of a local group that could be potentially willing to assist in this way. Other groups, such as homeowners associations and the Township itself may also wish to participate. Other aspects of trail maintenance to consider include Township budgeting for equipment, personnel and eventual replacement/rehabilitation of certain trail segments.

Trail / Road Intersections

Special consideration must be given to places where the trail intersects roadways since these are the areas where accidents have the greatest chance of occurring. According to the Florida Department of Transportation's Trail Intersection Design Guidelines, "Numerous studies have well established that roadway junctions are over-represented locations for bicyclist-and-pedestrian-motor vehicle crashes." At a minimum, there should be signage and striping installed to warn both trail users and the motorists of potential danger. Illuminated warning signs, hot buttons on traffic signal controls for trail users to receive priority, and rules that require bicyclists to dismount at roadway intersections are additional safety techniques. Adequate site distance for trail users and concrete bollards on the trail at roadway intersections should also be part of safe trail design. Individual design elements and specifications will differ somewhat based on whether the trail crossing is mid-block or at a roadway intersection.

Trail Parking

To avoid nuisances for neighbors and traffic hazards along roads, parking areas should be provided at key locations along the trail system. These parking areas work best when they are available at a park or an existing public facility where there is some oversight. The parking areas should be located in places visible from a road so they are less likely to be used improperly. In some cases, a local business may be willing to allow part of its parking lot to be used by trail users, particularly if peak demand for trail parking is at a time when that business does not need its full parking area. The number of parking spaces at various trailheads will vary by location. In addition to parking area, trailheads should also include one or more of the following:

- trash receptacles
- a rules and regulations sign
- map kiosk/bulletin board
- a bench
- port-a-johns
- a stretch post

Public Education

Public education is important to gain public support for trails, particularly among people who own property adjacent to a proposed trail. Residents may oppose a trail because they fear increased crime, noise, litter and trespassing on their property. Extensive written materials are available from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and others about experiences in other communities where these fears turned out to be unfounded. In addition, concerns about dumping might be reduced if there is a commitment by volunteer groups to regularly clean the trail, or if the Township road crew is available to promptly clean up designated dump sites along a trail.

Publicly accessible trails incite concerns about liability. To help alleviate these fears, local residents and business persons should be made aware of Pennsylvania's Recreation Use of Land and Water Act (68 P.S. 477, et.seq.). This state law limits the liability of property owners when undeveloped land is used free of charge for public recreation, including trails. This legal protection has been regularly upheld by courts in Pennsylvania.

Security / Safety

Contrary to public perception, studies have found that trails are most often not a security problem and that trail users tend to police each other. As a reflection of this, properties adjacent to trails tend to have a higher, not a lower, value than similar properties not directly served by a trail. Where policing is required on the proposed Township trail, it will be the responsibility of the East Whiteland Township Police Department.

East Whiteland Township Park & Recreation Plan

PROPOSED TOWNSHIP-WIDE TRAIL SYSTEM

- HIGHEST PRIORITY TRAIL LINKS
- HIGH PRIORITY TRAIL LINKS
- ADDITIONAL TRAIL LINKS

EXISTING RECREATION SITES

TOWNSHIP - OWNED SITES

COMMUNITY PARKS
1. Conestoga Trail Soccer Field (Township Bldg.)
2. Swanenburg Property
3. Battle of the Clouds Park
4. Valley Creek Park

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
5. Whiteland Farm Park
6. Down East Park
7. Spring Mill Farms Park

TOT LOTS
8. Bryn Erin @ Kelmar
9. Bryn Erin @ Markel

NATURE PRESERVES
10. Ecology Park

OPEN SPACES
11. Chester Valley Knoll
12. Oakhill Circle
13. Brooklands
14. Glenoch Way
15. Bryn Erin Moores Road Basin
16. Bryn Erin Kelmar Avenue Basin
17. Aston Woods
18. Wyckfield Subdivision
19. Rubino Property

PUBLIC SCHOOL SITES

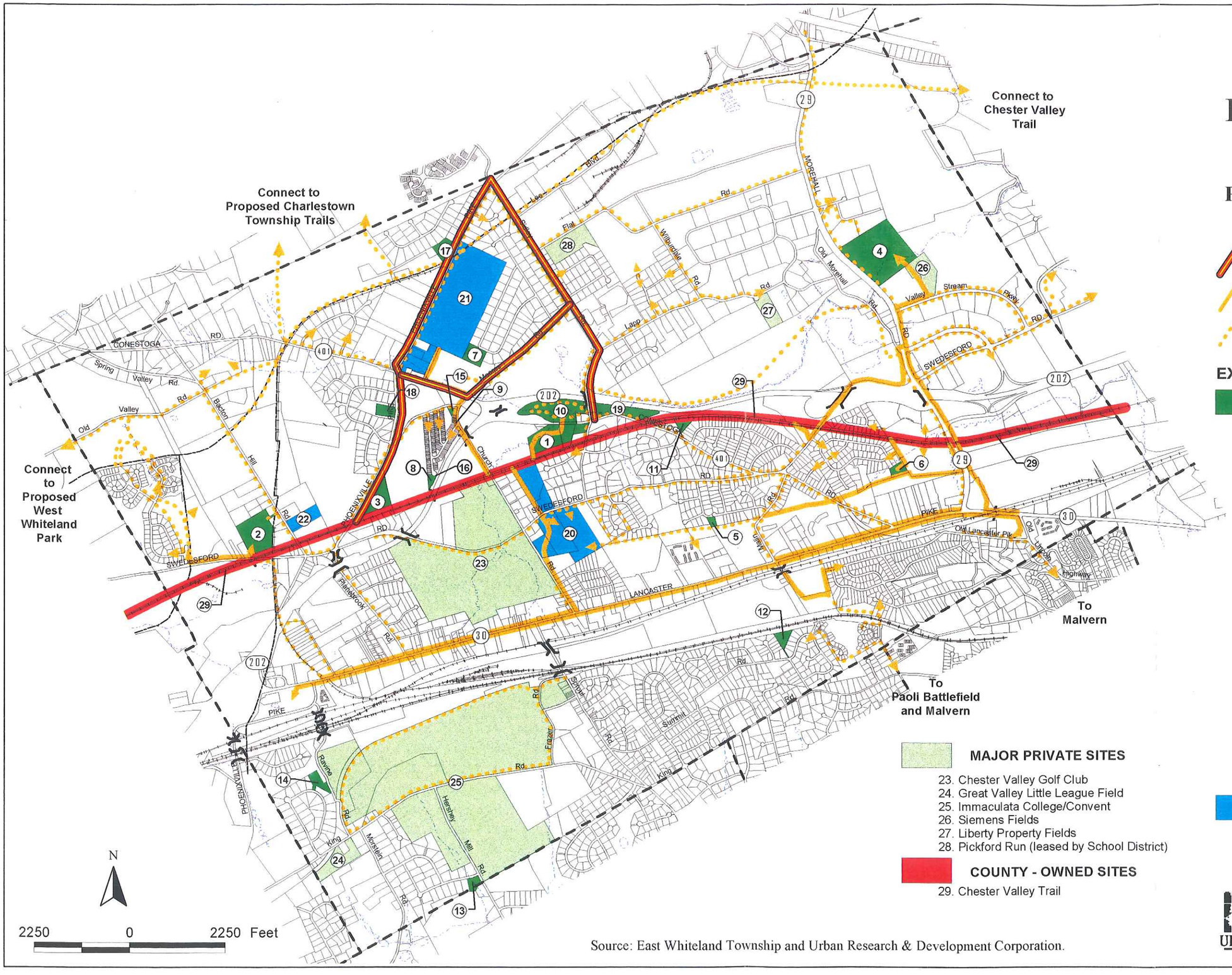
20. K.D. Markley Elementary School
21. Great Valley High School and Middle School
22. School-Owned Property

MAJOR PRIVATE SITES

23. Chester Valley Golf Club
24. Great Valley Little League Field
25. Immaculata College/Convent
26. Siemens Fields
27. Liberty Property Fields
28. Pickford Run (leased by School District)

COUNTY - OWNED SITES

29. Chester Valley Trail



Source: East Whiteland Township and Urban Research & Development Corporation.

