

# PETERS TOWNSHIP

Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan



Pashek Associates

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# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

## **Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan**

Having recently completed its Municipal Comprehensive Plan, Plan Peters 2022, the Township recognized the need to follow that up with a Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan.

In December of 2014, Peters Township Council contracted with Pashek Associates, a recreation planning firm based in Pittsburgh, to complete the Plan. Pashek Associates worked closely with the project Study Committee throughout the planning process. The approach used to generate the Plan included a detailed inventory and professional assessment of existing recreational opportunities; an wide-ranging public input process; and the development of a vision for the future of recreation, parks, and open space in for Peters Township.

This Plan is designed to serve as a tool for addressing the current and future recreation needs of Peters Township residents and to establish a framework for the decisions that must be made in order to provide adequate recreation facilities and programs. This Plan is broad in scope, encompassing a variety of issues pertinent to parks, recreation and open space in the Township. It lays the groundwork for the continued successful planning and development of recreation, parks, trails, amenities, facilities, and programs.

## **The Planning Process**

The Planning Process was led by a three-step progression of questions that would allow this plan to be custom-made for Peters Township.

### **Where Are We Now?**

This question prompted the research of existing conditions. What are the township's recreational and natural resources and where are they located? What facilities, amenities, and resources are available within the existing parks and recreation system? What recreational facilities in the township and surrounding areas that are offered by other municipalities, non-profit recreation providers, school districts, private entities, and other government agencies? What is the administrative structure that manages the parks and recreation system and how does it function?

**Of particular importance to Peters Township was an extensive commitment to the public input process and the development of a full capital improvements plan for all parks and facilities.**

## THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

**WHERE ARE WE NOW?**



**WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?**



**HOW DO WE GET THERE?**



## **Where Do We Want To Be?**

This question drove the process to reach out to the public in a variety of venues to help project what the future of parks and recreation should be in the Township. Public participation was gathered through five sources: a study committee that was representative of local interest groups; a series of public meetings across the Township; key person interviews; an internet-based blog; and a community recreation questionnaire. A thorough analysis was completed on the findings of the existing conditions to determine needs for the future.

## **How Do We Get There?**

The culmination of the answers to the two previous questions provided direction concerning the implementation process to meet the recreational needs, wants, and desires of the Peters residents. It includes a vision statement that depicts what the future should be; goals for bringing the vision to fruition; and implementation strategies to accomplish the goals.

## **Parks and Recreation – Good for You: Good for All**

Parks and recreation is a critical component of community services for all Pennsylvania residents. Peters Township has long played a significant role in the provision of parks and recreation through its ever-growing parks and recreation system. In addition, local sports and recreation organizations and non-profits have joined together to provide exceptional recreational opportunities throughout the township.

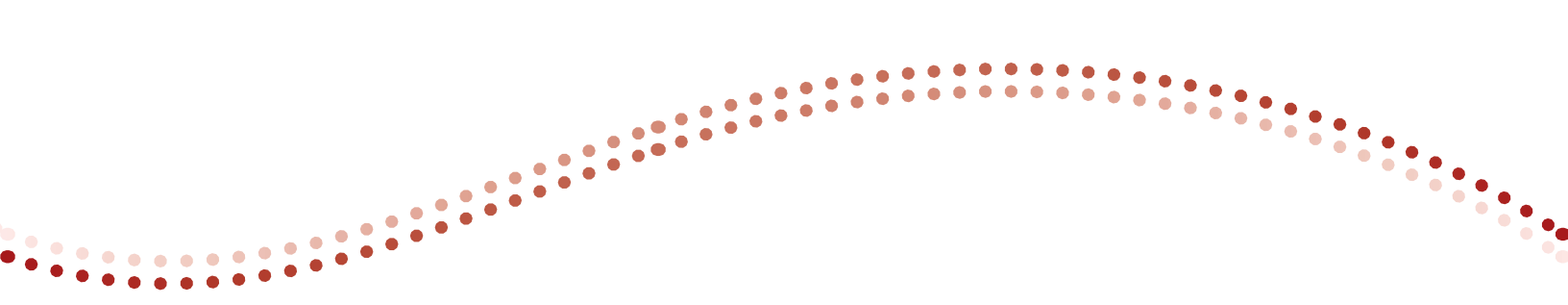
As one looks at parks, recreation, and open space across the country, the benefits are evident –senior citizens exercising to stay active and healthy; youth learning life skills by playing baseball, soccer or other youth sports; families strengthening relationships by hiking, biking or picnicking together; communities coming together through special events. As the Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Association describes it, Park and Recreation are good for you and good for all.

Parks and recreation opportunities encourage citizens to be engaged in their communities as volunteers, stewards, advocates and students. Access to parks and recreation facilities leads to healthy lifestyles for people of all ages. Activities in parks build self-esteem, reduce stress and improve overall wellness. Parks give communities a vital identity. Well-maintained, accessible parks and recreation facilities are key elements of strong, safe, family-friendly communities. Parks enhance property values, contribute to healthy and productive workforces and help attract and retain businesses.

## **How to Use this Plan**

Peters Township’s Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan will be a powerful tool to continually build and support a high quality park, recreation and open space system. It provides direction to sustain and enhance the quality of recreational opportunities, park facilities, open spaces, and trails.





The Plan provides a framework to fulfill the township’s vision for the future of recreation, parks, and open space. The recommendations presented in this document offer a clear direction for future recreation, parks, and open space initiatives. The wide scope of recommendations and strategies assist in realistic planning for implementation. The detailed information provided will assist in setting financial goals and the appropriate allocation of needed financial support.

The broad scope of this Plan includes the documentation and analysis of a variety of issues pertinent to recreation, parks, and open space in the Township. The document will be a valuable resource of supporting information as the implementation strategies are completed, new strategies are developed, and documentation of existing conditions is needed.

The Plan provides the Township with a wealth of data and background information to support the enhancement of its recreation facilities, the preservation of the area’s natural features, and the connection of neighborhoods. The Plan also provides needed information to support grant applications for improvement and expansion of recreation facilities.

Local residents will be the ultimate beneficiaries of new recreation facilities, preserved resources, and an enhanced economy based on the outcomes of the Plan. Residents have demonstrated a perpetual interest in the growth of a high quality system of recreation, parks, and open space. This Plan offers convenient, practical information for public consumption.



# Chapter 1: Background

## Profile of Peters Township Parks and Recreation

Located in the northeastern part of Washington County, Peters Township has long been known for its high quality recreational opportunities. The Township is bounded to the north by the Allegheny County municipalities of Upper Saint Clair Township and Bethel Park Borough; to the east by Union Township; to the south by Nottingham and North Strabane Townships; and to the west by North Strabane and Cecil Townships. Several of these surrounding municipalities offer strong recreational programs and facilities of their own.

With Peterswood and Peters Lake Parks serving as the de facto centerpiece parks for the Township, Peters also features the Arrowhead Trail and the Township Tennis Center as major recreational attractions. These are supplemented by a series of smaller parks that are scattered across the Township. All told, the parks comprise over 513 acres of recreational space for township residents.

The Peters Township Community Recreation Center, located at the entrance to Peterswood Park, offers Township residents a high quality indoor recreation facility that includes two full-size gymnasiums, a walking track, conference room, classroom, fitness room, multi-purpose room with a kitchenette, and a concession stand. It also houses the Township's Parks and Recreation Department.

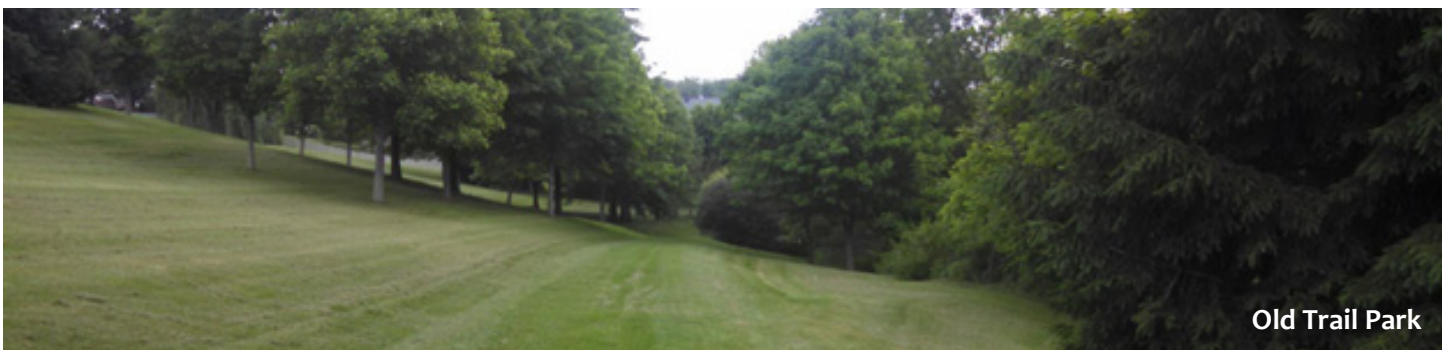
### **Park Facilities Include:**

- 9 – Diamond Ballfields
- 9 – Rectangular fields (1 Synthetic turf)
- 6 - Picnic shelters
- 6 – Playgrounds
- 9 – Tennis courts
- 1 – Boat launch
- 3.5 miles – Multi-use trails
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Skate park



### **Peters Township Parks and Recreation Facilities**

- Community Recreation Center*
- Peterswood Park*
- Peters Lake Park*
- Arrowhead Trail*
- Tennis Center*
- Elm Grove Park*
- Old Trail Park*
- Rees Park*
- Venetia Park*



## Related Plans

### Plan Peters 2022

Peters Township completed and adopted its most recent Township Comprehensive Plan, entitled Plan Peters 2022 in December of 2013.

The plan is describes as a policy guide, stating that, “It is intended to create a framework for land use and capital investment decisions over a long-range time period (10 to 20 years).”

The Plan identifies seven guiding principles that serve as the cornerstone of the plan. Among those are several that tie to parks, recreation, and open space within the township.

In particular, the Stay Green Forever principle calls for the promotion and preservation of natural areas throughout the township. The principle states that the Township should, “Strive to create an interconnected network of green space that conserves critical natural areas, supports working farms, provides recreational linkages, protects water quality and quantity, and contributes to the identity and sense of place within the community.”

A second guiding principle is to Increase Transportation Choice and Walkability. This is intended to, “Provide a safe, reliable transportation system that balances all modes of transportation, including walking, biking, transit, and cars.” While also concentrating “on both destination-based as well as recreational trips, promoting active living for all ages, with special attention given to the mobility of children and seniors.”

Another encourages the township to Excel in Education and Township Services. This principle encourages the township to, “Continue to advance quality-of-life for all residents of Peters Township by maintaining and expanding education and township services, while ensuring that elected officials are good stewards of Township assets.” Among these assets and services are the hundreds of acres of park land and open space as well as the recreational services offered to local residents.



### The Vision of Plan Peters 2022

Peters Township will continue to do what it does best – provide an enviable living environment with great schools, efficient services, proactive government and significant open spaces – while enhancing its competitive position in the region as a fiscally and environmentally sustainable community through increased housing choices for all stages of life, expanded employment opportunities, vibrant activity nodes, walkable neighborhoods and improved connectivity.



## Recommendations from Peters Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan

More specifically, the Comp Plan makes a number of recommendations that are directly related to the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan. Some of those are describe in the following narrative.

### Increase Transportation Choice & Walkability

- Provide a safe, reliable transportation system that balances all modes of transportation, including walking, biking, transit, and cars.
- Consider land use and infrastructure together, promoting street connectivity and complete streets that emphasize the quality and character of both the thoroughfare and adjoining development.
- Concentrate on both destination-based as well as recreational trips, promoting active living for all ages, with special attention given to the mobility of children and seniors.

### Trails and Connectivity

- Provide connections between the Arrowhead Trail and businesses along the creek and trail corridor, including improving visibility, foot bridges across the creek, convenient access points to and from the trail and bike parking
- Identify potential routes where shared bike lanes would be feasible
- Prepare a sidewalk plan to identify segments where walkways or paths should be constructed
- Identify trail links and park locations to be incorporated into future development projects
- Prepare an “official map” to establish the future location of new roads, public facilities, pathways, bikeways, sidewalks and open spaces
- Advertise the Montour and Arrowhead Trails and promote events to attract users and benefit businesses along the route
- As part of the “official map”, create a comprehensive open space map showing future trail, sidewalk, and bikeway connections to key locations within the community like parks, schools, and businesses. Also, show proposed open space and park locations
- Explore the potential for purchase or donation of property along the south side of Valley Brook Road (between East McMurray Road and Route 19) to establish a conservation corridor/park parallel to the Arrowhead Trail

### Parks and Facilities

- Coordinate with the schools and parks department to install sport courts
- Engage in public/private partnerships to secure funding and provide recreational opportunities
- Cooperate regarding joint use of parks and recreation facilities
- Explore the feasibility of/appetite for a dedicated tax millage for open space acquisition
- Install a short rowing course at Peters Lake Park

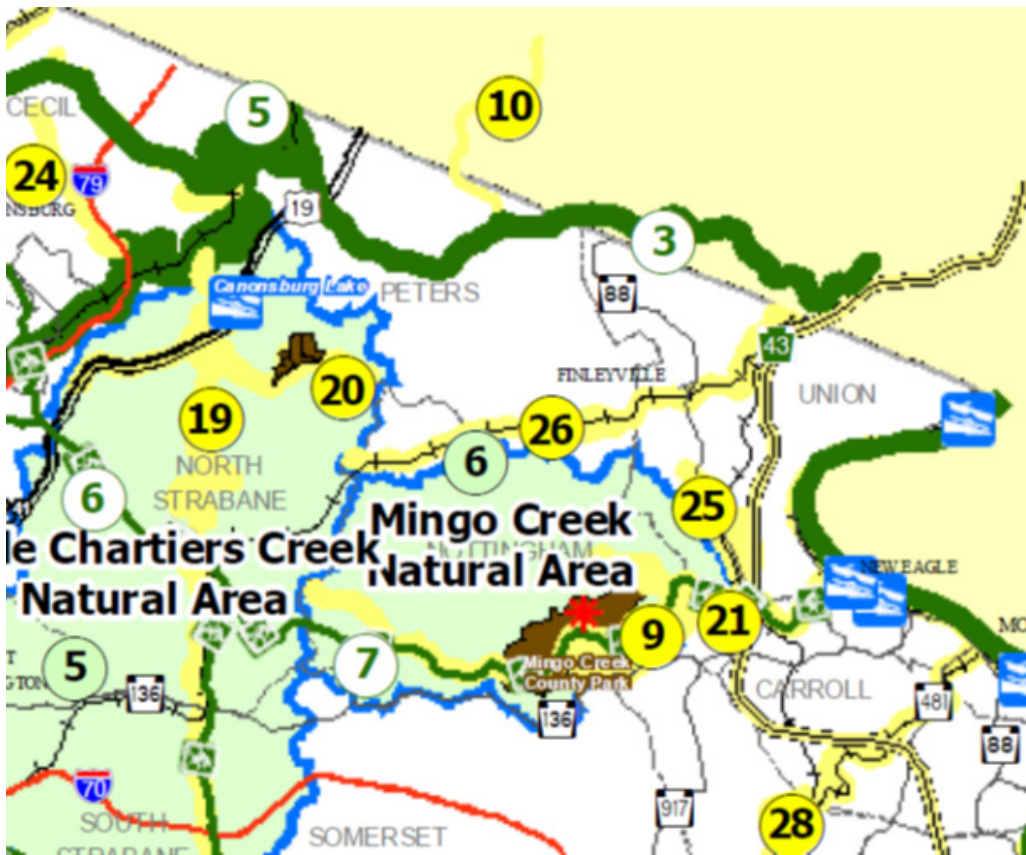
***The Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan has been developed to fit with the Guiding Principles, Vision, and Recommendations of Plan Peters 2022.***

