A project of this scope and magnitude could not be realized without the support and commitment of many individuals. It is important to acknowledge the vision and leadership of those that assisted in the preparation of this plan and all of the supporting technical work required. All of the participants that played a role in the project, including government, institutional and community leaders, are too numerous to list; however, primary project sponsors included:

- The Borough of Wind Gap Staff, Boards and Committees.
- The residents of Wind Gap for their participation throughout the master planning process.

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This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>1.1 - 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND CONDITIONS</td>
<td>2.1 - 2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>3.1 - 3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASTER PLAN &amp; PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS</td>
<td>4.1 - 4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>5.1 - 5.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBABLE COSTS AND PHASING</td>
<td>6.1 - 6.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES</td>
<td>7.1 - 7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A - PNDI REPORT</td>
<td>A.1 - A.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B - RECOMMENDED TREE SPECIES</td>
<td>B.1 - B.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C - APPLICABLE LAWS &amp; REGULATIONS</td>
<td>C.1 - C.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D - MEETING MINUTES</td>
<td>D.1 - D.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OCTOBER 2016
CHAPTER 1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
What is a Park Master Plan and Why is it Important?

The master plan explores the options for the development of the parks and considers existing and potential park users, site characteristics, regional and local context, municipal recreation and cultural needs and opportunities, and the overall potential desires of the Wind Gap Community. The process for developing the vision for the park, physical plans, and supporting policy recommendations emphasized citizen input to develop a path forward that targets existing and future community needs. This effort is especially important since Wind Gap Park essentially functions as the community’s “central park” serving an expansive population base and a diverse set of community needs.

What an Effective Master Plan Achieves:

- Establishes a “vision” for the park that shapes management and capital improvements for the next 20+ years;
- Defines the role the park plays within the community’s overall parks and recreation needs;
- Establishes a framework for how the vision can be achieved;
- Determines the major incremental actions needed to achieve the vision;
- Considers physical improvements and operational and management requirements;
- Identifies related social, cultural, and ecological programming opportunities that can be integrated into the park;
- Establishes a general guidance and policy tool for decision-making as implementation occurs and to address future unforeseen conditions; and
- Enables Wind Gap Borough to be competitive for grant funding for park improvements.

What are the Limitations of the Park Master Plans?

The recommendations in this master plan report are purely for guidance in decision-making; the plan is not the letter of the law.

The master plan includes a clear vision for what can be achieved in Wind Gap Park and the key next steps. Multiple parties are involved in making decisions, and many partnerships are needed; therefore the plan can serve as a common reference for all parties, as step-by-step decisions are made.

The physical master plan drawings illustrate an “idealized” set of build-out/improvement scenarios.

The proposed physical layout depicted on the master site plan was developed based on an ultimate long-term desired future, considering and weighing all of the input received during the planning process. As each element of the master plan is designed in detail for implementation, much greater project-specific information will be gathered to inform the final realization, including public engagement to consider the details of the design of each project. Each of these actions will further influence and likely change the master plan. The final configurations of the various project components will change as the level of design progresses. So why is this effort important? Developing an overall picture of what is possible allows the Borough to fully understand the real physical constraints and opportunities and a direction and priorities for moving ahead without impeding the possibility of future desired project components. In essence, the master plan provides a roadmap for the questions to ask at each improvement step to ensure that as improvements are made, everything works together to create a cohesive whole. In the end what should be achieved after significant improvements are implemented is a park that is perceived by the community as being of greater community value than the sum of its individual parts.

Projects cannot be directly constructed from this master plan.

Plans of such magnitude will inevitably result in a series of recommendations that require further evaluation. In the vast majority of cases, the next steps require determining the details through a design and engineering process, all of which should be equally vetted through a community engagement process. These steps will determine how a project
Increasingly there are industry standards for all aspects of playfield design, similar to standards and codes for buildings. The cost of properly constructing and maintaining high-quality field facilities can be significant. In the case of Wind Gap Park, all of the fields require some level of improvements, starting with grading and drainage and including improved turf and supporting fixed facilities such as fencing and seating. It is strongly recommended that vehicles not be allowed to be parked on the fields for any reason except during emergencies.