Urban Research & Development Corporation
URDC 28 W. Broad Street Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

Creating New Recreation Program Opportunities

1. Include a recreation center if/when the Township building is expanded.

The Conestoga Trail Soccer Field, Battle of the Clouds Park and recreation facilities planned for the Swanenburg site and Valley Creek Park address East Whiteland's immediate need for athletic fields and other outdoor community park facilities. However, there is still a need for more public indoor recreation space in the Township to facilitate a greater range of recreation program opportunities. Some municipalities have addressed this need by constructing and operating a community center. Some of these community centers are mainly for athletic use. Others focus on providing space for social activities, club meetings, adult classes, etc.

East Whiteland should continue working with the Great Valley School District to meet the Township's needs for basketball courts and other indoor athletic facilities. The Township should also look into the status of a private developer's proposal to construct a for-profit recreation center on the closed Bishop Tube industrial site, opposite the intersection of Lancaster Pike and Malin Road.

East Whiteland should become more directly involved in providing public indoor recreation space for non-athletic uses. As East Whiteland continues to investigate the possibility of adding-on to its Township building, including a community center in the expanded building should be a prime consideration. The Township could construct the space and make it available to community groups free of charge. Administration, including scheduling and maintaining the space, would be East Whiteland Township's responsibility. The community groups, not East Whiteland, would sponsor and run the recreation programs and other activities held there. This way a community need could be met without the Township incurring additional staffing and programming obligations.

In working with an architect to design the new space, the Township should seek input from the community groups that currently use the Township Building's meeting room and other potential users. At a minimum, a large multi-use room and smaller meeting space should be included. Restrooms and kitchen facilities would also desirable.

2. Encourage a private entity to construct skateboarding facilities in East Whiteland.

East Whiteland would benefit from a skatepark facility in the Township. A skatepark would respond to the growing popularity of X-games activities and help meet the demand for legitimate places to skate. At the same time, a skatepark would provide a new location for young people to safely congregate and socialize.

In some cases, the non-profit and private sectors provide skateboarding facilities. The Upper Mainline YMCA on Paoli Pike in Berwyn offers the gen - Y skatepark. Examples of private for-profit skateboard facilities include Boarder Line Skate Park on Union Street in West Chester,

Boomers Skate Park on Route 41 in Avondale, Boards & Blades formerly of Berwyn, 360 Skate Spot in Willow Grove, and Cheapskates in Quakertown. Costs usually run in the area of $6 to $10 per visit.

Like East Whiteland, some neighboring municipalities have investigated the feasibility of constructing public skateparks. West Goshen Township plans to build skatepark facilities and has a conceptual design in mind, but is still searching for funding. West Whiteland Township has ground set aside for a skatepark but does not have the funding or a design in place yet. On the other hand, neither East Goshen Township nor Tredyffrin Township have any active plans for skateparks.

There are municipal skateparks in the City of Philadelphia, Cheltenham Township, Bensalem Township, among other locations. But in each case, the municipality must operate these facilities under strict rules and regulations to qualify for reasonable insurance premiums. This typically requires:

- A fenced facility that can only be used during certain hours.
- Permitting procedures so that no one can use the facility without signing a liability waiver.
- Mandatory use of safety equipment, such as helmets, knee pads, and elbow pads.
- Paid staff attendants to ensure regulations are followed and be available in case of a medical emergency (similar to lifeguards at a municipal pool).

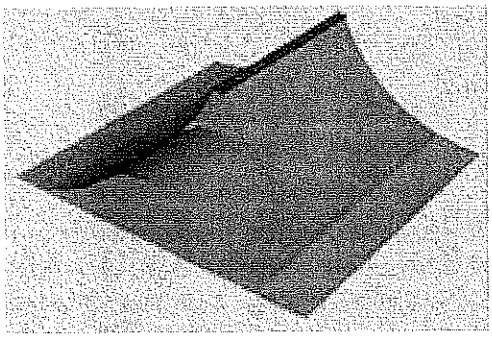
East Whiteland has no recreation personnel on staff, except for part-time playground counselors hired for five weeks each summer. Nor is the Township ready for the administrative duties that go with designing, constructing and operating a full-time skateboarding facility. For these reasons, East Whiteland policy at this time should be to ensure there is adequate opportunity for private skatepark facilities to start up and operate in the Township. This means ensuring that the Township's zoning ordinance (now under revision) lists skateboard facilities as a specific permitted use in commercial and industrial districts, and that associated regulations governing minimum lot size, minimum setbacks, parking, etc. are not overly restrictive.

3. *Underwrite the cost for Township residents who use a neighboring municipality's skatepark.*

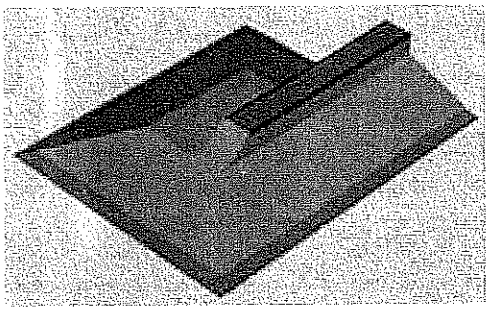
In addition to encouraging private skateparks to locate in the Township, East Whiteland should investigate an arrangement with any nearby municipality that constructs a skatepark. Such an arrangement would allow East Whiteland residents to use that skatepark at a discount rate. In this way, East Whiteland could help meet a genuine recreational need in the community for a small fraction of what it would cost the Township to construct and manage its own municipal skatepark. The Township could test the demand for such a program by initially allocating funds to cover the cost of underwriting 500 visits. The program could then be re-evaluated when the initial funding allocation is used up.

A SKATEPARK PRIMER

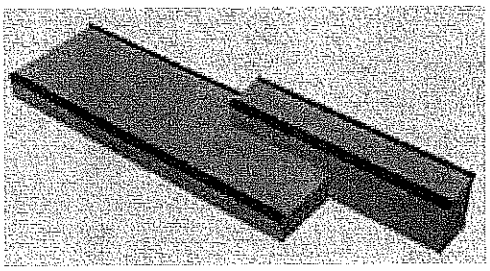
Examples of Skate Park Features



Spine with rollover

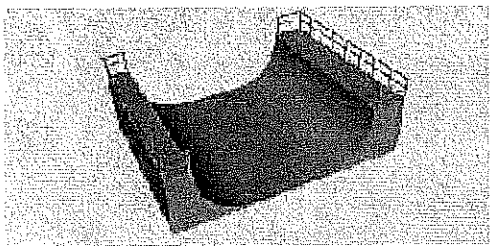


Pyramid with planter

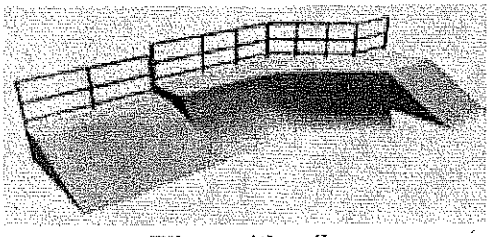


Multi-level grind box

Kinked grind box



Vert ramp



Elbow with rails

- There are an estimated 10 million skateboarders and 30 million in-line skaters in the USA. Approximately 80% are under age 18, with the average age being about 14.