## Washington County Greenways Plan

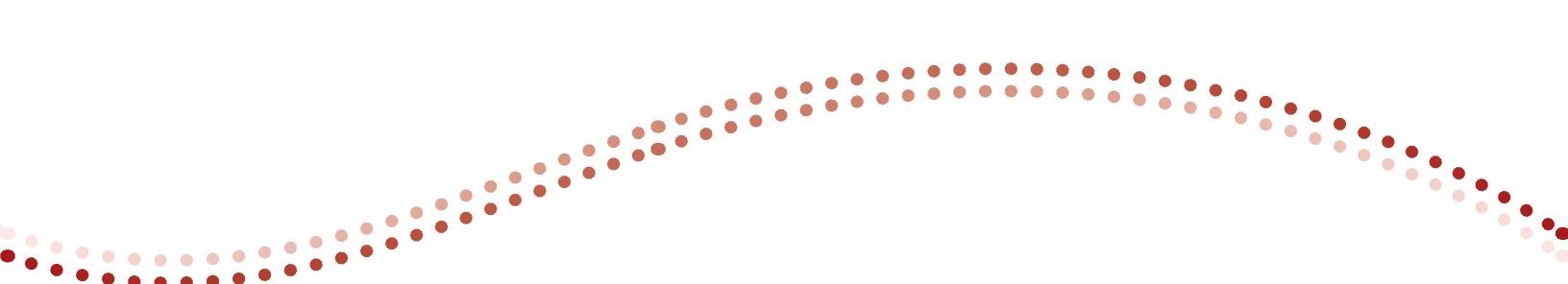
The Greenways Plan provides direction for development, management, and implementation of conservation and recreation greenways in Washington County.

### Greenway Descriptions and Recommendations

The Washington County Greenways Plan describes a number of recreational and conservation greenways that impact the residents of Peters Township. As well, the Plan proposes recommendations for future maintenance, conservation, and/or development of some of the greenways. The following map and related narrative depict four existing or proposed greenways that are located in or near Peters Township.



Section of the Washington County Greenways Map #10



### **Montour Trail Corridor** (Primary Greenway #3 on Map 10)

The Montour Trail spans the northern section of Washington County, linking trail systems in Allegheny County with Washington DC. The portion of the trail system that is located in Pennsylvania is known as the Great Allegheny Passage. It is recognized by DCNR as one of Pennsylvania’s Major Greenway Corridors. Peters Township’s Arrowhead Trail is part of the Montour Trail and the Allegheny Passage as it travels through the Township.

### **Peters Creek Greenway** (Secondary Greenway #26 on Map 10)

The Peters Creek Greenway contains a Biologically Diverse Area of high significance north of the Mingo Creek Natural Area.

### **Bethel Branch (of the Montour Trail) Corridor** (Secondary Greenway #10 on Map 10)

The Bethel Spur Trail provides a connection from Peters Township to Bethel Park in Allegheny County. The Plan recommends the continued development of this section of the Montour Trail.

### **Biologically Diverse Areas**

In addition to these, three areas along the creeks are classified as Biologically Diverse Areas (BDA) according to the plan. They include the Chartiers Creek BDA located along a section of Chartiers Creek that forms the municipal boundary between Peters and Cecil Township; the Canonsburg Lake Slope BDA located along the eastern slope of the lake; and Wright Woods BDA located along Peters Creek near the south eastern boundary of Peters Township. These areas are identified on the Natural Infrastructure Map in this report.

#### **Recommendations**

*Finish development of the trunk line of the Montour Trail.*

*Continue planning and development efforts to provide connections from proposed hubs to the trail, including those trails listed in the Recreational Greenways*

# Demographic, Social, and Economic Statistics and Analysis

As part of the Plan Peters 2022 Community Snapshot publishes on November 12, 2012, a complete profile of the Township was presented. The Snapshot described the Township's:

- History
- Population and Trends
- Housing
- Economic Characteristics
- Land Use
- Natural Features
- Parks and Trails
- Transportation



As part of the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan, the Snapshot was reviewed in an effort to understand how each section might apply to this Plan.

## Of particular note were the following:

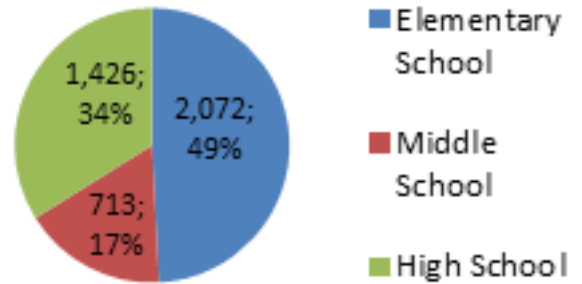
- The Township Population grew nearly 47% between 1990 and 2010 and is projected to have grown another 8% between 2010 and 2015.
- The percentage of residents under the age of 18 in Peters Township greatly exceeds that of the county, region by 9 percentage points and of the state and country by 7 and 5 percentage points respectively.
- At the same time the percentage of Peters residents age 65 and over is more than 4 percentage points below that of the county and the region, and 2 percentage points lower than the state.
- These population statistics suggest a much younger population that should be considered when evaluating recreational needs and demands.
- The median household income in Peters Township is shown as \$100,109, which is more than double that of the county, region, and the state.
- The total amount of open space in the township is shown as 14.8% total acreage of the township.
- The township's natural features are well described in the Snapshot, including watersheds and topography.

## Schools

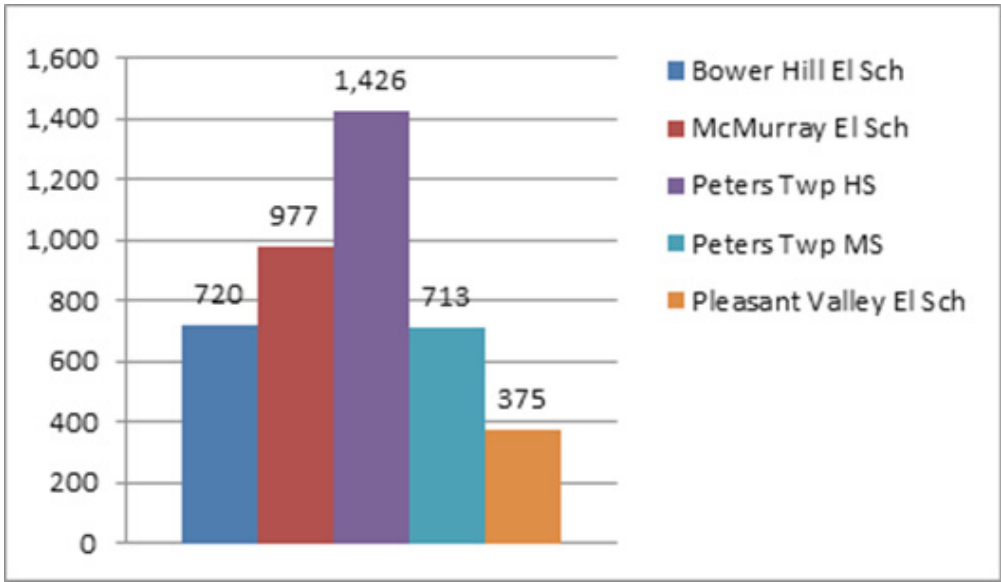
### Peters Township School District

The district supports one high school, one middle high school, and three elementary schools serve the student population. The facilities are as follows:

- Peters Township High School
- Peters Township Middle School
- Bower Hill Elementary School
- McMurray Elementary School
- Pleasant Valley Elementary School



The student population includes 1,426 high school students, 713 middle school students, and 2,072 elementary students.



Source: <http://www.education.pa.gov/> PA Department of Education 2014-2015 Enrollment Data



# Chapter 2: Inventory & Analysis

## Peters Township Parks and Recreation Opportunities

*Peters Township has a quite comprehensive park system. With Peterswood featuring sports fields with varied amenities; a variety of picnic shelters and playgrounds; amphitheater, skate park, and recreation center; it has all the makings of an exceptional Community Park. The variety of sports fields and satellite facilities found at Elm Grove, Venetia, Rees, and Old Trail parks serve to spread recreational opportunities around the Township. The tennis center, as a special use facility, comprises multiple tennis courts and amenities that meet a unique need in the Township. Peters Lake Park offers a more quiet space for relaxation, fishing, kayaking, picnicking, and enjoying the outdoor natural features. Arrowhead Trail offers exceptional outdoor opportunities for residents of all ages as it connects sections of the Montour Trail located within Peters Township.*

## Summary of Township Parks and Facilities

### Peterswood Park

Peterswood Park is the Township's largest park with about 133 acres of land. Using the National Recreation and Park Association classification, Peterswood Park is recognized in the category of a community park. Although many of its facilities are sports-based, with as many as fourteen sports fields, the park includes other community based features such as an outdoor amphitheater, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and a skate park. In addition, the Peters Township Community Recreation Center sits at the entrance to the park, and there are two access points to the Arrowhead Trail within Peterswood Park.

According to the survey that was conducted as part of this plan, Peterswood is the most used of the Township parks. At least 1,350 of the 1,500 survey respondents indicated that they or their family members used the park at least once during the last year. Six hundred fifty one respondents said they use the park 16 or more time throughout the year.

### Park Amenities Include:

- Outdoor Amphitheater
- 5 Ball Fields
- 4 Multi-Use Fields
- 1 Synthetic Turf Field
- 3 Playgrounds
- 4 Restroom Buildings
- 3 Concession Stands
- 6 Shelters
- Community Recreation Center
- Skate Park



## Analysis of Peterswood Park Facilities

### Softball Complex – Softball fields, concession, restrooms, picnic shelter and plaza, observation decks

- The area is in excellent condition
- No major upgrades needed
- Parking is sometimes an issue

### Field 5 – Artificial turf Soccer Complex with multiple fields

- Area is in excellent condition
- Major needs: ADA access, restroom facilities, concession stand. It could use additional parking. An alternative is to manage parking through critical scheduling of field use
- The site is in need of a permanent restroom facility. This issue was one of the top two identified through the public input process

### Picnic Shelter/Playground Area – located above the soccer field

- All three shelters and the playground are already scheduled for replacement.
- Shelters 2 and 3 are not ADA compliant
- Lower playground is not ADA compliant
- Schedule playgrounds for replacement over next 3-5 years
- Recommend restructuring of this area to enhance appearance and usability
- Restrooms are fairly new but may not meet all ADA requirements
- Parking is insufficient for the existing facilities however there is an additional parking lot across the street to the south

### Field 11 (located south of Picnic Shelter Area)

- The best use of this field is for it to be left primarily as open space
- Add a picnic shelter that would support Community Day
- Upgrade electric service to better accommodate community day

### Outdoor Amphitheater

- Scheduled for major upgrades in 2015/16
- There is no parking near the facility; consider possible areas to add parking nearby
- Long-term – consider relocating public works storage area – reuse that area to support the park

### Hofbauer Field - field, spectator area, press box

- No major upgrades needed
- Some minor ADA upgrades needed



## Multi-use field #4 (rectangular/diamond) with playground, picnic shelter and restrooms

- Minor ADA upgrades
- Plan for playground replacement in 5+ years

## Baseball fields #1 and #2

- Need ADA improvements
- Needs better spectator and user access to fields, bleachers and spectator areas
- Construct a natural visual barrier to hide the view of the maintenance facility along the 1<sup>st</sup> base side of Field 1

## Baseball field #3

- No major improvements needed
- Provide ADA access to bleachers and field areas

## Skate Park

- Needs major upgrades and improvements. Can be done over a period of years
- Some of these upgrades are already budgeted in the Township's Capital Improvement Plan



## Peters Lake Park

Classified as a resource-based park, this 189-acre park is the Township's most natural park yet is still well used with sixty percent of the survey respondents saying that they used it multiple times per year. Many of the comments from the public input process revealed that they appreciated the natural effects of the park while many strongly articulated they would like it to stay that way. The most used features of the park are the trails and the lake.

### Park amenities include:

- Peters Lake
- Woodchip walking trail (.75 mile)
- Fishing Pier/Kayak Launch
- 2 Boat Launches

## Analysis

Maintenance of such natural areas are typically time consuming and costly. The Township should begin to allocate adequate resources to maintain rather than upgrade the natural surface trail. Many residents prefer it remain as natural as possible while others are





open to sensitive development that will maintain the natural components while making it more usable.

DEP has identified the dam as high hazard, which may affect any proposed improvements. The Township is still evaluating its options for the dam. With some environmentally sensitive upgrades, this could become a more usable township park.

### **Improvements should include:**

Maintain as natural surface trails

Rehabilitate the kayak launch

Construct a new shelter as proposed on the park’s master plan. This could be used for education programs that are held at the park.

### **Tennis Center**

Peters Township just recently took over management and operations of the indoor tennis program. The Center hosts a wide variety of leagues, teams, tournaments, and instructional clinics and classes. As well, it is open to the public to use during unscheduled times. Four clay and five deco surface courts provide for nearly every tennis need. The clay courts are enclosed for indoor use for October through April.



### **Amenities include:**

- 9 tennis courts
- Pro Shop

### **Old Trail Park**

Old Trail is the Township’s only true neighborhood park. With 7 acres of land, it services part of the Old Trail neighborhood with its playground and open space. It is a popular place for children who live close by. The park is accessible mostly by pedestrians as there are only a few parking spaces near the front of it.



### **Park amenities include:**

- Playground
- Open Space

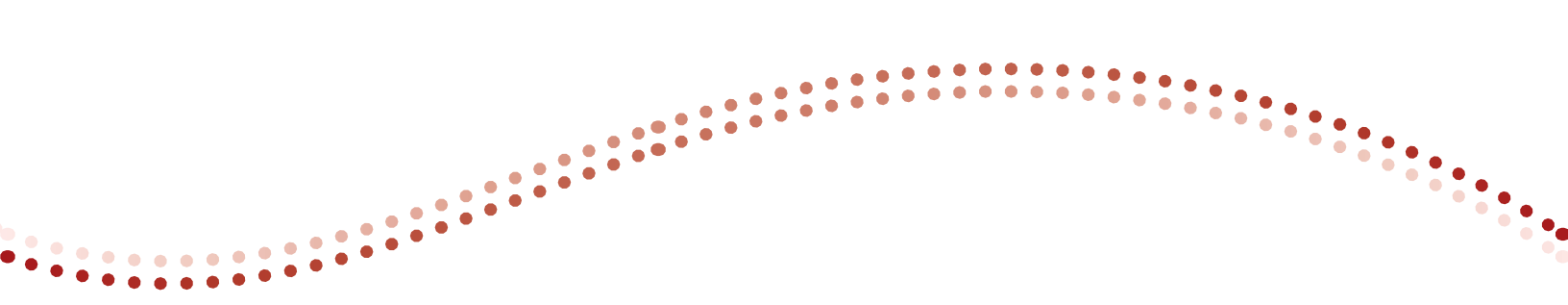
### **Analysis**

- The park is not ADA compliant.
- Plan for replacement of the playground

### **Elm Grove Park**

Elm Grove is one of the Township’s satellite parks with 14 acres and a variety of amenities. The park is accessible to the neighborhoods via a walking trail and to others by car. The property is





District and leased to the Township who maintains and manages it. The softball field is used by the one of the school district's girls' teams. The sports fields offer great opportunities for community based softball and soccer. As well, the picnic shelter and playground are quite attractive for community use.