**Implement an existing tree planting strategy to ensure the perpetuation of tall tree canopy.**

Mature canopy tree cover is a very important aspect of the overall quality and experience in the park. The amount of existing tree canopy varies greatly throughout the park, and with the significant tree removal that has already occurred combined with additional trees that will likely need to be removed in the near future, it is important that a comprehensive canopy tree planting and management strategy be deployed. The recommended canopy tree management strategy could include:

- Developing a detailed tree management program that is phased in over time in a 20-year framework, with specific monitoring activities and management/conservation actions to be performed on an annual basis.
- Increase ecological diversity in the park through a broader re-establishment of the layers of a forest to include more native and indigenous canopy trees strategically supplemented with understory trees, shrubs and herbaceous plantings, especially at gateways into the park and other strategic areas. A list of recommended canopy tree species is provided in Appendix B. Less turf under canopy trees, where feasible, will improve the health and longevity of the trees.
- Focus on planting more, smaller trees, on an annual basis. This will reduce cost, increase diversity, and likely increase the success rate of trees that are planted.

**Address fundamental code compliance and utility upgrades, specifically related to the park’s electrical service.**

Investments into the current electrical distribution system within the park should be made with an emphasis on the service panels located within the main concession building. Additional routing of underground electrical conduits/service should be performed in the upper tier to remove overhead wiring and to provide additional safety/architectural lighting and for seasonal holiday lighting.

**Focus on improving maintenance, especially related to utilization and wear-and-tear on facilities.**

Sports fields especially are park infrastructure and not catchall land that can be used for any purpose. The quality of turf, the compaction levels of the soils, the drainage, grading and uniformity of the surfaces are all aspects that impact play and players’ safety.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

However, the opportunity exists to create a complete pedestrian loop path around the park. This loop could connect to interior paths between existing facilities and tie to the surrounding neighborhood streets. This is also important when considering the opportunity to ultimately create complete pedestrian and bicycle networks to the regional trail system, via local streets.

Improving the park entry gateways and main circulation spine into the park from Lehigh and 3rd Streets will aid in forming the framework for many of the other proposed improvements for the upper tier of the park. These improvements in circulation can occur incrementally and be tied to the proposed canopy tree and landscape planting recommendations.

**Address drainage issues throughout the park with grading, conveyance, and green infrastructure.**

Several of the existing facilities, including the athletic fields as well as the support facilities for the lower ballfield grandstand/concession area and the lawn in the upper tier suffer from drainage issues. The master plan proposes a series of traditional conveyance system and “soft engineering” (i.e. planted bioswales/raingardens) improvements to alleviate drainage improvements with the least amount of expense while also adding landscape amenities to the park. As with some of the other recommendations, these can be accomplished incrementally with the most important being the drainage improvements as part of the multi-use path improvements proposed along the eastern boundary of the park.

**Upgrade the concession and restroom facilities.**

The existing buildings in the park lack functionality as well as architectural continuity. Architecture can add a great deal to the overall appeal of a park. Too often buildings that focus on a particular service, such as restrooms, are approached from a purely utilitarian standpoint resulting in a bland or downright unpleasant experience from a park user's perspective. In the case of Wind Gap Park, there is no architectural aesthetic or continuity amongst the collection of buildings, with some appearing as if they were utility sheds or as “bunkers” as one resident referred to them.

Many of the buildings require upgrades and improvements and the master plan proposes to upgrade some, eliminate others and in some cases construct replacements. The priority should be placed on upgrading the main concession building, starting with the code compliance items listed above and then by adding an open-air covered addition and create an improved architectural treatment for its exterior.

**Improve the upper parking lot.**

With a minor expansion of the upper parking lot and its reconfiguration, potentially 17 additional parking spaces can be provided for the park and the area surrounding the parking lot can be better buffered and connected to the overall park circulation. This effort would include removing and replacing some of the existing vegetation, expanding, resurfacing and restriping the lot. Integrated stormwater management elements that would reduce runoff flowing towards the upper lawn and the lower fields are part of this project as well.

**Expand and improve the play area.**

Although somewhat dependent on other improvements described above, the master plan recommends expanding the play area to include a broader age range of play equipment. This can be achieved by extending the current play area to the east. Additional improvements include adding site and regional inspired play elements, shade sails, canopy trees, and replacing the galvanized fencing with vinyl coated or other decorative fencing.