- With proper design and construction, skate parks can be safe, attractive places to exercise and socialize. Skate parks can also become focal places for other teen activities, such as concerts.

- Most skateparks range in size from 7,500 to 15,000 square feet.

- Skateparks can be all concrete. Alternatively, the ramps can be: a) wood; or b) steel-frame with a metal or special skate-safe surface.

  - Concrete parks average around $20 per square foot for materials or $200,000 for a 10,000 square foot park. They require very little maintenance.
  - Wood ramps cost about $ 6 per square foot or $60,000 for a 10,000 square foot park, plus the cost of the concrete pad. Wood ramps require regular maintenance but are portable and can be reconfigured.
  - Steel-frame ramps with a metal or skatelike surface cost about $20 per square foot or about $200,000 for a 10,000 square foot park, plus the cost of the concrete pad. Steel-frame ramps are weatherproof, sturdier than wood, and can be reconfigured.

- Skateparks should be close to residential areas, accessible to walkers and highly visible from the street for security reasons. Many are built within existing parks and recreation areas.

- Facilities should be provided for different skill levels. Most skaters are beginners or intermediate.

- Injury rates in basketball, soccer and baseball are 2 to 4 times higher than in skating, according to the U.S. Product Safety Commission. The keys to reducing injury are personal safety gear, proper design and maintenance. Using specialists to design and build the park is highly recommended. It is also advisable to let potential users participate in planning a skatepark.

- Specialized insurance for skateparks can be obtained from the Skatepark Association of USA, or other carriers.

- Allowing BMX (freestyle) bike riders to use skateparks has sometimes been a controversial matter. The Skatepark Association USA recommends admitting bike riders. Most private parks allow joint use.

4. *Continue community use of local public schools.*

There is a concept in recreation planning known as the "school-park". This is the idea that a tax-supported public school property should serve as a mini-community center, not just a classroom and play area for that school's students. In accordance with its written policy, the Great Valley School District makes both its indoor and outdoor facilities available for community use. (See Appendix). The School District makes its indoor recreation available for youth sports, among other users. An application must be completed and signed by the user group. Non-profits use the facilities for free. For-profit groups pay a fee for custodial services. Use is on a first come-first served basis and is arranged by contacting the office of the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds. This office coordinates all requests and presents them to the School Board for final approval. Similar arrangements govern community use of outdoor athletic fields on School District property. The Great Valley School District has exceptional recreation facilities that are up-to-date and very well maintained. Community use of these facilities should continue and be expanded as new facilities come on line and are available for use beyond direct school purposes.

5. *Create more non-sports activities, especially for teens.*

East Whiteland residents would benefit from a greater diversity of recreation programs. Opportunities should be available for males and females of all ages and a variety of interests, especially teens. The following program categories should be expanded to place more emphasis on "TLC" activities, those that involve thinking, learning and creativity.

- arts and crafts
- mental and language arts
- camping, nature
- dance
- drama
- music
- service activities
- social recreation
- special events
- clubs, hobbies and collecting

The following are examples of specific program activities for consideration by local recreation programmers. These activities focus on non-sports recreation since local sports clubs already offer well-organized sports programming.

<u>physical recreation</u>

- frisbee golf
- field hockey
- volleyball
- exercise for seniors
- outdoor ice skating
- boccie for seniors
- sledding
- outdoor racquetball
- hiking
- horseshoes for seniors

<u>hobbies, clubs, collecting, special interest groups</u>

- juggling
- miniature golf
- landscaping, gardening
- furniture refinishing
- auto mechanics
- woodworking
- toy making
- flower arranging
- dog obedience

- fitness program
- sand volleyball

the arts (music, dance, drama, arts and crafts)

- music
- storytelling
- art appreciation
- quilting
- knitting, crocheting
- needlework
- ethnic art
- painting

nature, outing, camping, interpretation

- nature study
- fishing
- birdwatching
- animal tracking

mental and linguistic activities

- bridge
- chess
- reading
- discussion groups
- lecture series
- genealogy for seniors
- nutrition
- recipe swapping

service activities

- babysitting classes
- adopt-a-grandparent
- clean-up day at parks
- Arbor Day

social recreation

- hay rides
- garden walks
- picnicking

special events

- scavenger hunt
- jump rope contest
- talent show
- puppet show
- travel/tours
- holiday activities

6. *Offer more special events programming.*

East Whiteland currently sponsors special events in association with its Community Weekend. The Township also provides July 4th Fireworks and Community Health Day. Some examples of additional special events the Township may wish to consider include the following:

- trips to amusement parks, theaters, historic sites, ball games
- a 5-K run
- golf outings
- Halloween Party/Haunted House
- township triathalon
- bike treasure hunt
- tour of local historic sites

Refining How East Whiteland Administers its Park, Recreation and Open Space System

1. *Institute regular safety inspections at Township parks.*

East Whiteland should formally inspect its parks on a regular basis to ensure the safety of the parks and their recreation facilities. The purpose of these inspections is to determine the following:

- needed grounds work (e.g., regrading, clearing of overgrown vegetation, etc.)
- needed structural repairs
- current condition of recreation facilities
- grounds/repair work which will be needed in the near future
- other safety and security concerns

Designated inspection days are intended to insure parks and recreation facilities are thoroughly inspected in a formal, structured manner. Ongoing informal inspections should continue between formal inspections. Such safety inspections should be conducted frequently to detect and repair faulty facilities. A designated person on the municipal staff should become familiar with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Handbook for Public Playground Safety. This person should lead all future park inspections.

2. *Improve risk management practices.*

Risk management is the best insurance. In addition to regular safety inspections, East Whiteland should consider four administrative procedures for improving its park risk management practices:

- establish a written policy on visitor safety to guide risk management decisions about identifying and abating hazards, prohibiting unsafe actions, setting standards for maintenance and upkeep, and providing for emergency services. This policy should be strictly enforced.
- have municipal employees and visitors report potential hazards in Township parks.
- establish written emergency procedures.
- develop standardized accident report forms.

These risk management techniques will improve safety standards in park areas. In addition to reducing the chances of potential legal actions, effective risk management actively and visibly promotes owner competence to park users. Once these practices are in place, coverage/policy terms can be re-evaluated for possible reduction of the insurance premium.

3. *Establish a gifts catalog of recreation items needed.*

East Whiteland can make its commitment to parks, recreation and open space preservation more visible and enlist the support of the community by inaugurating a gift catalog. A gift catalog describes a wish list of needed recreation equipment and facilities. Prices are listed with the idea that people can donate the money for a specific item(s) as a gift to the municipality. Both businesses and individuals have responded to this type of appeal in many other communities. East Whiteland could start this effort with a "buy a brick" program, through which people can give money for recreation in the Township in exchange for getting their name cast on a brick that is part of a specials donors wall that could be built as part of community park improvements slated for the Swanenburg site.