### **Park amenities include:**

- 1 Soccer Field
- 1 Softball Field
- 1 Playground
- 1 Shelter
- Restroom Facilities

### **Analysis**

- Park needs a general facelift – overall improvements to improve appearance, functionality, and safety.
- Space is available for development of sport courts above the soccer field
- ADA access needed to softball and soccer fields
- The trail connection to Ammons Drive needs rehabilitated
- Add a pedestrian crossing on Thompsonville Road to connect to the East Edgewood area

## **Rees Park**

Rees Park is mostly a sports park with multiple soccer fields and a baseball field. The only non-sports facility is a playground located at the front of the park. The park sits on 15 acre of land. It is only accessible by vehicle.

### **Park amenities include:**

- 1 Ball Field
- 1 Multi-Use Rectangular Field
- 1 Playground
- Restroom Facilities



### **Analysis**

- Park needs a general facelift – overall improvements to improve appearance, functionality, and safety.
- Additional features should be considered to draw residents to the park for uses other than baseball or soccer.
- Opportunities would include a small picnic shelter, observation deck on the hillside overlooking the baseball field, and improved spectator space for the soccer fields.
- A fence needs to be installed around the new playground to protect children from direct access the road and parking lot
- Needs ADA improvements
- There is some additional Township-owned property across McCombs Road to the north of Rees Park that was evaluated as a possibility for parking or other recreational uses. The property was found unsuitable for either.

## Venetia Park

This 7-acre park is a small, satellite sports park. It is located next to the Venetia Community Center. It is used primarily for baseball, softball, and soccer.

### Park amenities include:

- 2 T-Ball Fields
- 1 Multi-Use Rectangular Field
- Concession stand
- Observation deck

### Analysis

- Park is in good condition but none of the fields is ADA compliant.



## Arrowhead Trail

The 3.5 mile trail adds yet another outdoor opportunity as it connects sections of the Montour Trail located within the Township. Comprising 129 acres, the asphalt trail services much of the Township population.

On any given day, the trail sees an assortment of users including cyclists, walkers, rollerbladers, joggers, and moms with strollers, seniors, dog walkers, and many more. Eighty-six percent of the questionnaire respondents said they or their family has used the trail in the last year while 733 respondents (nearly half) said they used the trail more than 15 times.



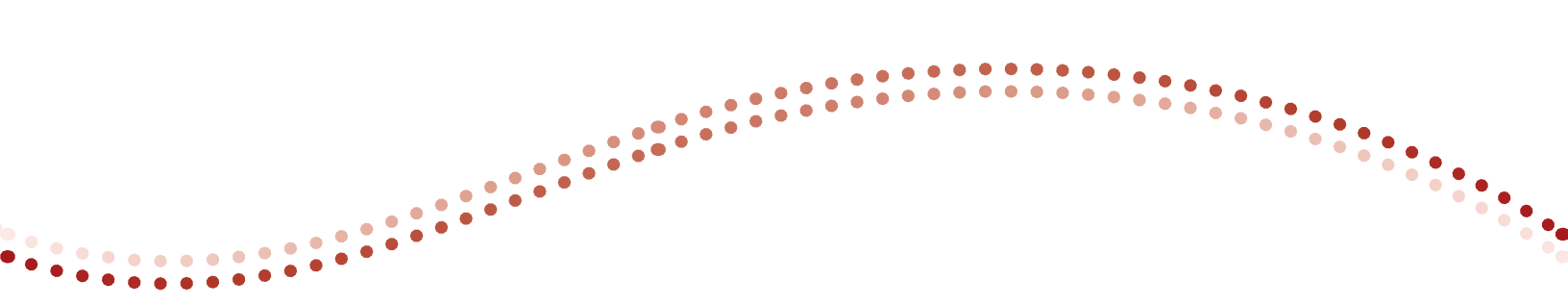
**A list of recommended replacements and upgrades for each park is found in Chapter 4 along with the Capital Improvement Plan.**

## General Analysis of Township Parks

### Care and Maintenance of Facilities

The Township has done a good job over the years of maintaining and upgrading its parks and facilities. Even with the good maintenance and appropriate replacement plans, there comes a time when facilities need to be fully replaced or receive more significant upgrades. With the extensive use of Peters Township parks, it is necessary to remain vigilant in replacements and upgrades in order to ensure long-term sustainability, safety, and usability of park facilities and amenities.

**In order to ensure long-term usability, safety, and sustainability of township parks, the Township should keep maintenance and ongoing capital improvements a priority.**



A full analysis of each Township park was completed as part of this Plan. The Township has an existing replacement plan for items such as backstops, fencing, roofs, trail resurfacing, and other standard replacement items. In addition to these, the Township annually prepares a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). In addition to scheduling for replacement of these routine items, the CIP also plans ahead for rehabilitation or replacement of picnic shelters, playgrounds, and other capital expenses.

For the most part, there seems to be sufficient maintenance funding and staff. The one exception would be at Peters Lake Park where additional staff time and finances need to be allocated.

## **ADA Compliance**

As well, certain design, building, and safety standards tend to change over time. Of particular note, are compliance standards within the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act that are specifically related to park and recreation facilities. These guidelines can be found at [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov). A thorough ADA analysis of each park was completed as part of this plan. This analysis found that all of the Peters Township parks have facilities that need to be brought into compliance with the ADA Guidelines. Specific recommendations for ADA compliance are described in Chapter 4.

## **Capital Improvements Plan**

This plan, in Chapter 4, makes recommendations for capital improvements in each of the parks to ensure their ongoing usability, safety, and compliance with current standards and guidelines. A seven year Capital Improvement Plan is included.

## **Parking Deficiencies**

Insufficient parking is a significant issue at Peterswood and Rees Parks and to a lesser degree at Elm Grove Park. It is also an issue that is extremely hard to remedy. In some cases, there are simply not enough parking spaces for the amount of activity at nearby facilities. Sometimes this can be alleviated through creative scheduling of programs and facilities. While scheduling may not eliminate the issue, it can often ease it.

Often at ballfields, parking issues are most intense as teams and families are arriving for a game at the same time teams from the previous game are still on the fields. This may double the demand for parking for a brief period while the change of use takes place. As soon as the existing teams have exited the field and the parking lot, space is once again available. Scheduling fields to limit these situations can significantly diminish the parking issue. This type of scheduling might help at locations such as Rees Park, Peterswood Park Field 5 and the Softball Complex.

In other cases, adequate parking is available but some of it may be further away from the activity that people prefer to walk. Signage directing drivers to the “additional parking” spaces will at least indicate that additional space is available, albeit a little further away. The Township may also consider developing more direct walkways from distant parking areas to the location of the activity.

In an effort to address needs of the elderly and disabled, additional space nearer to the fields may be designated for such persons.

## ***Peters Township School District Outdoor Recreational Facilities***

Peters Township Parks and Recreation as well as local sports organization often utilize sports and recreational facilities that are owned by the School District. The following is a list of school facilities that are most often used by these organizations.

While school-owned playgrounds are not scheduled for specific use, they do provide added play spaces for children and families across the Township.

The sports fields and playgrounds are included in the recreational facilities analysis found on the next page.

### **Bower Hill Elementary School**

- Playground
- Multipurpose Room/Gymnasium

### **Pleasant Valley Elementary School**

- Playground
- Football field
- Softball field
- Multipurpose Room/Gymnasium

### **McMurray Elementary School**

- Baseball/softball field
- Playground
- Multipurpose Room/Gymnasium

### **Peters Township Middle School**

- Multipurpose field – diamond and rectangular
- Gymnasium

### **Peters Township High School**

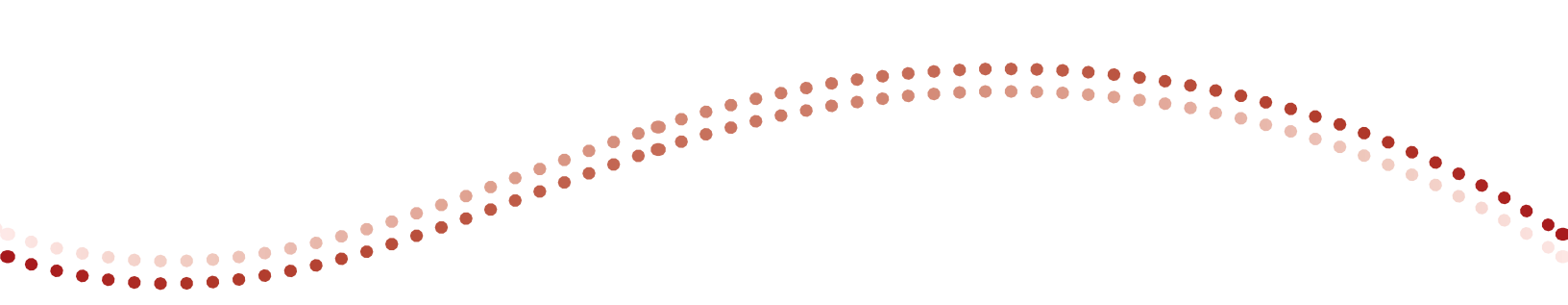
- Football field/Track stadium
- 2 Outdoor basketball courts
- Indoor swimming pool
- Gymnasium and Auxillary Gymnasium



## ***Sufficient and Adequate Land and Facilities***

Determining the appropriate acreage, type, and number of recreation facilities for a community is a function of analyzing a variety of data. There are many factors unique to Peters Township that are considered: extensive natural resources, existing land use, projected residential growth, existing parks and their current uses, recreation trends in the region, the role of the Peters Township Parks and Recreation Board, and the input received through the public participation process.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), no longer provides a specified standard to identify the amount of park acreage or the number of recreational facilities needed per 1000 residents. Rather, they recommend a “level of service” approach to determining what facilities and space is needed. That is, park and facility



development should be based on local demand with some reference to national averages or standards.

The demand analysis is based on factors such as sports league use, public input, population trends, socioeconomic conditions, and even location. Essentially, communities should determine what type of parks to include, what facilities and spaces will comprise these parks, and what the appropriate balance between active and passive areas is in these parks.

For the purposes of this study, we have begun with the 1995 national standard to serve as a baseline and have considered the level of service and demand as determined through the public input and analysis process.

Parkland is analyzed in two specific categories: community park land and neighborhood park land. Peterswood Park is the Township's only true community park. It is quite typical of communities the size of Peters Township to have just one, or sometimes two community parks. While other parks that are scattered around the Township, including Old Trail, Rees, Venetia, and Elm Grove provide greater service than might be accounted for in a neighborhood park, they are still classified as neighborhood parks for purposes of this analysis. The Township has three additional specialty parks.

- Peters Township Tennis Center that serves a specialty sports facility
- Peters Lake, a natural resourced-based park
- Arrowhead Trail

These types of parks are not normally included in the park land analysis as they serve very specific purposes.

The chart on the following page analyzes the community and neighborhood parks according to a proposed acreage per 1,000 residents. The analysis depicts the amount of land that is currently available; the amount of acreages that is needed; and the surplus or deficit. It shows the same analysis for the current Township population and for the projected population in 2025.

The analysis shows that there is about the right amount of acreage for neighborhood parks in the current year and projects a deficit of about 7.5 acres by 2025. For community park land, the chart shows a deficit of about 26 acres in 2015 and 49 acres by 2025.

And, although it is not shown in the chart, at the Township's projected build out population of 36,635, the Township would need an additional 30 acres of neighborhood park land and 140 acres of community park land.

Based on the demand for new facilities and the community's desire for protected park land, these estimates seem quite realistic. In fact, when considering the hilly topography of much of the land in the Township, the amount of park land might need to be increased by an additional 50% or more.

Using this chart as a starting point and comparing it with community input and professional analysis, we note the following:

<b>Peters Township Recreational Land and Facilities Analysis</b>						
Peters Township 2015 Population	22,349	Projected 2025 Population	25,289			
<b>Park Land Acreage Comparison to NRPA Standards</b>						
Park Type	Needed Acres/1000	Existing Acres	2015 needed acres	2015 Surplus (Deficit)	2025 needed acreage	2025 surplus (Deficit)
<b>Community Parks</b>	8	153	178.792	-25.792	202.312	-49.312
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	4	43	44.698	-1.698	50.578	-7.578

<b>Facility Comparisons to NRPA Standards</b>						
Peters Township 2015 Population	22,349	Projected 2025 Population	25,289			
	1 facility per X people	Existing	2015 need	2015 surplus (deficit)	2025 need	2025 surplus (deficit)
<b>Basketball Courts</b>	5,000	2	4	(2)	5	(3)
<b>Tennis Courts*</b>	5,000	9	4	5	5	4
<b>Volleyball Courts</b>	5,000	0	4	(4)	5	(5)
<b>Diamond Fields*</b>	2,000	11	11	(0)	13	(2)
<b>Rectangular Fields**</b>	1,250	15	18	(3)	20	(5)
<b>Municipal Swimming Pools</b>	20,000	0	1	(1)	0	-
<b>Picnic Shelters</b>	2,000	6	11	(5)	13	(7)
<b>Football</b>	5,000	2	4	(2)	5	(3)
*adjusted to reflect current trends						
**excluding football fields						

1. While rectangular fields indicate a deficiency in the chart, there appear to be sufficient sports fields for current use, both diamond and rectangular. However, there is certainly no room for growth in either the size or number of leagues using the fields. Sports fields are currently used to their maximum. In fact, it is only through the strong cooperation among the Township, School District and sports association that the system continues to work. Additional fields will very likely be needed for the future.
2. The existing relationship among the School District, sports organizations, and the Township must remain strong if the current sport field inventory is to work for the future. While the School District relies on the Township for use of sports fields for interscholastic schedules, the Peters Township Parks and Recreation Department and the sports organizations also rely on the school district for significant field use. If this sharing of facilities falters, all organizations will face scheduling difficulties.

3. According to public input, the soccer association would like to be able to expand the types of leagues they offer to include Futsal but lack the fields/space to do so. Currently local teams must register in leagues and facilities located outside the Township to play.
4. None of the other sports organization indicated any need for additional fields for their current levels of participation.
5. Outdoor basketball courts show a deficiency in the comparison chart and also showed up in the public input as being insufficient. As many as three additional outdoor basketball courts are needed in the Township.
6. While outdoor volleyball courts show a significant deficiency in the comparison chart, there was no indication of demand or desire indicated through the public input process.
7. The public input process did suggest needs for additional picnic shelters, outdoor basketball courts, a dog park, a swimming pool, and sledding/tubing areas.
8. Park land deficiency indicates a little less (29.7 acres) than what the projected through the consultant's demand and use analysis (40-60 acres).