**Follow a cohesive design aesthetic that ties all elements together and reinforces the park’s visual identity. The care and crafting of each element matters.**

One of the simplest improvements that can be made to improve the visual aesthetic of the park is to create a palette of consistent, complimentary, and high-quality site fixtures for the park. Elements would include benches, trash receptacles, architectural and safety lighting, fencing, and signing. A well-branded comprehensive image and signing system for the park would go a long way to promote the park as a community gem of Wind Gap. A branding and signing system could be developed which creates a Borough promotion logo (not a Borough Seal) and color palette. Sign types could include gateway entrance signing, path signing, trailblazer signs linking the park to regional trails, botanical/interpretation, kiosks, banners, and regulation signing.
CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND CONDITIONS
GENERAL SITE FEATURES

Wind Gap Park is located within the Borough of Wind Gap at the corner of South Third Street and South Lehigh Avenue. The park site is one block east of South Broadway, which is also designated Pennsylvania State Route 512. The park is situated and centrally located within a residential area of Wind Gap Borough and is well connected to neighborhood streets and sidewalk networks.

The Wind Gap Park site covers approximately 25 acres and has a variety of active and passive recreation uses situated within three main tiers. The park, which is topographically broken into three tiers at different elevations, has a mix of facilities for athletics, supportive active recreation, and passive recreation activities. The top tier, located at the south end of the park along Lehigh Avenue and Third Street includes the majority of passive recreation amenities and non-athletic recreation uses within the park. These amenities include a large lawn area with two small pavilions and an amphitheater, a large playground area for children, a large pavilion/event space, and several buildings including concessions and restroom facilities. This top tier is the main entrance and gateway to the park with some small entry elements and some dated light fixtures in varying condition.
The active recreation facilities, which are utilized by the public, the Wind Gap Athletic Association, and the local school district, are spread throughout all three tiers in the center of the park. The top tier contains a shared-use baseball, softball, and soccer field. The larger baseball field in the shared-use field area includes dugouts and bleachers and a scoreboard that located on the fence along the norther side of the fields adjacent to the basketball and tennis courts. The middle tier contains three fenced-in basketball and two fenced-in tennis courts. The middle tier also contains a batting cage area that does not appear to be in use. The bottom tier includes a fully lit, fenced in baseball field complex with bleachers, dugouts, parking, and a restroom/concession building. Adjacent to the athletic fields is a small gravel service road which is in varying states of repair and runs along the eastern edge of the park property and connects to East West Street.

Beyond the athletic fields located on the bottom tier of the park, there is a small unnamed stream extending through the park which flows from densely vegetated areas of the park to the east. North of the unnamed stream, there is un-programmed park open space which is split between lawn and wooded areas. The park also includes additional area to the east (where the unnamed stream flows from), but this area is densely vegetated and largely delineated as wetlands and, thus, is not currently in use by the borough.
Note:
All parcels, road edges, right-of-ways, and existing structural elements were traced from the provided PDF survey from Rettew Associates, Inc. dated 02/11/2006, and from available GIS data and 2010 USGS aerial imagery. Currently, all FEMA floodplain data shows the entire site is located in zone "X" 0.2% or less chance of a flood event annually.
All parcels, road edges, right-of-ways, and existing structural elements were traced from the provided PDF survey from Betley Associates, Inc. dated 02/11/2006, and from available GIS data and 2010 USGS aerial imagery. Currently, all FEMA floodplain data shows the entire site is located in zone "X" 0.2% or less chance of a flood event annually.
Circulation

**Pedestrian** – Wind Gap Park is bordered by sidewalks along its South Lehigh Avenue and East 3rd Street property lines and has a moderate amount of pedestrian connectivity with the surrounding neighborhood, but there are noticeable limitations to the sidewalk network. Sidewalks are present in the neighborhood but are not always on both sides of the roadways and have some gaps in coverage. Connectivity is also limited to the east of the park, as the East 3rd Street stretch of sidewalk ends at the limits of the park boundary and no sidewalks are present on East West Street, east of South Lehigh Avenue.