4. *Establish a park endowment fund supported by donations and fundraisers.*

This is a companion recommendation to the gifts catalog. East Whiteland could establish a fund to finance future recreation improvements. Proceeds are accumulated from fundraisers, donations and bequests.

5. *Prepare and distribute a brochure describing leisure opportunities available to East Whiteland residents.*

East Whiteland should prepare a brochure which lists recreation opportunities currently available from public, quasi-public and private recreation providers in and around the Township. The brochure should be comprehensive, including information on things such as area parks, recreation programs, facilities for specific activities, museums, libraries or historic sites. It should be general in nature, giving basic information and a phone number or web address for more specific information. The brochure can be updated periodically to reflect changes in the basic information it contains. The brochure can be made available at the East Whiteland Township Municipal Building, among other locations.

6. *Formalize the duties of the Park and Recreation Board.*

The East Whiteland Township Board of Supervisors should use the following list to formalize and confirm the duties and responsibilities of the East Whiteland Township Park and Recreation Board.

<u>Operating Responsibilities</u>

- work with the Township to develop policies on the scheduling and use of recreation facilities owned or operated by East Whiteland Township.

- work with the Township by providing recommendations on Township-sponsored recreation activities.
- undertake periodic surveys of public opinion regarding recreation in East Whiteland Township.

Advisory Responsibilities

- recommend to the Board of Supervisors periodic adjustments to any user fees associated with Township recreational activities.
- recommend to the Board of Supervisors periodic adjustments to open space dedication requirements and to the fees charged in lieu of open space dedication.
- work with the Board of Supervisors in planning the development of future recreation sites and improvement of existing sites.

Budget and Capital Programming Responsibilities

- submit a brief, 1-2 page Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors that indicates the year's accomplishments in implementing the Action Program contained in the East Whiteland Township Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- reevaluate the Action Program every year and, as part of the above-mentioned Annual Report, recommend changes as needed to the Board of Supervisors.
- submit an annual categorized budget request to the Board of Supervisors for proposed capital improvements and proposed operating expenses related to recreation.

7. ***Institute a formal orientation for park board members.***

The idea of this recommendation is to ensure all park board members are familiar on a first-hand basis with the Township's parks, recreation and open space system. This orientation should include visits to all municipal recreation and open space properties. It should also include ongoing briefings about maintenance, programming and public relations topics. This orientation should be repeated annually, not just be a one-time process for new members.

8. ***Amend the East Whiteland Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to facilitate private funding of park, recreation and open space facilities.***

East Whiteland can adopt certain amendments to the Township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance that will encourage developers to help add local park, recreation and open space opportunities. Specific suggested amendments are as follows:

- Extend mandatory dedication requirements to apply to non-residential subdivision and land development submittals. Currently these stipulations affect only residential submittals. A proposed land development or subdivision that creates one or more commercial, industrial or other non-residential principal uses and that involves a total area of two acres or more, excluding public or private schools, should be required to dedicate a minimum of 5% of the proposed development's total land area to East Whiteland Township for parks, recreation and open space use.

- Add regulations that allow developers to select a third option instead of just dedicating land or fees. The third option would give the developer the chance to construct certain recreation facilities instead. The recreation facilities constructed should be within the proposed land development or subdivision or they may be located at another nearby open space approved by the Board of Supervisors. The applicant must prove to the satisfaction of the Board of Supervisors that the recreation facilities proposed for construction are approximately equal in market value to the land or fees that would otherwise be required.

- Allow developers to subtract trails (even paved trails) from the calculations about a particular development's unimpervious surface. This would remove the "penalty" associated with building trailway segments as part of new developments. Under current Township regulations trail surface area is not considered pervious, and thus counted as part of the maximum allowable portion of the development allowed to be impervious.

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarizes each recommendation described in detail elsewhere in this plan. Suggested phasing and who should be primarily responsible for overseeing the implementation of each recommendation are suggested. Potential partners and funding sources are listed as appropriate.

East Whiteland Township
Park and Recreation Plan Action Program

	SHORT-RANGE 1ST THROUGH 2ND YEAR	LONGER RANGE 3RD YEAR & BEYOND	RESPONSIBILITY (in addition to Board of Supervisors and Township Manager)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS/ FUNDING SOURCES
EXPANDING AND IMPROVING THE PARK SYSTEM				
1. Establish additional neighborhood parks in under-served areas of the Township. (p. 32)		X	Park and Recreation Board	Neighborhood groups, Chester County Heritage Park Funding
2. Refurbish selected existing neighborhood parks. (p. 33)	X		Park and Recreation Board	Neighborhood groups, Chester County Heritage Park Funding, PA DCNR Funding
3. Implement the improvements planned for the Swanenburg property and Valley Creek Park. (p. 33)	X	X	Park and Recreation Board	Chester County Heritage Park Funding, PA DCNR Funding
4. Further enhance Ecology Park. (p. 35)	X		Park and Recreation Board	Chester County Heritage Park Funding, PA DCNR Funding
5. Consider providing public off-leash dog areas. (p. 35)		X	Park and Recreation Board	Local Dog Owners, Neighborhood groups, Chester County Heritage Park Funding, PA DCNR Funding
DEVELOPING A TOWNSHIP-WIDE TRAIL SYSTEM				
1. Work with Chester County to complete the East Whiteland portion of the Chester Valley Trail. (p. 36)		X	Chester County	Local Trail Enthusiasts, Chester County Park and Recreation Department
2. Develop a trail system throughout East Whiteland. (p. 37)		X	Park and Recreation Board, Planning Commission	Local Trail Enthusiasts, Chester County Park and Recreation Department
CREATING NEW RECREATION PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES				
1. Include a recreation center if/when the Township building is expanded. (p. 47)		X	Park and Recreation Board, Planning Commission	Private Recreation Providers

	SHORT-RANGE 1ST THROUGH 2ND YEAR	LONGER RANGE 3RD YEAR & BEYOND	RESPONSIBILITY (in addition to Board of Supervisors and Township Manager)	POTENTIAL PARTNERS/ FUNDING SOURCES
2. Encourage a private entity to construct skateboarding facilities in East Whiteland. (p. 47)	X	X	Park and Recreation Board, Planning Commission	Private Skatepark Business
3. Underwrite the cost for Township residents who use a neighboring municipality's skatepark. (p. 48)	X		Park and Recreation Board	YMCA and/or Private Skatepark Business
4. Continue community use of local public schools. (p. 50)	X	X	Community Recreation Providers	Great Valley School District
5. Create more non-sports activities, especially for teens. (p. 50)		X	Park and Recreation Board, Community Recreation Providers	Community Recreation Providers
6. Offer more special events programming. (p. 51)	X		Park and Recreation Board	Community Recreation Providers
REFINING HOW EAST WHITELAND ADMINISTERS ITS PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM				
1. Institute regular safety inspections at Township parks. (p. 52)	X		Public Works Department	--
2. Improve risk management practices. (p. 52)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--
3. Establish a gifts catalog of recreation items needed. (p. 53)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--
4. Establish a park endowment fund supported by donations and fundraisers. (p. 53)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--
5. Prepare and distribute a brochure describing leisure opportunities available to East Whiteland residents. (p. 53)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--
6. Formalize the duties of the Park and Recreation Board. (p. 53)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--
7. Institute a formal orientation for park board members. (p. 54)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--
8. Amend the East Whiteland Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to facilitate private funding of park, recreation and open space facilities. (p. 55)	X		Park and Recreation Board	--

IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES AND FUNDING SOURCES

There are a variety of effective techniques for preserving land and defraying the costs of park, recreation and open space activities. In the following section, these suggestions are grouped into three main categories:

- Ways to Preserve Open Space
- Local Funding Sources
- State Grants for Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Conservation

Ways to Preserve Open Space

1. **Fee Simple Acquisition** - The most direct means of obtaining land for parks or greenways is through fee simple purchase. The main advantage of this procedure is that an entire parcel of land belongs to the organization purchasing the land. In many situations, fee simple acquisition is the most appropriate manner by which to preserve land. However, the expense of fee simple purchase can sometimes exceed available funding sources. East Whiteland has used fee simple acquisition to set aside open space and may continue doing so in the future.