## Open Space

### Township-owned

- 75 parcels = 233.5 acres
- Size range .25 to 17.5 acres
- Average size = 3.07 acres

### School District-owned

- 5 parcels = 138 acres
- Size range 17.5 to 80.5 acres
- Average size = 34.5 acres

### HOA -owned parcels

- 28 parcels = 224.5 acres
- Size range 1.75 to 40 acres
- Average size = 8 acres

### Clean and Green Parcels

- 105 parcels
- Sizes not available
- See map below

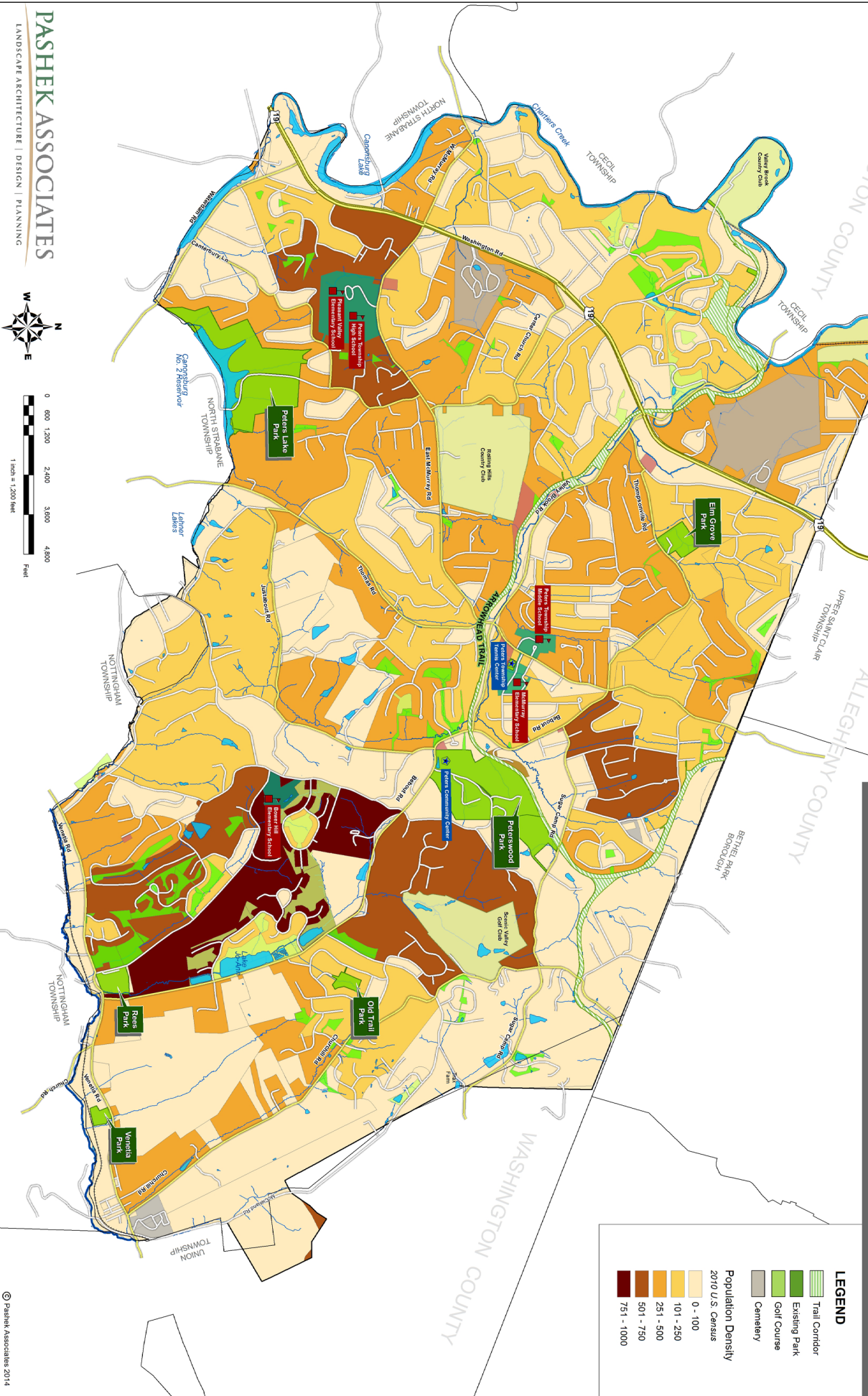
### Golf Courses

- 5 parcels = 453 acres

Type	Acres
Township Park Land	513
Arrowhead/Montour Trail land	121.8
Township-owned Open Space	233.5
School District Open Space	138
Association-owned Open Space	224.6
Public Golf Courses*	452.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,684</b>
Township – Total Acres	12,672
Percent of Acres as protected open space	13.29%
*Rolling Hills Country Club will change use	

# OPEN SPACE AND POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

Peters Township  
Washington County, Pennsylvania



**LEGEND**

- Trail Corridor
- Existing Park
- Golf Course
- Cemetery

**Population Density  
2010 U.S. Census**

- 0 - 100
- 101 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 750
- 751 - 1000

**PASHEK ASSOCIATES**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | PLANNING

N  
W  
E

0 600 1,200 2,400 3,600 4,800  
Feet

1 inch = 1,200 feet



## Recognition of Key Recreational and Conservation Areas within Peters Township

### **Montour Trail**

The Montour Trail spans the northern section of Washington County, linking trail systems in Allegheny County and Maryland. This trail system, known as the Great Allegheny Passage, is recognized by DCNR as one of Pennsylvania's Major Greenway Corridors. The trail, when completed, will extend 47 miles, from Coraopolis to Clairton. Currently, multiple sections of the trail totaling over 40 miles are available for public use with new sections being added each year. The trail is paved with a smooth surface of crushed limestone, which makes it ideal for all forms of non-motorized use: bicycling, walking, running, cross-country skiing, nature appreciation and in designated sections, horseback riding is permitted. Four miles of the trail are located in Peters Township.

This section of the Montour Trail is leased by the Township to the Montour Trail Council (MTC), a nonprofit group responsible for trail development, operation and maintenance. MTC relies on corporate, foundation and government grants and private donations for funding. MTC has an active volunteer base that assist with maintenance and light construction (<http://www.montourtrail.org>). A portion of the Montour Trail falls within Peters Township.

### **Arrowhead Trail**

The Arrowhead Trail is a 3.5-mile section of the Montour Railroad in Peters Township. The section was abandoned in 1977, and the Township purchased the 100 acres of railroad right-of-way in 1985. With the help of state funds, the first phase was developed as a recreational multi-use trail as well as to preserve and reinstate the natural surroundings with native trees and wildflowers. With the aid of a DCNR grant the original section of Arrowhead Trail was resurfaced in 2002. The Arrowhead Trail is recognized as a National Recreation Trail by the US Department of Interior. ([www.peterstownship.com](http://www.peterstownship.com))

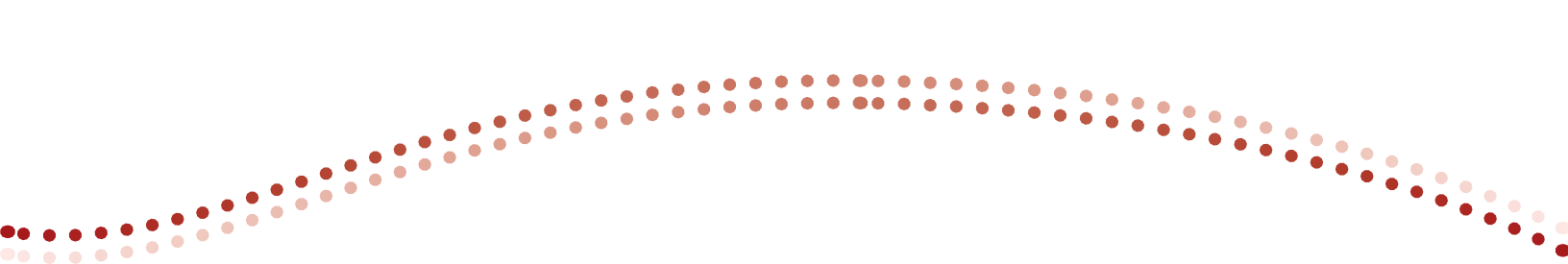
## **Waters and Waterways**

### **Chartiers Creek**

Chartiers Creek is a tributary of the Ohio River in Western Pennsylvania in the United States. The creek was named after Peter Chartier, a trapper of French and Native American parentage who established a trading post at the mouth of the creek in 1743. Chartiers Creek winds from its headwaters in Washington County through Allegheny County, where it meets the Ohio River at McKees Rocks and Pittsburgh's West End, three miles west of the Point at Pittsburgh. It forms the western boundary between Peters and Cecil Township as well as Peters and North Strabane Township.

### **Peters Creek**

Peters Creek has a drainage area of 16 square miles. It originates in Peters Township and flows northeast for approximately seven miles where it empties into the Monongahela River in Allegheny County. The PADEP has classified this stream as a warm water fishery. The Natural Infrastructure project has identified Peters Creek as having acid mine drainage.



## Canonsburg Lake

Located along the border of Peters and Cecil Township, Canonsburg Lake is a 76-acre impoundment owned by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and managed by the Fish and Boat Commission. The lake is formed by a concrete gravity dam impounding Little Chartiers Creek, adjacent to Donaldsons Crossroads. The dam is about 525 feet long and 45 feet high. It impounds a lake with a surface area of about 76 acres with a maximum depth at normal pool of 18 feet (estimated). The drainage area for the lake is comprised of 46 square miles.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, acting by and through the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, owns and controls about 138 acres at this site, which includes the 76 acre lake, dam, shoreline, and associated lands. The Commonwealth acquired this property in 1957. The dam, known locally as the Alcoa Dam, was built in 1943. (Description is from [http://www.fishandboat.com/water/lakes/canonsburg\\_lk/00canonsburg.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/water/lakes/canonsburg_lk/00canonsburg.htm) . The lake is notable for both recreation and conservation.

## Peters Lake (aka Canonsburg #2 Reservoir)

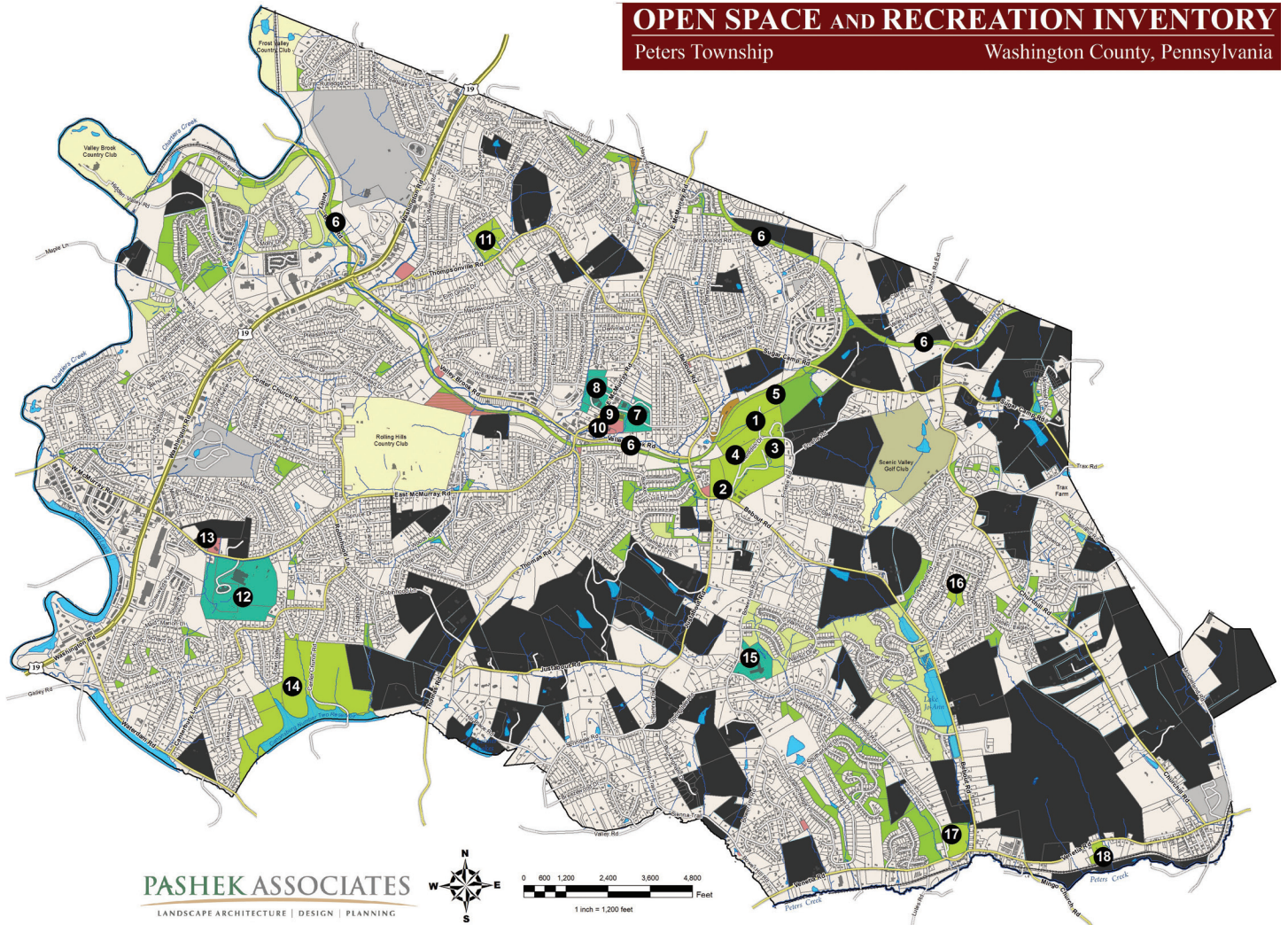
Located at 560 Center Church Road, Peters Lake Park was acquired by Peters Township in 1996. The 189 acre site contains rolling topography and is part of a stream valley, typical of Western Pennsylvania terrain, heavily wooded with second generation timber, probably planted in the 1930's as part of the construction of the earthen dam and lake. The land for the reservoir was purchased in 1931, by the Pennsylvania – American Water Company to provide clean drinking water to the area. The Township has developed the land minimally since its purchase. The Park is being maintained as a passive Recreation Area. (Description from [peterstownship.com](http://peterstownship.com)).

## Clean and Green Areas

Much of Pennsylvania's land that is ideal for agricultural production, forestry and recreation is also well-suited for development purposes. As development pressures rise, well-drained soils, open space and convenient access to major roadways increase property values. When the market value of this land rises, the taxes also increase, creating a hardship for landowners. Real property taxes generally are unpopular with farmers because the value of their business is land-based (and thus more subject to the real property tax), unlike many other local businesses. Because the size of a property tax bill is based on the value of the land owned and not the amount of money earned on that land, it is not based on the landowners' ability to pay. This can create special hardships for farmers and others with large amounts land but relatively low cash flow. Increased tax assessments can have a significant impact on a farmer's bottom line, possibly tempting them to sell their land to take advantage of its increased value. To mitigate this problem, the Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act (Act 319), referred to as the Clean and Green Act, was signed into law in 1974. The intent of the act is to protect farmland, forestland and open space by allowing for land taxation according to its use-value rather than the prevailing market value.