Within the park, the circulation for pedestrians is limited to an extent. Particularly between the different tiers of the park, there is a lack of connectivity that limits the cohesiveness of the site as a whole. Pedestrians can travel between tiers of the park by using the sidewalk along Lehigh Avenue, but beyond the gravel service road along the woods, no circulation is present within the park to connect between the different areas.

**Vehicular** – Wind Gap Park contains two paved, off-street parking areas which serve the park. One asphalt paved parking lot services the upper tier from both South Lehigh Avenue and East 3rd street. This is the larger of the two and it contains eighty-two vehicle spaces. The second, smaller asphalt parking lot services the middle and lower tier, basketball, tennis, and baseball field and contains about sixty vehicle spaces. These lots, particularly the lower lot, lack buffering from the street, which impacts the park’s aesthetic appeal and squeezes the sidewalk areas between the lots and the active roadway. On-street parking is also extensively utilized for the park, as the lots do not have the capacity to handle the parking demands of some larger events and other organized activities.

**Bicycle** – There are no designated bicycle routes that serve the park via South Lehigh Avenue or East Third Street, but these streets are mostly residential and wide enough to accommodate bikes and vehicles at the same time. No regional or state bike routes connect directly to Wind Gap Park, but the seven-mile Plainfield Township Trail is located nearby, approximately a mile and a half east of the park site. This trail, which runs through Plainfield Township from the Stockertown border to PA Route 512 between Wind Gap and Pen Argyl, receives significant use and can currently be reached via the roads heading east out of Wind Gap Borough.

**Transit** – There are four Lehigh and Northampton Transit Authority (LANTA) bus stops a block away from the park between 3rd street and West Street on South Broadway Avenue that gain access to the surrounding neighborhoods/municipalities and regional locations like Bethlehem. LANTA Route #217 is the only route that travels through Wind Gap; its northbound terminus is in Roseto, PA and its southbound terminus is in downtown Bethlehem.

Hydrology

Regionally, Wind Gap Borough is located within the Delaware River Basin watershed, the waters of which all eventually drain to the Delaware River. Wind Gap is located at the northern extents of the Bushkill sub-watershed which drains into Bushkill Creek, which eventually feeds into the Delaware River in Easton, PA. Wind Gap itself has a series of small tributaries which eventually lead to Little Bushkill Creek.

On the park site, there is a small unnamed tributary which runs through the park from east to west. FEMA's floodplain designations do not reach these extents in the drainage network, but this tributary has a history of flooding at times and flows through a delineated wetlands area located within the borough-owned park property. Other areas along this tributary, including a small nearby park along South Broadway Avenue, have also experienced flooding during significant storm events.

It has been indicated by the public and borough officials that Wind Gap Park has drainage concerns throughout the multiple tiers of the park. A series of factors, which include the grading, soils, geology, and drainage patterns of the site, are likely contributing factors to some of the concerns with flooding and standing water in the recreational areas of the park. Examples of the drainage issues have been observed by the public to be near the amphitheater and lower baseball field restrooms, among other locations in the park.
Soils and Geology

The geology underlying Wind Gap Park features bedrock exclusively from the Martinsburg Formation. This formation consists largely of slate and shale with intermittent seams of sandstone which is commonly found throughout much of the Lehigh Valley region. The Martinsburg Formation in the Delaware River Basin is typically located between flatter, lower-lying carbonate rock formations and the sandstone ridges that form much of the Appalachian Mountains. The formation sometimes exhibits shallow outcrops and it tends to result in “rolling hill” type topography. Some areas within Wind Gap Park have been mentioned as possibly having shallow bedrock, which may contribute to some of the park’s drainage concerns.

The soils located underneath Wind Gap Park consist mainly of loamy soils with varying levels of coarse and fine grained material mixed in. The north end of the park is underlain primarily by the Brinkertin-Comly Silt Loam, a fine silty colluvium with moderate hydrologic conductivity but low overall water capacity. Central portions of the park consist primarily of Udorthents, Shale, and Sandstone complex which covers most of the recreation playing fields. This silty loam soil is well drained with a moderate to high hydraulic conductivity but very low water storage capacity. The remaining portions of the park parcel contain Urban Land-Berks Complex which is located around the hard court surfaces, South Lehigh Avenue, and the southeast portion of the park. This soil class is made up of a channery (rocky) loam with a very low overall water capacity but can include other parent material from pavement, buildings, and other artificially covered areas.