2. **Condemnation** - Acquisition can occur by exercising the right of eminent domain where the public purpose is well defined, where fee simple acquisition is desired but not possible at a fair price and where the owner is reluctant to sell. It is prudent to view condemnation as a last resort when acquiring land for parks and/or greenways. East Whiteland has not used condemnation and has no plans to in the foreseeable future.

3. **Purchase and Lease-Back or Resale** - In certain cases, it is appropriate for a municipality to purchase land in fee simple, place restrictions on the deed prohibiting certain uses (e.g., residential development) and lease it back to interested parties. One advantage of this method is that the municipality can purchase land for future use (before the price increases, perhaps prohibitively so) and, through leasing, recoup some or all of the purchase price. In this way, land is maintained in open space and can be developed as a park when future demand warrants. Resale of some or all of the land (after placement of deed restrictions) would maintain open space while also relieving the municipality of maintenance obligations and returning the land to the tax rolls. This is a technique East Whiteland has not used to date.

4. **Conservation Easements** - Conservation easements are used to preserve land at a relatively low cost without acquiring it. With a conservation easement, the land remains privately-owned. The easement involves the property owner voluntarily agreeing to donate or sell the right to develop his or her land. The property owner agrees to place a restriction in the deed of the property,

which then becomes binding on all future owners of the land. The easement can be written in many different ways to restrict or not restrict certain types of activities. Most conservation easements prohibit the construction of new buildings and cutting down woods. Often, the granting of a conservation easement can result in federal income tax and local property tax advantages to the property owner. This technique may have particular relevance in securing right-of-way for trail corridors.

5. **Pedestrian Easements** - A conservation easement can also be combined with a "pedestrian easement" to allow the public the right to walk, hike and ride bicycles along a specific area, provided users follow pre-established rules. These easements can be particularly useful in connecting two or more greenway segments. Pedestrian easements may also be useful in establishing the Township-wide trail system.

6. **Mandatory Dedication** - The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247, as amended) enables municipalities to require that residential developers dedicate land, or fees in lieu of land, for public recreation. Municipalities must have an adopted recreation plan and an adopted ordinance relating to mandatory dedication before land or fees can be accepted. The amount of land required must be related to the demand for recreation land typically created by new development. The required fee should reflect the fair market value of the amount of land for which the fee is being substituted. East Whiteland has mandatory dedication regulations in place concerning both recreation land and fees.

7. **Donations** - Land sometimes is acquired through donations from private owners, organizations and corporations. Local governments should encourage land donations by pointing out benefits of such actions, such as public relations values and federal income tax benefits. Prior to accepting a donation, a municipality should consider two things: first, it should analyze the location of the parcel and the anticipated development and maintenance costs. If the location is poor and/or projected costs will be excessive, the municipality should strongly consider accepting a fee rather than the land. Second, if the land is found to be suitable, the municipality should encourage the donor to provide an endowment fund along with the land to assist with development and/or maintenance costs.

Local Funding Sources

1. **General Revenue Funds** - East Whiteland will continue to use general revenue funds for parks, recreation and open space purposes.

2. **User Fees** - User fees are revenues collected directly from the people who use a program or facility. Certain offerings, such as an adult fitness program, can be run in a business-like fashion

for greater efficiency and a fair distribution of costs. Care is needed to make sure that lower income families are not excluded because they cannot afford high fees. User fees should not be charged if it would be too costly or administratively burdensome to collect. East Whiteland collects only minor user fees from its summer playground participants.

3. **Bond Issues** - Bond funds are monies borrowed to implement a pre-approved list of capital improvements. Bonds can either be general obligation bonds, which are paid back from general revenues, or they can be revenue bonds, which are retired from revenues generated by specific improvements. A bond issue can be appropriate to fund projects with a long life expectancy. Payments are spread over the many years during which project benefits will be enjoyed. The total cost of a project funded through a bond is higher, however, because of interest charges. The key is to time a bond issue when interest rates are lowest. East Whiteland is not currently considering any bond issues for parks, recreation and open space.

4. **Special Fundraisers** - Fundraisers are special purpose campaigns designed to solicit money from local households and businesses. Contributions are collected in tandem with a publicity campaign that focuses on the need and the public benefit associated with a particular improvement such as a new community park. Walk-a-thons, bake sales and other special events can be used to generate interest. Appeals to civic duty and the chance for businesses to get good publicity should also be emphasized. This technique could be applied in East Whiteland Township, particularly with regard to raising funds for equipment and recreation facilities at new park properties.

State and County Grants for Parks, Recreation, Greenways and Open Space Conservation

1. **Community Conservation Partnership Grant Program** - This program is the primary source of State aid for parks, recreation and open space initiatives in Pennsylvania. Applications are accepted once per year for 50/50 matching grants through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). It is a highly competitive program and total funds available are subject to year-to-year changes in the State's budgetary outlook. Major funding categories are as follows:

Planning and Technical Assistance

- **Planning Projects**
  - Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plans
  - Conservation Plans
  - County Natural Area Inventories
  - Feasibility Studies
  - Greenways and Trails Plans
  - Rails-to-Trails Plans
  - Master Site Plans
  - Rivers Conservation Plans

- **Technical Assistance Projects**
  - Education and Training
  - Circuit Rider
  - Peer-to-Peer

Acquisition Projects
- Park and Recreation Areas
- Greenways, Trails and Rivers Conservation
- Rails-to-Trails
- Natural and Critical Habitat Areas

Development Projects
- Park and Recreation Areas
- Greenways and Trails
- Rails-to-Trails
- Rivers Conservation

Federally Funded Projects
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Projects
- Pennsylvania Recreational Trails

2. **Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Enhancement Projects** - The Federal Inter-Modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) allocated approximately $4.7 million per year for six years to Pennsylvania for use in Enhancement Projects. Enhancement Projects involve transportation-related activities outside of the traditional highway construction and mass transit projects. In 1998, Congress extended this program for another six years and substantially increased the total funding available by enacting the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21).

   The program is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) under a cooperative agreement with the Federal Highway Administration. Construction phases are eligible for 100% grant funding. 80% funding is offered for planning, design and acquisition. There are twelve funding categories for projects that "enhance the transportation experience":

   - Facilities for pedestrians and bicycles
   - Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
   - Acquisition of scenic easements of historic sites related to transportation
   - Scenic or historic programs, including tourist and welcome center facilities
   - Landscaping or other scenic beautification
   - Historic preservation
   - Rehabilitation or operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals)
   - Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails)
   - Control and removal of outdoor advertising

- Archaeological planning and research
- Mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff or reduction of vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity
- Enhancement of transportation museums

3. **Pennsylvania Legislative Initiative Program** - This program provides wide discretion to many State legislators to award limited amounts of State funds for worthy projects in their home district. However, because the money can be used for such a wide variety of community-oriented uses, it cannot be counted upon as a regular source for park, recreation and open space funds. There are no specific guidelines regarding what types of projects can be funded, who may apply or the maximum amount that can be provided. The application process varies form district to district. State legislators can seek the grants annually. Traditionally, the best time to submit a request has been between January and June when the annual Pennsylvania State budget is being formulated.