Land owners in Peters Township have protected 105 parcels of land under the Clean and Green program. While this is not classified as permanently protected open space, it is protected in the short-term. Clean and Green properties are displayed in green on the following map.

## Clean and Green Properties

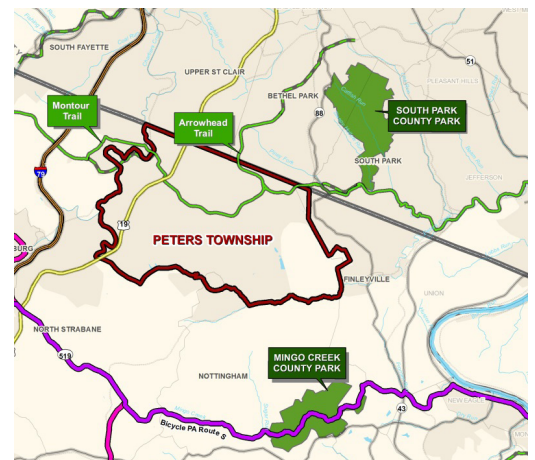


## Regional Recreation Areas

### Mingo Creek (Washington) County Park

The Washington County Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for 5,500 acres of park land in Washington County, offering picnic shelters, nature trails, bicycle and bridle trails, hunting and fishing, as well as recreational programs, and special events.

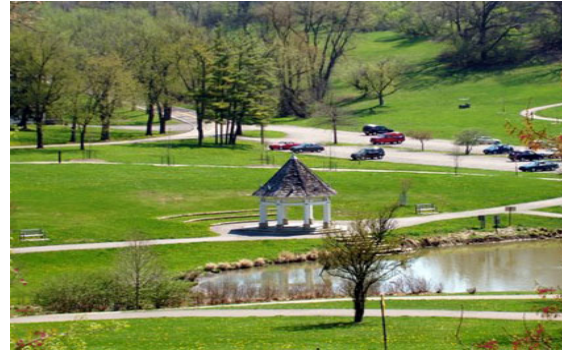
The department is in charge of Mingo Creek, Cross Creek, and Ten Mile Creek county parks. All of the county parks are open all year long and house two covered bridges. Activities within these parks are controlled through a permit system. Parks and Recreation is responsible for maintenance of these parks.



Mingo Creek County Park is primarily natural resource based with hiking, biking, and horseback trails; numerous picnic shelters, a dog park, playgrounds, covered bridges, a scout camping area, model airplane field, and historic home. It also features the Mingo Creek Observatory. The park is located within 5 miles of Peters Township.

### **South Park, Allegheny County**

South Park is a diverse 2,018 acre park combining recreational sports facilities, and preserved natural areas in South Park Township. The park has an 18 hole golf course, ice rink, in-line skating and deck hockey, wave pool, Allegheny County Gardens, sports fields, 3-B's Action Park, bumper boats, a BMX track, nature center, and a multitude of other amenities. It is located within 5 miles of Peters Township.



## **Operations and Administration**

### **Peters Township Parks and Recreation Mission and Objectives**

Peters Township Parks and Recreation Department is led and directed by its stated mission statement and objectives of service.

#### **Parks and Recreation Department Mission Statement**

*The Parks and Recreation Department exists to provide meaningful recreation and leisure opportunities through program offerings and the provision of parks, special use areas and facilities. The Parks and Recreation Department wishes to create a positive relationship between staff, volunteers and the public through mutual respect and consideration.*

#### **Objectives of this Service**

1. To provide opportunities for relaxation, learning and socialization to promote personal growth and wellbeing.
2. To continuously improve the quality and safety of our facilities and services.
3. To provide a well-rounded and worthwhile program to meet basic social, physical and creative needs.
4. To provide an opportunity for the learning of lifelong leisure skills, and an outlet for creative individual and group expression.
5. To provide facilities and programs that will touch the lives of the greatest possible number of people.
6. To conduct activities which will have appeal to persons of all skill levels.
7. To reflect the area's customs, traditions, interests, and unique characteristics and resources.
8. To plan and organize, and whenever possible, to encourage family participation.
9. To include services which meet the needs of exceptional persons and special groups.
10. To utilize all recreation resources available in the area.



## **Overall Parks and Recreation Management**

Day-to-day management and operation of Peters Township parks and recreation is done by the Parks and Recreation Director. The Township Parks and Recreation Board offers input and recommendations into operations, planning, funding, programming and much more. The Township Manager provides direct supervision and oversight to the Director and the department. And ultimately, the Township Council has the final responsibility and supervision over the Department.

## **Parks and Recreation Board**

The Parks and Recreation Board was created by Township ordinance and operates in accordance with its legally established bylaws.

According to its bylaws, the Board may consist of seven to nine members. Three are nominated and recommended for appointment by the School District. The Peters Township Council appoints all members. Members of the Parks and Recreation Board may serve no longer than three years each term. Members may request reappointment at the end of an existing term.

### **The purpose of the Board is to:**

1. Advise and recommend to Peters Township Council, in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Director, concerning policies and practices of recreation, the Community Recreation Center (CRC), and parks.
  2. Promote recreation and park services.
  3. Participate in initiation, review and recommending the development of recreation areas and park facilities to Township Council.
  4. Assist the Parks and Recreation Director in the organization and development of recreational activities that address community needs.
  5. Engage in public outreach, education and advocacy.
  6. Provide a forum to review and advise the Parks and Recreation Director in matters pertaining to the enforcement of the Participant Sportsmanship Pledge as requested by staff, by an individual, or by a Peters Township Recreational Sports Association.
  7. Solicit input for and engage in a review of the Capital Improvements Plan.
  8. Solicit assistance from any and all resources to meet these ends.
  9. Work with the designated youth sports associations that operate under the auspices of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Source: Bylaws of the Peters Township Parks and Recreation Board

## **Staffing**

The Parks and Recreation Department is led by the Director of Parks and Recreation, who is directly responsible to the Township Manager. The Director is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Department including general administration, programming, financial management, planning, and recreational oversight of the Township's parks and the Community Center. Additional staff includes a secretary, recreation supervisor, facility supervisor, and park maintenance supervisor, and a

### **Local Sports Organization that use Township and School Facilities**

**Baseball Association  
Basketball Association  
Youth Cheerleading Association  
Junior Football Association  
Boys Youth Lacrosse Association  
Soccer Association  
Girls Softball Association  
Swim Club  
Youth Wrestling Association  
Girls Lacrosse**



Tennis Center Manager. Under each of the supervisors, part-time and/or seasonal staff is employed as required.

As program, maintenance, and administrative functions increase according to the recommendations of this Plan, additional hours for existing staff and/or additional staff may be required.

### **Cooperative Recreation Programming**

Peters Township has a strong interagency cooperation program with the local sports and recreation organizations as well as with the School District. As has been previously described, the School District and the Township share many indoor and outdoor sports and recreation facilities. While the school utilizes the Township's sports fields and recreation center, the Township uses many of the school district's indoor and outdoor facilities.

As well, local sports organizations rely heavily on the school district and the township for sports fields and gymnasium space. In return for use of these facilities, the sports associations provide a wide variety of recreational, instructive, and competitive sports for hundreds of Township children and youth.

It should once again be noted that all parties involved should be making strong efforts to secure and strengthen these cooperative relationships in an effort to ensure a strong future of youth sports in Peters Township. Neither the sports organizations nor the Township would be able to maintain a strong program without assistance from the other.

### **Non-Municipal Recreation Providers**

Several other recreation facilities located within and without of Peters Township provide additional recreation offerings for Township residents.

#### **Golf Clubs**

Valley Brook and Rolling Hills Country Clubs offer golf and other recreational services to area residents. Each of these is identified on this plan's Recreation Inventory Map.

#### **Swimming Pools**

Several swimming clubs including Rose Garden Swimming Pool Association, Valley Brook and Rolling Hills Country Clubs all have swimming pools located within Peters Township. However, Rolling Hills Country Club is being sold and the pool may no longer be available for future use. Woodland Hills Club, Upper St. Clair park, Canonsburg, and Mineral Beach have swimming pools that are located nearby but outside of Peters Township. It is documented in the public input chapter of this report that Peters Township residents, to varying degrees, make use of all of these facilities. Two homeowner associations also provide swimming pools at Cranmore and Quail Run.

#### **Recreation Centers**

South Hills YMCA is in the process of constructing a new YMCA just a few miles outside of Peters Township in Bethel Park. Bethel Park also has its own Community Center also located near Peters Township. And Upper St. Clair has a community center. Many Peters Residents directed attention to this facility as the standard for what a community center ought to be. As well, numerous residents indicated that they frequently use the Upper St. Clair Center.

## Peters Township Community Recreation Center

Located at the entrance to Peterswood Park, Peters Township Community Recreation Center is home to the Township's Department of Parks and Recreation. Administrative offices and staff are located in the center, which also houses the majority of the department's indoor recreation activities. The Center is generally open seven days a week from 8:30 in the morning until 9:00 at night. These hours vary according to the day of the week, season, and program demand.

### Recreation Programming

Recreation programming is one of the primary functions of the Parks and Recreation Department in most communities. Peters Township Recreation and Parks Department offers broad-based series of programs with that has averaged more than a hundred total programs annually. Most of the programs are organized and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department while some are provided by the local sports organizations.

Programs are tracked in ten general categories: exercise, Fifty-five Plus, holiday events, instructional, pre-school, special events, sports, summer camps, teens, and tennis. The following chart depicts five years of historic attendance from 2009 to 2013.

Program Attendance 2009-2013								
Program Type	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	5-year total	5-year average	5 Year Inc/Dec
Exercise	2,293	2,170	1,700	1,739	1,939	9,841	1,968	325
Fifty-Five plus	488	544	529	685	794	3,040	608	-120
Holiday Events	1,863	1,471	1,524	1,755	1,055	7,668	1,534	329
Instructional	304	397	458	408	532	2,099	420	-116
Pre-school	130	86	160	29	205	610	122	8
Special Events	5,774	4,938	5,466	5,692	6,233	28,103	5,621	153
Sports	6,822	6,528	6,396	6,054	6,347	32,147	6,429	393
Summer Camps	102	78	128	144	76	528	106	-4
Tennis	2,921	3,776	3,218	3,517	2,994	16,426	3,285	-364
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,697</b>	<b>19,988</b>	<b>19,579</b>	<b>20,023</b>	<b>20,175</b>	<b>100,462</b>	<b>20,092</b>	

Sports and special events account for the greatest levels of attendance averaging about 60% of the total program attendance every year. Tennis averages about 16% of total program attendance while Exercise and holiday events come in at 9.8% and 7.6% respectively.

Pre-school and summer camps show the lowest attendance with instructional programs and those for 55+ rank just above. It would appear that non-sports programs for preschoolers, elementary ages, and seniors would be areas to focus for growth.

**Indoor Facilities**

**2 Full Size Gyms**  
**1/10th of a mile Track**  
**Multi-Purpose Room with partial Kitchen**  
**Fitness/exercise room**  
**Classroom**  
**Conference Room**  
**Staff offices**  
**Concession Stand**  
**Restrooms**



## **Pushed to the Limit**

The peak use season at the CRC runs from late fall to early spring. During this time, the facility is used nearly to capacity in the afternoons and evenings, as well as on weekends. During these times indoor sports leagues often rent the facility for practices, games, instruction, and leagues. These times put a strain on scheduling the facility as there is more demand for space than there is time available. Mid mornings to late afternoons are the least used time blocks and would be available for additional uses but these are times when most users cannot come.

The high demand by sports leagues also places a strain on the scheduling of gym time for public use. The Township tries very hard to provide open gym time when community residents can simply drop in for pick-up games, family use, or general free time in the gym. The high demand by sports leagues pushes the limits of open gym time. However, the benefit of the sports leagues is that they are providing good recreational and competitive sports for the youth of the community. It is a good partnership as the Township provides the facility and the sports organization run the programs. The Township should do all it can to sustain and even strengthen these partnership for the future.

In addition to the rentals and open gym time, the Parks and Recreation Department offers a host of recreational programming including exercise, dance, and instructional classes, as well as special events, pre-school, senior programming and much more at the center.

There is also additional demand from other traditional or emerging sports that are looking for gym time. In addition to the times the facility is open to the public, the Recreation Department rents Saturday and Sunday evenings to sports leagues but does not open to the general public during these times. While this practice assists in meeting the league's needs, some residents wonder why the center is not open to the public during those times.

## **Public Perception of the Community Recreation Center (CRC)**

**Residents seem to be looking for more in their recreation center. Overall, through the public input, residents asked for**

- Program enhancements
- Expanded hours
- Better balance between public and scheduled use
- Fitness equipment/center
- Swimming/aquatic facilities
- Locker rooms
- Child care
- Cafe

While it may not be possible, or just prudent, to improve the CRC to address all of these issues, the Township should at least consider what can be done to better meet the residents' concerns.

Perhaps the biggest concern for the CRC is that many members of the community seem to think rather poorly of it... It seems to have an image problem. Through the public input opportunities associated with this plan, residents said the following about the Community Recreation Center.

- Not enough open gym time –limited availability to the general public –it is scheduled with programs most of

### **Great Things About the CRC**

1. First rate gymnasiums
2. Exceptional walking track
3. Clean, attractive, and functional
4. Excellent programming
5. A great asset to the community
6. Draws 52,000 to 80,000 people use the facility annually



the time

- It does not have fitness facilities or a swimming pool
- There's little to do besides play basketball or walk
- Peters needs a "true" community center – fitness, pool, etc. It lacks important features
- There is a lot of wasted space in the building
- The staff is rude and unwelcoming
- It's not a good place to take kids – not kid friendly
- There is not enough programming for kids, youth, or adults
- It needs to be open more hours
- There were many comments suggesting it does not offer the programs, facilities, and amenities available at the Upper St Clair Recreation Center

Whether the shortcomings are really just perceived or actual, they are all real in the public's eye. Peters Township must do something to address the image problem.

Through discussions with the staff and study committee, it is evident that there are legitimate reasons that the CRC must operate in some ways that are not satisfactory to the public. However, it is likely that a number of changes could be made to address many of the public's concerns. Perhaps the first think is to look candidly at the issues raised by the residents...look at them in a new way; then consider if there are new opportunities, methods, techniques, or procedures that could sufficiently address the needs while still maintaining appropriate administrative controls over the center.

This plan suggests looking for new ways to address or improve conditions, concerns, or requests rather than simply saying we cannot do it based on past practices. Sometimes this may require changes in policies, more staffing, additional funding or other changes but is that will help to better serve Peters residents, it may be worth it.

**Community Recreation Center  
Resident Perspective  
The Center needs to:**

- Provide greater opportunities for all residents
- Be more inviting for youth
- Become a "Destination Center" for the community
- Make better use of the space
- Be bigger in order to offer more opportunities
- Provide babysitting
- Extend weekend and evening hours and earlier morning hours
- Designate "open gym" times

### **Additional Facility Needs**

As is suggested in some of the previous narrative, community residents requested a number of facility additions and upgrades at the community center. Among those are:

- Additional community space
- Exercise/fitness equipment
- More court space
- Locker rooms
- Child care space
- Café



These types of facilities would most certainly enhance the usability of the CRC and provide better services to the community. It must be noted, however, that there is little or no room to add facilities within the footprint of the existing building. Any additional facilities would need to come as add-ons to the current community center. An architectural analysis will need to be conducted to determine the best location and fit for any additional amenities.