4. **The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)** - This federal program was established in 1991 by the ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) to distribute funds over a 6-year period (1998-2003) to organizations wishing to reduce mobile source transportation emissions. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission has set aside $12 million of the funds for the round of projects that will start in the fiscal year 2003-2004, with the fiscal year beginning on October 1. Pennsylvania counties will receive $9.6 million and New Jersey counties will receive $3 million. Although the last authorized project submittal date was November 1, 2002, Congress will be considering a new transportation bill soon so more funds may be allocated for future CMAQ grants later in 2003 or 2004.

   Applications are submitted to DVRPC and reviewed by an oversight committee for initial eligibility, completion and general merits. Next, projects undergo a screening process and an air quality emissions analysis. Final approval is based on:

   - cost effectiveness
   - ease of implementation
   - extent of prior work
   - commitment of the sponsor to provide matching funds
   - the level of matching funds or the extent of applicant-funded work
   - written commitment to implement from government agency or authority
   - certainty of emission benefits
   - consistency with local, county and regional plans
   - level of support
   - degree of innovation
   - how well it complements other efforts in the region to improve air quality

Candidate projects then advance to PENNDOT for inclusion in the State's Transportation Improvement Program. Although the distribution of projects by geographic location, as well as the desire to produce a balanced mix of project types will be considered, projects cannot be selected unless they reduce mobile source transportation emissions no matter how well they score on other criteria. Funds may also be used for projects which are the joint effort of public agencies and incorporated private or nonprofit firms, but in all cases, the prospective applicant must contact the county/municipal government(s) in which the project will be completed.

The most recent deadline was on November 1, 2002. All projects were screened for eligibility and assessed for their emissions reduction potential in late 2002.

Eligible projects include the following:

1. Bicycle and multi-use trails
2. Transit projects
3. High occupancy vehicle lanes
4. Employer-based transportation management plans
5. Development efforts of a locality to reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) travel
6. Traffic flow improvement projects (see Section "L")
7. Fringe and corridor park and ride facilities
8. Restricted vehicle use programs
9. Programs to control extended idling of vehicles
10. Alternative fuels projects
11. Education, marketing and outreach programs
12. Ride sharing activities
13. Fare/fee subsidy programs
14. Intermodal freight projects
15. Inspection and maintenance (I/M) programs
16. Experimental pilot projects

Since the program is extremely competitive, some projects are submitted more than once before they can get to the final review stage. All 54 projects submitted by the November 1, 2002 deadline are currently being reviewed (12 projects in NJ and 42 projects in PA). Projects will be approved until funds are depleted.

Federal funds may cover up to 80% of project costs and a local match must cover at least 20%. DVRPC requires the applicant to fund all preconstruction activities (environmental clearance, engineering, design, utilities, right-of-way acquisition). CMAQ funds pay construction only, although special exceptions can be made.

5. **Chester County Heritage Park and Open Space Municipal Grant Program** - The Chester County Board of Commissioners recently announced the opening of Round XV of the Heritage Park and Open Space Municipal Grant Program. As a major component of the County's overall

Open Space Program, the Municipal Grant Program provides municipalities with the following types of grants: Park Land and Open Space Acquisition; Park Facilities; and Greenways. 2003 applications were due in March.

The Park Land and Open Space Acquisition and programs provide municipalities with the opportunity to receive 50% funding up to $250,000 for the purpose of purchasing or acquiring easements on property for open space and park land. The Park Facilities Grant provides the same funding for large-scale park facility and improvement projects. In each of these projects, the municipalities are required to provide a minimum 50% match.

The Greenways Grant Program will reimburse up to 50% of the approved cost to a maximum of $150,000 for single-municipality and $200,000 for multi-municipality greenways acquisition or facilities improvements. The program is administered through the Chester County Parks and Recreation Department.

APPENDIX

Community Use of Great Valley School District Facilities

Great Valley School District

47 Church Road, Malvern, PA 19355

APPLICATION FOR BUILDING/GROUNDS RENTAL

(return all copies)

1. School _____

2. Area: Gym _____
   Cafeteria _____
   with kitchen* _____
   w/out kitchen _____

   * MUST USE SCHOOL PERSONNEL WHEN UTILIZING KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

   Auditorium _____
   Classroom No. _____
   Library _____
   Special Equipment Needed: _____

3. Date(s) of Use: _____
   (month/day/year)

Day(s) of the Week: Mon/Tues/Wed/Thur/Fri/Sat/Sun
(Circle appropriate days)

4. Time: From _____ To _____

5. Person to be contacted:

   Name _____

   _____
   Street Address/P.O. Box

   _____
   City Zip

   Telephone: _____

Field/Lot: _____
(name of field/lot)

_____
(location)

6. Organization Desiring Use: _____

7. Purpose: _____

8. Will Admission be Charged? _____

I certify that I have read and understand the school district's policy concerning school rental.

_____
Responsible Person

APPLICATION MUST BE COMPLETED 30 DAYS IN ADVANCE OF REQUESTED USAGE

TO BE COMPLETED BY BUILDING PRINCIPAL

Approved Per Board Policy ☐ Disapproved ☐

_____ _____
Principal's Signature Date

TO BE COMPLETED BY BUSINESS OFFICE

Applicable fees to be billed **after** use of the building:

Custodial _____$ _____ per hour

Cafeteria _____$ _____ per hour

(The above fees may be required prior to building use)

Rental Fee to be paid **prior** to use of the building:

Amount of Payment Due $_____

Date Bill Sent _____

Date Payment Received _____

Date Building Principal Notified of Approval _____

_____ _____
Director of Business Affairs Approval Date

(White) District Office; (Canary) Organization; (Pink) School

GREAT VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
47 Church Road, Malvern, Pennsylvania 19355

RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that _____ [outside group or organization), for and in consideration of the permission granted by the Great Valley School District to use _____ [name and description of facility] on _____ [dates(s)], does hereby remise, release and forever discharge the Great Valley School District, its governing body, officers, employees, agents, successors, and assigns, of and from all and all manner of actions, causes of action, suits, debts, dues, judgments, contracts, obligations, liabilities, agreements and all other claims and demands of any nature whatsoever, whether at law or in equity, especially including but not limited to all claims, obligations and liabilities which the undersigned now have or which may hereafter accrue on account of or in any way growing out of any and all known and unknown, foreseen and unforeseen, temporary or permanent bodily and personal injuries and property damage and the consequences thereof resulting or to result from any accident, incident, casualty, or event occurring on or about the date or dates written above and in connection with the use of the above-described facility of the Great Valley School District including ingress and egress thereto and therefrom; and including any such claim or demand which against the said Great Valley School District, its governing body, officers, employees, agents, successors or assigns, the undersigned in any capacity ever had, now has, or which its heirs, executors, administrators, successors, assigns, governing body, officers, employees, agents, invitees or guests, shall or may have, for, or by reason of any cause, matter or thing whatsoever, from the beginning of the world to the date of these presents.

AND FURTHERMORE, the undersigned does hereby expressly stipulate and agree, in consideration of the benefits to the undersigned described hereinabove, to indemnify and hold forever harmless the said Great Valley School District, its governing body, officers, employees, agents, successors and assigns against loss from any and all claims, demands and actions in law or in equity as described hereinabove, including the reasonable cause of defense thereof; and the undersigned hereby waives any and all rights of exemption or contribution to which it may be entitled under the laws of this or any other State as against such claim or indemnity.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, _____ [outside organization or group] has here unto set its hand and seal this ____ day of _____, 20 _____.

[OUTSIDE ORGANIZATION OR GROUP]

Witness

_____ By: _____

GREAT VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

By: _____
Director of Business Affairs

(White) District Office; (Canary) Organization

2/01

Great Valley School District

Section NO. 707 PROPERTY

Title SCHOOL FACILITIES USE

Date Adopted August 16, 1988

Guide	707. SCHOOL FACILITIES USE	Reference
1. Purpose	The board of school directors recognizes the community needs school facilities for recreational, social, and educational purposes. The board of school directors encourages public use of the district's facilities. District facilities may be used for individual or corporate gain only when the individual's or corporation's goals and actions directly enhance the district's educational programs. The board of school directors intends that school facilities are used by residents and community groups that are located within Great Valley School District boundaries. These groups may use school facilities according to established regulations and when use does not interfere with school programs or building maintenance.	
2. Authority	The board of school directors authorizes the superintendent, the director of business affairs, or their designee to revoke any permit. School facilities availability is affected by the school's convenience, requirements, and activities. The district may assign necessary employees to staff buildings. The user and/or sponsoring organization will pay all expenses. School, school-related, community or civic/service, and other organizations or individuals that provide educational, civic, recreational, or cultural programs are eligible to use the school facilities. Governmental agencies may use school facilities for public hearings and meetings. When the building principal questions a Request for Use eligibility, the request shall be resolved by the director of business affairs. If eligibility is contested the request will be referred to the board of school directors. The superintendent will review the request and recommend action by the board.	
3. Categories of Individuals, Groups and Organizations	The individual groups, and/or organizations that may request permission to use district facilities are: Class AA (Parent organizations). Parent organizations which include PTOs and other parent organized groups whose primary function provides support services for students and student activities.	

Class A (School organizations and individuals).
Organizations and individuals whose primary function is to support Great Valley School District educational programs. This includes student organizations and music instruction by district approved personnel.

Class B (School/community related).
Organizations within the Great Valley School District whose primary purpose is to improve the community and to provide service to residents. This category includes the YMCA, women's club(s), men's club(s), little league baseball, football, soccer, basketball, boy scouts and girl scouts, parks and recreation, governmental groups, and other citizen advisory groups approved by the school board.

Class C (Adult/community related).
Industries and adult groups which are physically located within the Great Valley School District are included in this group. These groups may use facilities only for educational activities, recreation or entertainment. District facilities will not be used for commercial purposes except as indicated on page (1), paragraph (1) of this policy.

Class D (Adult/community related/fee charged).
Industries, adult groups, and community groups located in the region but not physically in GVSD are included in this group, Class C facilities users are Class D when any admission fee is charged.

4. Application Procedures

The majority membership in organizations or groups that apply for school facilities use must be Great Valley School District residents, graduates, or employees of organizations located within the school district with the exception of Class D.

A. All facilities use (except Class A) must be submitted on district forms which are provided on request. Completed forms are submitted to the building principal at the school where users want the facility. Building principals will forward completed forms to the director of business affairs. Requests will be made not less than 30 days prior to the scheduled facility use. Class A users must obtain permission from the building principal.

B. Application forms are available in all district buildings. (APPENDIX A)

C. The director of business affairs will recommend applications to the board of school directors for approval. Applicants will receive written approval for facilities use after board approval.

D. An authorized organization representative must sign each application for facilities use.

E. Building principals will approve all applications before the application is considered by the director of business affairs.

F. Organizations, whose applications are approved, will receive signed contracts.

G. Applicants, whose applications are not approved, will be notified by phone with a letter to follow.

H. Building use permits do not include: professional stage lighting or sound, projection booth, and/or border lights. Stage settings which may be required by speakers are not included. Note: No facility shall be altered except with permission, and such facility must be returned to its original state.

I. Applicants may postpone or cancel requests to use facilities. Requests must be received by the business office at least five work days prior to cancellation. Applicants who do not comply with this requirement will pay all costs incurred.

J. Applicants will complete three copies of the application. After approval, the business office will distribute copies to the applicant, the building principal, and supervisor of buildings and grounds.

K. Applicants will complete an indemnification agreement (APPENDIX B) signed by an organization member or individual who is designated to have that responsibility. The application is not complete until it is accompanied by the signed and dated indemnification form. Class A and Class AA applicants are not required to furnish the indemnification agreement.

5. Fee Schedule

The fee schedule is compatible with individual, group and organization categories: (1) rental fees for use of certain facilities, and (2) charges for technical services.

A. Rental Fees

1. Class A (School Organizations and District Approved Individuals) and Class AA - (Parent Organizations)

(1) No rental fee.
(2) Custodial overtime paid by the district.
(3) Cafeteria overtime charged to the organization.

2. Class B (School/Community Related - No Admission Fee

(1) No rental fee.
(2) Custodial and cafeteria overtime charged to the organization.

3. Class C (Adult/Community Related - No Admission Fee)

   (1) No rental fee.
   (2) Custodial and cafeteria overtime charged to the organization.

4. Class D (Adult/Community Related/Fee Charged

   (1) Rental fee charged to the organization.
   (2) Custodial and cafeteria overtime charged to the organization.

B. Personnel Service Charges

1. The district reserves the right to require that authorized school personnel are employed to operate district equipment.

2. Custodial costs are assessed for time worked beyond the custodian's work day or work week. When custodial time is required, as overtime for extra work, or when a custodian comes into the building when school is normally closed, the custodian fee is charged.

3. Arrangements for kitchen use and number of employees required shall be made through the building cafeteria manager 30 days in advance. Organizations and groups who have banquets will be charged food supplies, and personnel costs for preparation, serving, and supervision. Organizations and groups subject to rental fees will be charged the building rental fee in addition to the food and preparation costs. When the kitchen or kitchen/cafeteria is used, a cafeteria employee must be employed to supervise school equipment use.

C. The following fee schedules apply to those categories or organizations and groups defined in the policy. The office of the supervisor of buildings and grounds will invoice the using organization or group for all rental fees prior to use of the facilities, and all personnel service charges will be billed after the facility is used. Rental fees do not include custodial charges and are based on a per day or part of day usage. Fees can be changed at the discretion of the school board. The district may require a security deposit which will be refunded following the actual usage.

FACILITIES FEE SCHEDULE

	Class			
Auditorium*	A	B	C	D
Secondary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$200
Elementary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$100
(Half fee for rehearsals & practices)				
Gymnasium*				
Secondary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$200
Elementary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$100
Cafeteria Dining Area*				
Secondary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$150
Elementary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$100
Cafeteria Dining Area and Kitchen*				
Secondary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$175
Elementary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$125
Classrooms or Other Space*				
All Schools	NC	NC	NC	$75
Athletic Fields / Other*				
Secondary Schools				
Soccer/Utility	NC	NC	NC	$60
Baseball/Softball	NC	NC	NC	$75
Stadium	NC	NC	NC	$2000
Parking Lots	NC	NC	NC	$50
Elementary Schools	NC	NC	NC	$50

*Any group using the facilities five or more days in one school year will be eligible for a 10% discounted rate on fees.