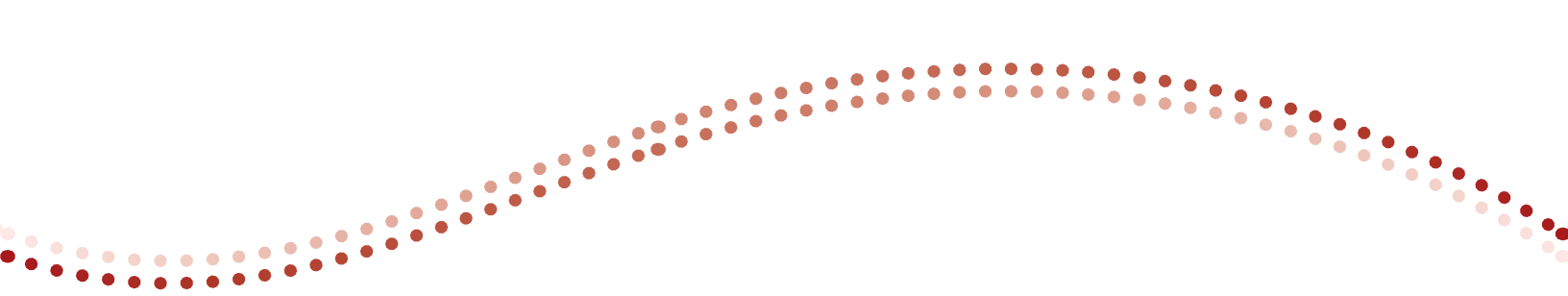
### **Swimming Pool/Aquatic Facility**

The most requested recreation facility indicated through the public input process was a swimming pool. Consideration of a swimming pool or splash park should be evaluated in terms of the facility improvements for the Community Recreation Center. While space may be a limiting factor for a swimming pool at the CRC, it could be possible to add a splash park outside of the CRC. A splash park could be an exciting addition to the CRC as its primary use would be at a time when the rest of the center receives little use. A splash park would be a great summer draw at the Community recreation Center.

- The swimming pool and/or aquatic facility will be addressed in the implementation chapter of this report.

### **Recommendations and Implementation**

Chapter 4 in this report provides much detail concerning implementation, recommendations, and costing associated with the analysis presented in this chapter.





# Chapter 3: Public Participation

## Public Participation

The collection of public input for the Peters Township Plan was gathered via seven different venues. Public participation was a key component to the development of Peters Township's Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan.

### Seven venues were used to involve Township residents in the study process.

- A Study Committee gathered regularly throughout the process to represent the community in meetings with the Consultant.
- Public meetings were held.
- A digital recreation questionnaire was used to collect information concerning residents' recreational interests.
- An internet-based blog was made available to collect comments.
- Interviews were conducted with several individuals who represented a variety of interests in recreational opportunities and operations.
- A focus group meeting was held with the Parks and Recreation Board.
- A public open house presented the findings and draft recommendations of the plan and solicited input from residents

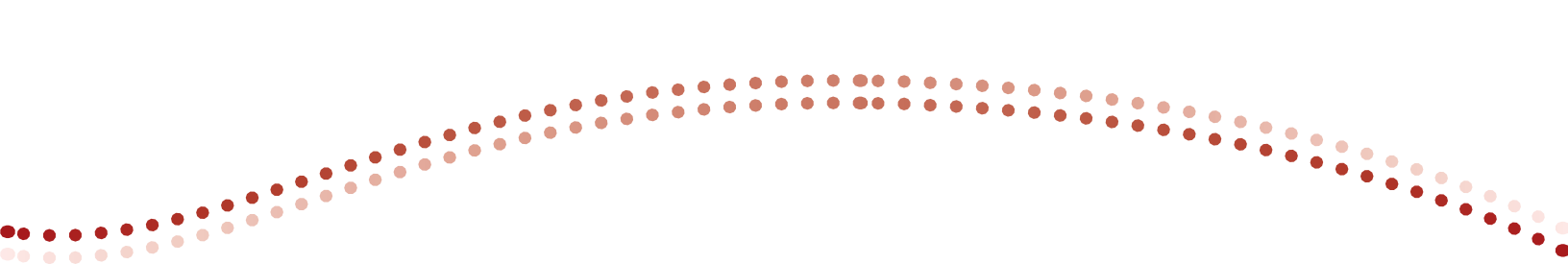


Each public participation opportunity helped to understand the needs, desires, concerns and issues of Peters Township residents. This process sets up the final analysis and recommendations of the plans to be responsive to community needs.

This chapter describes the public participation process and results for each venue. Details of each public input venue are in the Appendices.

## Study Committee

The eighteen-member Study Committee met seven times throughout the planning process assisting the Consultant to understand community characteristics and to provide community interaction at each step of the Plan. The committee comprised Township residents representing senior citizens, Peters School District, sports organizations, Township Council, environmental concerns, recreation volunteers, members of the Parks and Recreation Board, and staff. The varied interests of the Committee provided a balanced outlook at recreation, parks, and open space in the Township.



## Committee members' functions included:

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

As part of the first study committee meeting, the Committee went through a two-step, group participation process to describe what it perceives as the key issues, opportunities, and concerns. The first step was to ascertain what the committee thought was important to accomplish from the Plan. The second step was to identify strengths, opportunities, concerns, and needs for each of the Township parks and the Community Center. The following is a compilation of these comments, suggestions, and recommendations.

## Vision for the Plan

- Become a partner Plan to Peters 2022 (Township Comprehensive Plan)
- Gauge citizen desires and needs for recreational facilities and programs
- Tie it to a capital improvements plan so it becomes implementable
- Consider the balance between active and passive recreation opportunities
- Understand the current usage of facilities and evaluate the need for future facilities
- Be progressive; consider cutting edge opportunities; know what is trending in parks and rec
- Plan for the population that will be in Peters 10-15 years from now
- Include a financial component for implementation and operation
- If certain recreation facilities are considered but not proposed, describe why not
- Build excitement among residents
- Conduct a land inventory and cost analysis

## Thoughts on Individual Parks and the Community Recreation Center

### *Peterswood Park*

- Parking is an ongoing issue
- Traffic control is a problem
- Need more space
- Consider a spray park
- Update the outdoor amphitheater
- Need outdoor basketball courts

### *Peters Lake*

- Review and/or update the park's master site plan
- Needs restroom facilities
- Needs public water supply
- Add a shelter
- Add pathways
- Consider revenue opportunities – kayak/canoe rentals

### **Rees Park**

- Leased from the athletic association
- Its more than just a neighborhood park
- Pedestrian access to the park is severely limited
- Parking is an issue
- There is a parcel of open space across the street from the park that may serve as additional park land

### **Elm Grove Park**

- Leased from the school district
- It's more than just a neighborhood park
- Good potential to develop walking paths to the park from the neighborhood

### **Old Trail Park**

- One of the true neighborhood parks in the Township

### **Tennis Center**

- Formerly a joint venture between the Township and the Tennis Association; now a full time, year-round Township operation
- Consider adding paddle courts

### **Community Center**

- Used by all ages and interests
- Great location
- Serves as the hub of recreational activity in the Township
- Is a jewel of the community
- It's a great value for the money
- A use and space analysis of the building should be conducted to see if there are other opportunities for activities and/or facilities
- Needs more rentable room space
- Add facilities that would keep users at the center longer
- Possible additions include:
  - Café/juice bar
  - Kitchen
  - Day care center
  - Fitness center
- Determine the cost and revenue expectations of the Center



## Public Meetings

Three public meetings were held at the beginning of the process to gather input from residents.

**Jan 28, 2015 – Pleasant Valley Elementary School – 7:30 pm**

**Feb 5, 2015 – Peters Township Public Library – 7:00 pm**

**Feb 11, 2015 – Bower Hill Elementary School – 7:00 pm**

An extensive publicity campaign informed local residents of the opportunities to share their thoughts and feelings about recreation, parks, and open space in the Township.

At the meetings, the Consultant gave an overview of the planning process and held brainstorming sessions to provide residents with an opportunity to voice their opinions and identify key issues. Once they were recorded, attendees prioritized the issues through a ranking process.

### Top Eight Issues Identified

- There is a need for a **swimming pool complex** that might include both indoor and outdoor pools, water play equipment, slides, lap lanes, competitive swimming.
- Provide **support facilities for Field 5** in Peterswood Park to include restrooms, concession stands, and better spectator access to the fields.
- **Upgrade the Community Recreation Center** to provide opportunities for all residents; make it more inviting for youth; add a swimming pool(s); add exercise and fitness equipment; add community space; add babysitting.
- Develop **additional walking and bike paths** throughout the Township, connecting neighborhoods, parks, schools, etc.; additional links to Arrowhead and Montour Trail.
- **Acquire more land** for parks, trails and open space preservation
- **Keep and expand unspoiled natural space** at Peters Lake and other places throughout the Township.
- **Upgrade existing playgrounds** throughout the Township.
- **More activities and programs** should be provided at the existing recreation center; recognize that expanding programs will result in outgrowing the existing facility; provide programs for all ages including outdoor programs; need for wellness programs, physical exercise, whole family activities

The complete list of issues from all three public meetings can be found the appendix.

#### Pleasant Valley Elementary School

**18 Attendees**

**33 Issues Identified**

#### Peters Township Public Library

**42 Attendees**

**34 Issues Identified**

#### Bower Hill Elementary School

**23 Attendees**

**30 Issues Identified**



## Community Recreation Questionnaire



The Consultant and Study Committee together developed a fourteen-question on-line survey to allow residents to express their thoughts and concerns about a number of recreation, parks and open space issues. Fifteen hundred households responded to the questionnaire. The following summary describes the findings of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire respondents were demographically comparable with the make-up of the Township. The 1,500 responses represented 7,350, about 32% of the Township's residents. The following summary does not address every question in the survey but summarizes its highlights.

Over ninety-eight percent of the respondents live in Peters Township with just 26 indicating they do not live in the Township. The oldest respondent was 82 and the youngest 13.

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents indicated that parks and recreation are important to them, and 61.5% said there are sufficient parks in the Township.

The most used parks and recreation facilities in the Township include are:

- Peterswood Park with 96% of the survey respondents stating that they used this park at least one time during the past year and 48% indicating that they used it 16 times or more. Of the Peterswood Park facilities, the most used are the Community Recreation Center (84%), playgrounds (74%), picnic shelters (69%); Fields 5 (60%); and baseball/softball fields (49%).
- Arrowhead Trail with over 1,000 respondents saying they used it at least once in the past year and over 500 stating they used it more than 16 times during the year.
- Peters Lake Park was the second most used with 66% of the survey respondents saying they used it at least once over the past year.
- Elm Grove, Rees, and Venetia parks, all of which feature sports fields fell in the mid-range of use with the neighborhood Old Trail Park having the lowest use. The Tennis Center also fell into the bottom tier, likely because it is a specialized facility intended for just one user group.

**1,500 Households**  
Representing  
**7,350 residents**  
Totalling  
**32% of the Population**  
Responded to the Questionnaire

Residents are most often attracted to local parks by their trails, sports fields, water features, programs, and playgrounds.

In terms of nearby recreation facilities, Peters residents most often use Allegheny County's South Park, the Upper St. Clair Community Center, Washington County's Mingo Creek Park, and the Isoplex at Southpointe.

When asked how they find out about Peters Township Recreation programs, respondents indicated INPeters Township Magazine, the Township website, word of mouth, and emails as the most common.

The top five facilities respondents indicate are needed:

1. Outdoor swimming pool
2. Indoor swimming pool
3. Sledding/tubing hills
4. Outdoor basketball courts
5. Protected natural areas

Respondents suggested that the least needed facilities are softball, baseball, and football fields; skateboard facilities, pickleball, tennis, and volleyball courts; equestrian trails, disc golf course, and horseshoe pits.

Existing facilities that need the most improvements were shown as picnic shelters and playgrounds.

Nearly 55% of the respondents believe that funding for Peters Township Parks and Recreation programs and facility upgrades should increase. At the same time, most respondents suggested there should be a variety of funding sources including user and program fees, fund-raising, Township tax dollars, sports league fees, and business/corporate contributions.

## Internet Blog

An internet blog was made available for residents to offer written comments concerning recreation, parks, and open space in Peters Township. The Blog was also used to publicize other public input opportunities and to post information concerning the plan.

Seventy-two resident comments were posted through the process. While the greatest majority of comments were related to the restroom and concession needs at field 5, the following other topics were also addressed.

- The need for a swimming pool or aquatic facility that would meet all the swimming needs of Township residents.
- Requests for Community Recreation Center upgrades – fitness center, pool, babysitting, youth programs and more.
- There were a number of comments comparing Peters to





other communities such as Upper St. Clair, and Romeoville, TX. These comments were specifically intended to suggest the need for upgrades to Peters Township recreation facilities and programs.

- The need for a dog park
- Needed upgrades and/or expansions of neighborhood parks

## **Key Person Interviews**

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

### **The following is a list of the interviewees and topics discussed with each.**

1. Ken Soliday, South Hills YMCA – potential partnership opportunities, new South Hill YMCA facilities and demand; swimming pool and aquatic facilities.
2. Brian Geyer, Peters Township School District – mutual sharing of sports facilities; school district swimming pool uses and future plans; demand for future sports facilities; cooperation between the district and the Township Parks and Recreation Department.
3. Sandy Gregg, Peters Township School Board – Cooperation between the school district and the Township Parks and Recreation Department, expected student population, high school facility needs, and potential cooperation on a future swimming pool or aquatic facility.
4. Joe Jasek, Peters Township Chamber of Commerce – business ties, benefits, and/or obstacles, to parks and recreation.
5. Jay Mizia, Peters Township Park Maintenance Foreman – tour of parks, park maintenance methods and needs, capital plan, planning for ongoing upgrades.
6. Michele Harmel, Peters Township Parks and Recreation Director – tour of parks to discuss operations, needs, capital improvement plans; discussion of staffing, finances, policies and procedures, cooperative efforts with other organizations, issues and concerns, multiple other issues.

Information gathered from these interviews is interspersed throughout this report as part of the analysis and recommendations.

## **Parks and Recreation Board Focus Group Meeting**

Because the Community Recreation Center rose to be one of the key issues in the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan, the consultant asked to meet with the Parks and Recreation Board to discuss all issues surrounding the future of the Community Recreation Center. The meeting was held on August 18, 2015 at 6:00 pm in the Community Recreation Center Conference Room.

The primary goal of the meeting was to get consensus on moving forward the key recommendations of the plan and in particular with the CRC recommendations. As a result of the meeting the Board committed to supporting the following Vision Statement.



Peters Township Parks and Recreation will:

- Be recognizable as Peters Township, having its own clear identity
- Sustain the Recreation Center as an outstanding community asset
- Feature programs and facilities that stand out as exceptional
- Be balanced in type, amenities, locations
- Ensure first rate maintenance and upkeep
- Heed the present yet be prepared for the future
- Not just maintain but be constantly moving forward
- Offer top tier community in parks and recreation

As well, they recognized that there are some issues with the image of the CRC and how it relates to the community that need to be addressed. The Board supported the recommendations of the plan for moving the CRC forward to better serve the community.