6. Regulations for School Facilities Use

MISCELLANEOUS FEE SCHEDULE

The hourly rate charged for custodial services, cafeteria employees, or maintenance personnel, shall be established every year and be reflective of a rate commensurate with the overtime rate plus salary related benefits of the average salary in the classification of the person employed.

1. Any organization or group who uses approved school facilities is responsible for admission and conduct of participants and spectators. Facilities users will adequately protect the facility, equipment, participants, and spectators.

   Individuals and/or groups accept facilities with understanding that during heating season (September-May) buildings are cooler on evenings and weekends.

2. Any organization or group which uses approved school facilities will designate one group member who is responsible to supervise the activity. This person is responsible to the custodian(s) on duty.

3. All permits issued are for specific rooms, spaces, and hours. The designated organization person-in-charge has responsibility for all persons involved in the facility use which is restricted to that part of the building requested for the activity. All other building areas are restricted and may not be entered.

   Applicants who have approved permits may use only assigned fields and/or facilities and only for the time(s) and date(s) specified in the permit.

   School district fields may be used only for the specific, intended, and approved purposes. Organizations that have approved applications to use school district playing fields for athletic events or practice must carefully consider potential damage to the fields if practice or scheduled competition occurs during the following conditions: during inclement weather which means when the ground is wet, soggy, muddy, or when precipitation is falling or has recently fallen. If the playing fields will possibly be damaged under the preceding conditions, the organization and/or group authorized to use the facility should not practice or compete on those fields until field conditions permit.

   Field areas which have recently been seeded, landscaped, repaired, renovated, and/or otherwise designated as temporarily out-of-use will not be used.

   Vehicles may be parked only in designated areas.

   Violation of this policy requirement will cause any approved permit to be immediately revoked.

4. Organizations and groups are responsible for damage to buildings, equipment, and grounds. If facilities users find the part of the premises approved for use to be damaged or defective, the responsible organization person will report this condition to the custodian on duty prior to using the facility. Cost of damage, theft of school property, or any other loss to the district will be paid or reimbursed by the organization at a rate determined by the district.

5. Facilities use is automatically canceled when the facilities are closed by school authorities because of local, state, or national disaster, or emergencies (fire, flood, storms, or mechanical failure, as well as normal weather-related school closings.

6. Organizations using school facilities must comply with state laws, local ordinances, and rules of the police and fire departments regarding public assemblies. Adequate police protection must be arranged for by the approved user for all public assemblies.

7. The supervisor of buildings and grounds will assign a custodian(s) to the building being used. The custodian(s) will ensure that the building is opened, lighted, heated, ventilated, cleaned, and closed. The custodian(s) may not deviate from approved procedures and will report variances and enforce regulations. A custodian and/or other authorized school employees shall be on duty whenever property is in use. A charge, in addition to the rental rate as per schedule, will be made for custodial services when a custodian is not ordinarily on duty or if additional work is required for preparations before or cleaning after a rental, or approved use.

8. A cafeteria employee will be on duty whenever kitchen facilities are used. An extra charge will be made. Only school cafeteria employees will operate cafeteria kitchen equipment.

9. Permits, once issued, may not be transferred to any other person, group, company, or organization.

10. Permission to use fields and/or building facilities will be immediately revoked for misuse, abuse, damage, malicious mischief, vandalism, and/or any act of conduct or misconduct that causes the fields or facilities to be in less desirable or usable condition after approved use.

11. Outdoor school facilities are closed and off limits, after dark, except those areas lighted for nighttime use.

12. Lights, stage scenery, score boards, projectors, public address systems, and other school equipment that requires a skilled operator will be supervised by a school district employee. Expenses for equipment operator and necessary students required for "stage hands" will be paid by the organization renting or using the property.

13. School district equipment may not be used unless specifically requested on the application and approved. Charges may be assessed for school district equipment use.

14. All decorations and any temporary materials used must be fireproof and must be approved by school officials. Open flame decorations will not be used anywhere in the buildings. No object in auditoriums and foyers may be fastened to walls, ceilings, and/or floors. No object may be fastened to the floors in any manner that will damage floor finish without permission. All objects, furnishings, and equipment must be installed and removed by the user under school staff supervision. Removal (along with debris) must be completed immediately when the activity ends.

15. To protect students, employees, and the public from a potential health hazard, smoking by employees, visitors, and all adults is prohibited at all times in all Great Valley School District buildings and on all school district premises. Smoking is prohibited at all times on school busses, in all classrooms, in all instructional areas, and in or about all employee work spaces.

16. All intoxicants, including alcohol, drugs, and/or any illegal chemical substance are strictly forbidden on school district premises or in buildings at any time.

17. Refreshments and/or food must be served only in cafeteria dining rooms. Exceptions will be approved by the building principal.

18. Footwear and appropriate dress will be worn inside buildings. Sneakers or gym shoes will be worn when using gymnasiums for athletic purposes.

19. District owned equipment will not be taken from school premises by school district personnel or any other person except for school business.

20. The director of business affairs may require police protection. If required, the cost will be paid by the organization responsible for school facility use.

21. School authorities may take necessary action to preserve order and to protect school property. This action does not relieve applicant's responsibility.

22. No payments will be made directly to school employees for their services (except as set forth in Item 27 below).

23. All rental fees and security deposits will be paid two weeks prior to use. All other charges are payable within 30 days after the billing date. Checks should be mailed to the Great Valley School District, Attention: Director of Business Affairs, 47 Church Road, Malvern, PA 19355.

24. The organization or group will provide a Certificate of Insurance to the school district director of business affairs when the facilities use application is submitted. Applications will be considered incomplete and will not be further processed unless a Certificate of Insurance accompanies the application. The minimum insurance limits provided shall be $1,000,000 for personal injury and $500,000 for property damage. The school district may waive this insurance requirement for routine meetings of organizations. Applicants who want to use school facilities will be informed of the required insurance when the contract is signed.

25. Chairs and/or other obstructions will not be placed in aisles, entrances, or exit areas.

26. School authorities reserve the right to limit, restrict, or prohibit proposed school facilities use when this use is not in the interest of the district or community.

27. Private music lessons may be taught in the district's facilities under the following guidelines:

    All arrangements for private music instruction, including any contracts or other agreements, are between the instructor and the student's parents. Great Valley School District is not a party to any arrangements for private music instruction. The district's participation is limited to permission to use school district space.

    Instructors may include, but are not limited to, district employees. All instructors must be approved by the assistant superintendent for instruction after consultation with the music staff.

Private music lessons are not intended to be a direct extension of district band, orchestra, or choral programs. Therefore, students shall be taught music different from that being taught in district band, orchestra, or chorus.

Private music instruction is limited to students enrolled in Great Valley School District.

A uniform instructional fee shall be set by the district.

Private music lessons shall not be scheduled during the teacher work day.

Adopted:
Revised: 11/17/81
Revised: 9/20/83
Revised: 11/15/83
Revised: 1/17/84
Revised First Reading: 6/21/88
Revised Second Reading: 8/16/88
Adopted: 8/16/88
Revised: 2/21/89
Revised: 5/15/90
Revised: 5/20/96