### ***Common Themes among Public Input Venues***

The Study Committee and the Consultant worked together to identify common themes that occurred in multiple venues of public participation.

#### **The Following Items were Identified:**

- Demand for a community swimming pool
- Need to upgrade the Community Center – facilities, programming, operations
- Need for additional park land and preserved open space
- High level of care for all parks – preserve, sustain, upgrade
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and trails
- Preservation of Peters Lake Park
- Top quality parks and recreation system
- Need for certain new recreational facilities

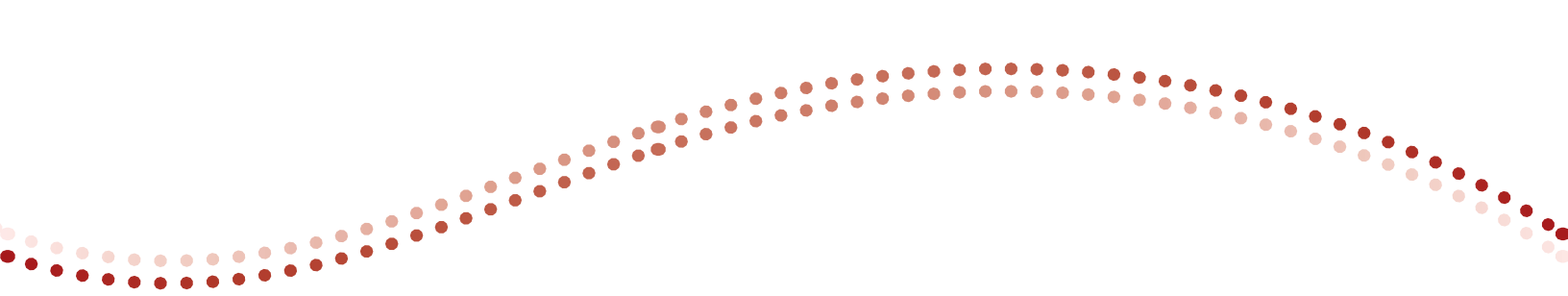
These common themes were used as the basis to develop the vision, goals, and strategies which are detailed in Chapter Four.

### ***Community Meetings***

On October 28, 2015, the consultant presented the findings and draft recommendations of the plan to the Peters Township Council.

On November 18, 2015, a public open house was held at the Community Recreation Center to present the findings and the draft recommendation of the plan to the community. The meeting was facilitated by the consultant and the Recreation Planning Committee. Twenty-two persons attended the open house. The plan was well received.

Detailed information from the various forms of public input can be found in the appendices.





# Chapter 4: Vision, Goals, & Implementation Strategies

## Looking to the Future

Implementation of this plan is based on the process of fulfilling the Township's Vision for its parks, recreation, and open space, by meeting specific goals for each of the identified key issues, and implementing the recommendations for each goal. Every step plays a significant role in ensuring that this plan becomes a useful tool in moving the Township towards meeting the current and future recreational needs of Township residents.



### Vision for the future of parks, recreation, and open space

#### Peters Township Parks and Recreation will:

- *Be recognizable as Peters Township, having its own clear identity*
- *Sustain the Recreation Center as an outstanding community asset*
- *Feature programs and facilities that stand out as exceptional*
- *Be balanced in type, amenities, locations*
- *Ensure first rate maintenance and upkeep*
- *Heed the present yet be prepared for the future*
- *Maintain well yet be constantly moving forward*
- *Offer top tier community in parks and recreation*

The vision, goals, and recommendations of this plan seek to complement and support implementation of [Plan Peters 2022](#). One of the Guiding Principles of the Plan is to build Township character and identity. Parks and Recreation can offer exceptional opportunities for the development of both character and identity. Parks and Recreation related recommendations from [Plan Peters 2022](#) can be found in Chapter 1 of this report.

### **Build Township Character & Identity**

**... increase the quantity and quality of public spaces and community gathering areas throughout the township.**

## Key Issues

### Issue #1 - Desire for a Swimming Pool/Aquatic Facility

*Goal – To determine the feasibility of developing a Township-operated swimming facility for Peters Township residents and visitors*



### Key Recommendation

Conduct a swimming pool feasibility study to further analyze and project:

- Community demand – Evaluate whether or not the demand truly exist to support a swimming pool in Peters Township.
- Indoor/outdoor – Determine whether the swimming pool should be indoor, outdoor, or both.
- Size and type – Calculate the size and type of pool that will be required and whether or not it can be adequately supported by the community.
- Population and density – Evaluate the density of the Township to determine the best location for a pool, and from what areas it is most likely to draw its users.
- Socio-economic status – Define the socio-economic features of the Township to verify the ability to financially support a swimming pool
- Community recreation operations – Analyze and define the impact of a swimming pool on the existing Parks and Recreation Department.
- Market saturation – Consider the number, types, and uses of existing pools that are located within the projected services area.
- Potential location – Evaluate potential locations for a swimming pool, taking into account potential partnerships, likely uses, accessibility, cost of construction, etc.
- Roles of others – Assess the possibility of partnering, sharing services, or working together with other organizations such as the Peters Township School District, YMCA, existing swimming pools, or other community organizations in meeting the swimming needs of Peters Township residents.
- Development costs – Estimate the costs for all components of development.
- Operations costs – Project operating costs, develop a five-year pro forma, and a breakeven analysis.
- Funding and financing – Develop a funding/financing plan for both development and operations.
- Alternative aquatic opportunities such as a spray park.

**Estimated cost \$60,000**

## Issue #2 – Township Park Improvements

**Goal – Provide, maintain, and operate high-quality parks and recreational facilities that are available to all residents.**

### Visual Impact

- Make Peters Township Parks “pop” or stand out as place everyone wants to be
- Color, quality, recognition, and exceptional maintenance to set the bar a little higher
- Playgrounds – new components, lots of color, bigger rather than smaller, lots of play options, benches, plenty of parking, colored poured in place solid rubberized surface, located in visible areas
- Shelters – laminate trusses and posts, colored metal roofs, amenities, grills, classy tables, plenty of outlets, clean, big and small, concrete walkways, adequate parking, views and setting
- Themed signage – that says “This is a Peters Township park; this is a great park”. – Entrance, directional, informational



### Parks ADA Compliance

- Accessible parking and access to facilities
- Accessible doors and access into the doors
- Restrooms and buildings
- Counters, fixtures, amenities
- User areas – observation areas, dugouts, sports fields and courts, office and meeting areas
- All recreation facilities and amenities
- Consider multiple disabilities – sight, hearing, arms and legs, wheel chair bound, limited walking ability, etc.
- Can't assume that someone won't use a particular facility because they have a disability



## Park Specific Improvements

The following charts describe the recommended upgrades, improvements and expansions for each of the Township parks. A summary of total costs for each park is provided at the conclusion on the recommendations.

### Rees Park – 15 acres

- Current facilities: Soccer fields; baseball field; new playground; restrooms, parking lot
- Rees Park needs a general facelift – overall improvements to improve appearance and functionality.

### Recommended Improvements

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
Add a small picnic shelter located near the playground or at the base of the walkway up to the soccer fields.	16'x20'	\$35,000
Baseball observation deck on the hill in center field	16'X20'	\$12,000
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve restroom to be ADA compliant. Fixtures, doors, stalls, walks, ramps</li> <li>• Improve the walkway from parking to soccer fields with observation pads at two fields to ADA compliancy</li> <li>• Install an ADA compliant walkway from parking lot to playground</li> <li>• Install two ADA compliant spectator pads at both the soccer fields and at the baseball fields</li> </ul>	600 LF asphalt  100 LF asphalt	\$15,000  \$18,000  \$8,000  \$12,000
Install decorative fence around the playground to protect children from traffic. 5' high with self-closing/latching gate.	600 LF	\$6,000
Replace restroom roof with metal roofing		\$12,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$118,000</b>



### Elm Grove Park (leased from School District) - 14 acres

- Softball field, soccer field, picnic shelter, restrooms, playground
- Park needs a general facelift – overall improvements to improve appearance and functionality.

### Recommended Improvements

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
Rehabilitate existing picnic shelter located near the playground. Add a metal roof.	20'x40'	\$45,000
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restroom fixtures, doors, stalls, walks, ramps</li> <li>• Install ADA compliant walkway from the parking lot to the upper viewing area of the softball field</li> <li>• Improve walkway and make ADA compliant from fields to Ammons Drive</li> <li>• Install ADA compliant walkway from parking lot to soccer field and add a spectator pad</li> <li>• Paint five ADA parking spaces close to the soccer field, and the picnic/playground area</li> <li>• Construct 4 ADA parking spaces in the grassy area to the northeast of the existing parking lot. Connect to the walkway.</li> </ul>	500 LF 800 LF asphalt 100 LF asphalt	\$15,000 \$18,000 \$24,000 \$8,000 \$3,000 \$32,000
Replace and expand existing playground based on standards identified in this section.		\$200,000
Replace restroom roof with metal roofing		\$12,000
Install sport courts such as multi-use, basketball, deck hockey and volleyball on the hill above the soccer field		\$130,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$487,000</b>



### Venetia Park – 7 acres

- Two t-ball fields and a rectangular field

#### Recommended Improvements

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve restroom and concession stand to bring into ADA compliance. Fixtures, doors, stalls, walks, turns, ramps, countertops, etc.</li> </ul>	800 LF concrete	\$18,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring the walkway from the parking area to the lower level of the soccer and baseball fields into ADA compliance and extend to viewing areas for both t-ball fields</li> </ul>		\$62,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install ADA compliant spectator pads(2) at the lower level of both t-ball fields and the soccer field</li> </ul>		\$12,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paint five ADA parking spaces close to the soccer field, and the picnic/playground area</li> </ul>		\$2,500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly mark ADA spectator spaces on the deck overlooking the fields</li> </ul>	Concrete	\$500
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install an ADA compliant spectator pad with accessible walkway from the parking lot at the parking level between the lot and the t-ball field.</li> </ul>		\$12,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$107,000</b>

### Old Trail – 7 acres

- Open space and playground
- Mostly landlocked serving the Old Trail neighborhood

#### Recommended Improvements

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install an ADA compliant parking space, and concrete walkway from the parking area to playground.</li> </ul>	800 LF concrete	\$62,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$62,000</b>

### Peterswood Park – 133 acres

Community Park (largely a sports complex) with a large artificial turf rectangular field used primarily for soccer; one grass rectangular field; four field softball complex; three baseball fields; one multi-use (rectangular/diamond) field; multi-use rectangular field; outdoor amphitheater; picnic area with three shelters, two playgrounds and restrooms; skate park; playground, shelter, restroom area; Arrowhead Trail; community recreation center.

**Softball Complex** – Softball fields, concession, restrooms, picnic shelter and plaza, observation decks  
No major upgrades needed.

**Field 5** – Artificial turf complex with multiple fields; Area is in excellent condition.

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install ADA compliant parking spaces and walkway from the parking area field and install new gates.</li> </ul>		\$29,000
Field Amenities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct restroom, concession, and storage building. (see drawing)</li> </ul>		\$660,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$689,000</b>



**Picnic Shelter/Playground Area** – located above the soccer field

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor upgrades in restroom facilities and ADA access to new picnic shelters and playground</li> </ul>		\$20,000
Picnic shelters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace shelter #1 in 2016</li> <li>Replace Shelter #2 in 2017</li> <li>Replace Shelter #3 in 2018</li> </ul>		\$65,000 \$60,000 \$60,000
Playground <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace existing two playgrounds in 2017</li> </ul>		\$375,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$570,000</b>

**Field 11**

- Leave primarily as open space
- Add a recreation pavilion that would support Community Day; locate in the southwest section near the parking lot
- Upgrade electric service for community day

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
General Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install a 20'x40' recreation pavilion that would support Community Day.</li> </ul>		\$40,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$40,000</b>

**Outdoor Amphitheater**

- Scheduled for major upgrades in 2016
- Long-term – relocate public works storage area – reuse that area to support the park

**Hofbauer Field**

- No major upgrades needed
- Some minor ADA upgrades needed

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install an ADA compliant walkway from the parking area to press box.</li> </ul>	560 LF asphalt	\$17,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$17,000</b>

**Multi-use field #4 (rectangular/diamond) Playground, picnic shelter and restrooms**

- Minor ADA upgrades
- Plan for playground replacement in 2016

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install an ADA compliant spectator pads (2)</li> </ul>		\$12,000
Playground <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace playground</li> </ul>		\$250,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$262,000</b>

**Baseball fields #1 and #2**

- Need ADA improvements
- Needs better spectator and user access to fields, bleachers and spectator areas

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install 4 ADA compliant spectator pads - Field 1- left field, third base line. Field 2 –outfield and third base line</li> <li>• ADA Compliant walkways to spectator pads</li> <li>• Additional walkways for ADA Compliance</li> </ul>		\$20,000 \$55,000 \$25,000
Safety and Aesthetic barrier between Field 1 and maintenance area		\$25,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$125,000</b>

**Baseball field #3**

- No major improvements needed
- Provide ADA access to bleachers and field areas

**Recommended Improvements**

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
ADA Improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install two concrete ADA compliant spectator pads with accessible walkways to each.</li> </ul>		\$20,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$20,000</b>

## Skate Park

### Recommended Improvements

Facility	Approximate size	Projected Cost
Skate ramps and equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partial replacement over a two year period (2018-19)</li> </ul>		\$49,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$49,000</b>

### Peters Lake – 133 acres

Goal – Maintain in as natural a state as possible, only making upgrades that protect the park for long-term sustainable use.

Peters Lake		
Trail upgrades		\$10,000
Kayak launch upgrades		\$5,000
Construct new picnic shelter		\$35,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$50,000</b>

All costs associated with implementation of the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan are included in a seven-year Capital Improvements Plan located at the end of this chapter.

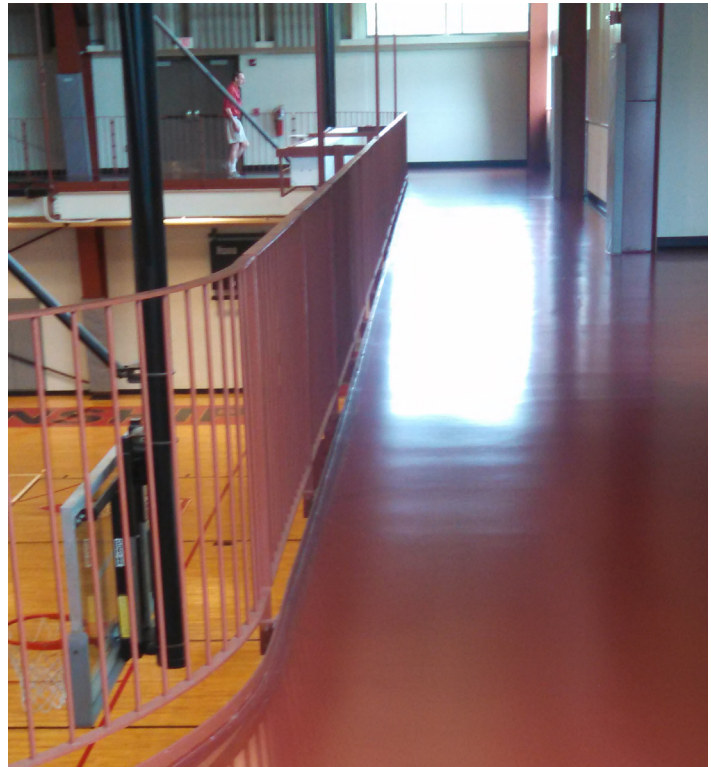
Included in the recommended improvements for Peterswood Park are two projects that have been planned and partially funded for 2015/2016. They are the replacement of picnic shelter #1 and the amphitheater. Because they were in the plans prior to the finalization of this plan, the associated costs are not included in the Plan.

Because residents are often particularly interested in replacements of playgrounds and picnic shelters, the chart on the following page identifies the replacement schedule for those types of facilities.

Summary of Estimated Park Improvement Costs	
Rees Park	\$118,000
Elm Grove Park	\$487,000
Venetia Park	\$107,000
Old Trail Park	\$62,000
Peterswood Park*	\$1,782,000
Peters Lake Park	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,606,000</b>
*does not include projects budgeted in 2015	



Peters Township Playground and Picnic Shelter Replacement Plan							
Improvement	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Peterswood Park - Replace Picnic Shelter 1	\$65,000						
<b>Phase 1</b>							
Peterswood Park - Replace Picnic Shelters 2, 3		\$70,000	\$50,000				
Peterswood Park - Replace Playground near shelters		\$375,000					
<b>Phase 3</b>							
Peterswood Park - Add new Picnic Shelter in Community Day field				\$40,000			
Peterswood Park - Replace Shelter 4 Playground	\$250,000						
<b>Phase 4</b>							
Elm Grove Park- Replace Picnic shelter						\$45,000	
Elm Grove Park - Replace Playground						\$200,000	
Rees Park Upgrades- New Picnic Shelter							\$35,000





### Issue #3 Community Recreation Center

**Goal – Preserve, enhance, and manage the Community Recreation Center as a first-rate facility, being responsive to the community’s recreational needs.**

#### Improved Community Recreation Center image

1. Seek out ways to support community groups in meeting their needs.
2. Try to maintain a consistent staff over multiple years.
3. Train staff in customer service, encouraging facility use, decision-making, conflict resolution, and other issues they may encounter in working with the public.
4. Look for new ways to partner with community organizations in enhancing recreational opportunities for Township residents.
5. Find ways to say yes to residents requests rather than reasons they can’t be done. This may mean modifying current policy, giving staff additional decision-making authority, hiring additional staff, re-training staff, etc.

#### Enhanced and expanded facility use

1. Find ways to utilize the facility during low use times.
2. Expand hours – this may include Sunday evenings, later evening hours, earlier morning hours, etc. and may require the hiring of additional staff.
3. Partner with sports and recreation organizations to take advantage of off season hours and times when the gym may be available for their use, i.e. soccer, basketball, baseball, baton, dance, etc. This may mean adjusting policies to allow more flexibility for organizational use.
4. Relax regulations that control facility use to make it easier to utilize the building.
5. Update the membership and registration system to make it easier to access the building and register for programs.
6. Prominently post open gym times, events, programs, registrations, etc. on the Community Recreation Center’s home page to make it easy for the community to know what is going on in the Center and when.
7. Expand recreational programming.

#### Facility Upgrades and expansion

8. Contract with an architect to evaluate the potential to enhance and expand the building. Schedule for 2017. Estimated cost: \$25,000.
  - a. Consider additional rental rooms
  - b. Fitness center
  - c. Babysitting area
  - d. Improved concessions
  - e. Meeting rooms for community and sports organizations.
  - f. Locker rooms
9. Consider the addition of a spray park immediately adjacent to the Community Recreation Center to enhance summer use.



## Issue #4 – New Park Land and Facilities

**Goal - Plan and prepare for the Township's park and open space needs through the acquisition of park land, preservation of open space, and provision of recreational opportunities.**

1. Acquire 40 – 60 acres of park land that can be developed with new recreational facilities.
2. Acquire additional property that is adjacent to Peterswood Park to be developed for recreational use.
3. Partner with local agencies, organizations, schools, and businesses in acquisition and/or development of properties and facilities. These could include sports organizations, Peters Township School District, environmental groups, non-profits.
4. Continue to preserve land and natural resources through the recommendations of Plan Peters 2022 guiding principle Stay Forever Green.

### Proposed methodology for acquisition of park land

- Set aside funding annually into a fund specifically intended for park land acquisition.
- Establish an intentional process to keep abreast of potential land sales on properties suitable for park land acquisition. Design a method of tracking properties of high interest for acquisition for park land. Be proactive in taking steps to ensure the Township will have the first option of acquisition.
- Develop a corresponding funding plan for land acquisition that will ensure finances are available as land becomes obtainable.
- Evaluate any potential property for its ability to meet park facility development needs. Prior to acquisition of any parcel, the Township should have a professional analysis completed to evaluate its topography, site amenities, utilities, recreational opportunities and obstacles, accessibility, and ability to meet the recreation needs of Township residents. Typically, at least two acres of land needs to be acquired for every one acre developed for park space.
- Acquire parcels adjacent or near to Peterswood Park or other Township parks if they become available. Such parcels will expand opportunities for recreational development; offer a natural buffer around the park, secure connections to other open space, and provide space for additional facilities needed both now and as the community grows.
- Acquire additional property as required for trail development. See Key Issue #5 to provide direction for such land needs.

### **Stay Forever Green**

Promote and preserve natural areas of Peters Township, including ponds, woods, trails, working farms, and parks. Strive to create an interconnected network of green space that conserves critical natural areas, supports working farms, provides recreational linkages, protects water quality and quantity, and contributes to the identity and sense of place within the community. If properties develop, create usable open spaces that contribute to the overall character and experience of the community.

*Guiding Principle Plan Peters 2022*



## Issue #5 Trails and Connectivity

**Goal – Create a walking and bicycle friendly community.**

1. Create walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods with connections to the Arrowhead Trail, local parks, and schools. (Peters Lake, Tennis Center, Peterswood Park, Community Recreation Center, Elm Grove Park, High School, Peters Township Elementary, Middle School, McMurray Elementary).
2. Utilize the Arrowhead Trail and Park Walkability Map found at the end of this chapter as a starting point to improve walking and biking trails to connect neighborhoods with the Arrowhead Trail, Township parks, and local schools.
3. Develop a community-wide bicycle/pedestrian master plan.
  - a. Identify trails that can be created simply by using surface painting and signage.
  - b. Use Federal Highway Administration’s Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for the design and marking of all share the road projects, whether they are located on Township, state, or national roadways.

### Priority Implementation

1. Easier trails to implement
  - Upgrade existing trail connection from Ammons Drive to Elm Grove Park.
  - Develop neighborhood trails that can be implemented by use of road surface painting and signage.
  - Neighborhood connections to Pleasant Valley Elementary and Peters Township High School and Peters Lake Park
2. Connecting neighborhoods to the Arrowhead Trail as depicted on the Trail and Walkability Map.

### **Increase Transportation Choice & Walkability**

Provide a safe, reliable transportation system that balances all modes of transportation, including walking, biking, transit, and cars. Consider land use and infrastructure together, promoting street connectivity and complete streets that emphasize the quality and character of both the thoroughfare and adjoining development. Concentrate on both destination-based as well as recreational trips, promoting active living for all ages, with special attention given to the mobility of children and seniors.

*Guiding Principle Plan Peters 2022*

### **For State Roads**

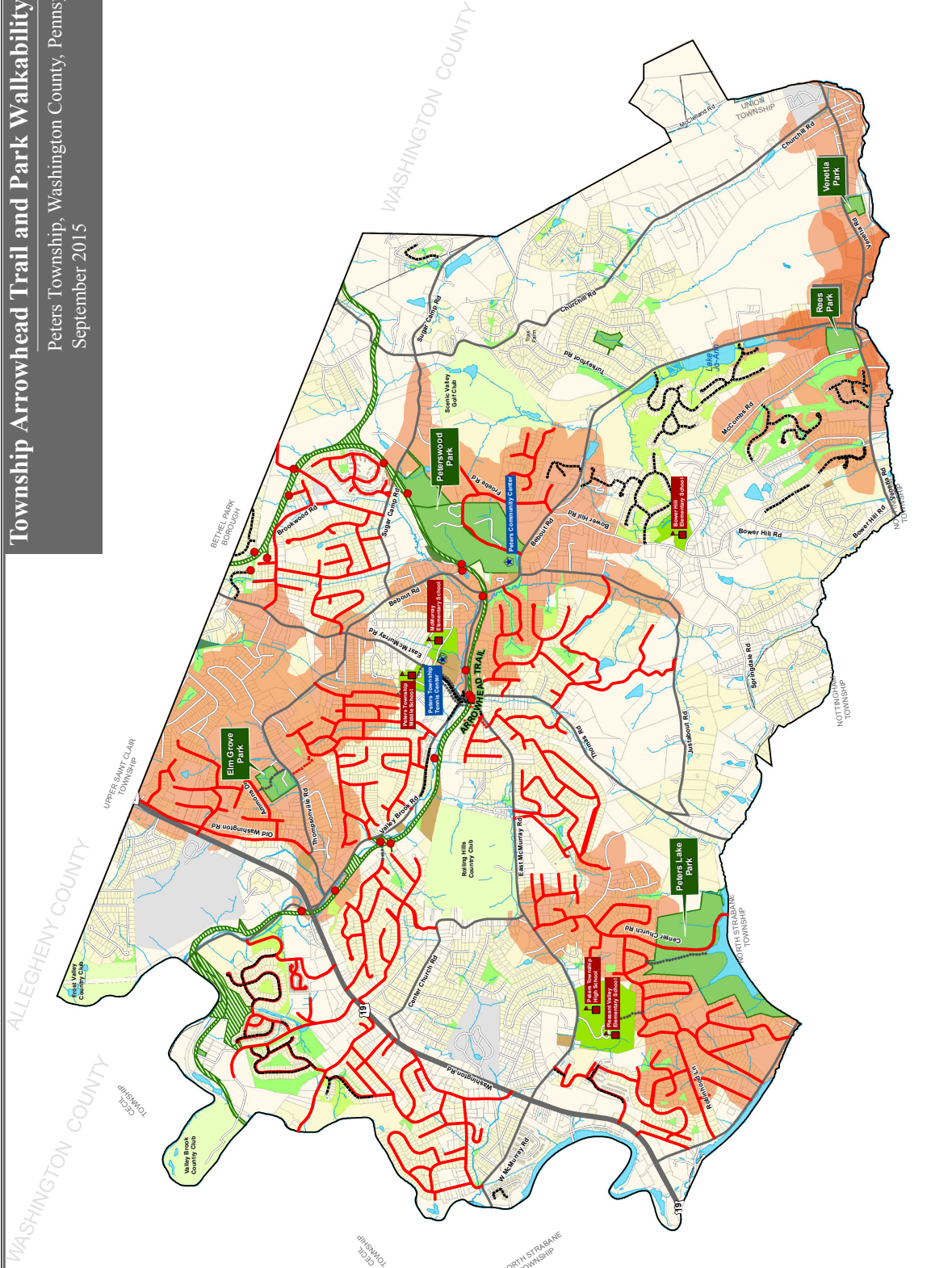
- Identify usable state routes that can accommodate share the road bicycle trails.
- Contact PennDOT District 12 to discuss the Township Bike/Ped Plan with them.
- Actively monitor the PennDOT Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and the Betterment Project list for projects expected to occur in Peters Township.
- Coordinate with PennDOT to ensure inclusion of Township Share the Road projects in the TIP and Betterment Projects.

## Projected Cost of Implementation

Peters Township Upgrade Schedule by Year and Phase							
Improvement	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
<b>Previously Planned and Budgeted</b>							
Amphitheater rehabilitation	\$600,000						
<b>Phase 1</b>							
<b>Peterswood Park</b>							
Peterswood Park - Replace Picnic Shelter 1	\$65,000						
Replace Picnic Shelters 2, 3		\$70,000	\$50,000				
Replace Playground near shelters		\$375,000					
Complete the engineering for field 5 restroom/concession stand	\$60,000						
ADA Improvements to shelter 1, 2, and 3 area	\$20,000						
Shelter 4 Playground replacement	\$250,000						
<b>Other</b>							
Swimming Pool Feasibility Study	\$60,000						
Community Center architectural improvements analysis		\$30,000					
Implement new admin procedures and computer tracking	\$35,000						
<b>Peters Lake</b>							
Trail upgrades			\$10,000				
Kayak launch upgrades			\$5,000				
Construct new picnic shelter			\$35,000				
<b>Total Phase I</b>	<b>\$490,000</b>	<b>\$475,000</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>				
<b>Phase 2</b>							
<b>Peterswood Park</b>							
Construct Field 5 restroom/concession stand			\$600,000				
Field 5 ADA upgrades			\$29,000				
<b>Phase 2 Total</b>			<b>\$629,000</b>				
<b>Phase 3</b>							
<b>Peterswood Park</b>							
ADA upgrades at fields 1 and 2				\$125,000			
ADA upgrades at Field 4				\$12,000			
ADA upgrades at Field 5				\$29,000			
ADA upgrades at CRC Ballfield				\$20,000			
ADA upgrades at Football field				\$17,000			
Construct new shelter in Community Day field				\$40,000			
Skate park rehabilitation				\$49,000			
<b>Phase 3 Total</b>				<b>\$292,000</b>			
<b>Phase 4</b>							
<b>Elm Grove Park - Repairs and Improvements</b>							
Upgrade picnic shelter						\$45,000	
Replace existing playground						\$200,000	
ADA Upgrades						\$100,000	
Replace restroom roof with metal roofing						\$12,000	
Install sport courts on the hill above the soccer field						\$130,000	
<b>Rees Park</b>							
ADA Upgrades							\$53,000
Add a small picnic shelter							\$35,000
Add an observation platform on hill near center field							\$12,000
Install decorative fence at playground							\$6,000
Replace restroom roof with metal roof							\$12,000
<b>Venitia Park - ADA Upgrades</b>							\$107,000
<b>Old Trail Park - ADA Upgrades</b>							\$62,000
<b>Phase 4 Total</b>						<b>\$487,000</b>	<b>\$287,000</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>							<b>\$2,760,000</b>

# Township Arrowhead Trail and Park Walkability Map

Peters Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania  
September 2015

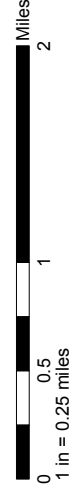


**Legend**

- Trail Corridor
- Trail Connector Points
- Proposed Connector Trails
- Existing Connector Trails
- Sidewalks
- Proposed "Share the Road"
- 20 Minute Walking Zone
- Peters Township Border
- Subdivisions
- US Highway
- Lakes
- Streams
- All other values

**Park Type**

- Association Open Space
- Conservation Easement
- Golf Course
- PTSD Green Area
- Public Park
- Township Land
- Township Open Space



**PASHEK ASSOCIATES**  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | DESIGN | PLANNING

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