The site’s underlying soils and geology is likely contributing to the hydrologic characteristics that are observed within the park, i.e. poor drainage and ponding. The shale and sandstone Udorthents Complex indicates that rock is near the surface in those locations and the channery loam designation in the Urban Land-Berks Complex describes the soil and geology condition that contains rocky conditions and is near a weathered bedrock location. The likely shallow bedrock beneath much of the upper tier of the park contains soil that has limited storage capacity, where water either runs off or pools at the surface, depending on the grading. The shallow restrictive layers, coupled with the finer soils, further impede water movement in the lower lying areas to the north and east, and have potentially created the moist conditions in the lower elevations of which have been designated wetlands.
BACKGROUND CONDITIONS

LEGEND
NOT TO SCALE

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Note:
All parcels, road edges, right-of-ways, and existing structural elements were traced from the provided PDF survey from Retlaw Associates, Inc. dated 02/11/2006, and from available GIS data and 2010 USGS aerial imagery. Currently all FEMA floodplain data shows the entire sites is located in zone "X" 0.2% or less chance of a flood event annually.
Vegetation

Northampton County lies in the Eastern Deciduous Forest Community within Pennsylvania and sits in a remnant of the oak-chestnut forests that dominated the southern two-thirds of the state. Due to the accidental introduction of chestnut blight in New York City in the 1900’s, Northampton County today is primarily dominated by white oak, red oak, scarlet oak, and black oak sometimes combined with mixes of red maple, American beech, and tulip poplar canopy trees.

Within Wind Gap Park, there are two primary vegetation conditions: the programmed and actively used park tiers and the undeveloped wooded areas. Most of the mature tree coverage in the programmed tiers of the park consists of white oak, pin oak, red maple, ash, and black pine. The vegetation in these tiers is typical of a community park, with maintained athletic fields and expansive lawn of regularly mown turf. Those areas also include a mix of white oak, red maple and ash trees typically found in a community park, scattered in a few locations, many of which are advanced in age or are in poor health. The upper tier also contains small gateway planters with various trees, shrubs and flowering plants including; hasta, daylilies, dwarf Alberta spruce, burning bush, hydrangeas, roses, flowering pear, and others. In the undeveloped portions of the park and lower-lying tiers there are thick wooded wetlands on the north and east portions of the site. These undeveloped areas were designated “Palustrine forested wetlands” in a study commissioned by the borough in 2005. Palustrine is classified as a non-tidal wetland that is significantly covered with developing vegetation such as shrubs, understory vegetation, canopy trees, etc.

Invasive Species - These are plants that, in their native habitat, live in harmony with the plants and animals around them. Outside of their native habitat, however, they are able to increase rapidly without any natural controls such as herbivores or diseases. These plants then threaten the native species of their adopted home, as they can out-compete them for light, space and nutrients.

Exotic plants are usually introduced deliberately as either ornamental garden species or crops. Only about 1% of species that are introduced to an area become invasive, but the impact of any one of these invaders can be huge. This can be both in terms of native species driven to extinction and the millions of dollars spent on control attempts. There is often a time lag between when a species is recognized as being a problem for the local environment and when it stops being commercially available. This means that continued education is necessary, outlining why invasive plants are everyone’s problem and which species are invasive. Once established, invasive plants are difficult to eradicate, and restoration of native ecosystems needs vigilant, long-term maintenance. Early detection and rapid response is the best and most cost-effective approach to controlling the spread of invasive species. This means keeping watch for species that are currently problems on your site.

As very mature plants die, especially in Wind Gap Park, the opportunity for these invasive species to take over large portions of the landscape is a real threat. Most of the areas where this dynamic is already occurring, is at the edge of the wooded areas abutting the mown landscape. The most prominent outlier is Japanese Knotweed – Polygonum cuspidatum. This is a herbaceous perennial that can grow to over ten feet tall, with large alternating leaves and an extensive rhizome system. Young shoots look like bamboo or asparagus, and later in the year it produces sprays of attractive greenish-white flowers followed by white, papery seeds. Japanese Knotweed can grow in a wide variety of habitats, although it grows mostly in moist areas with large amounts of sunlight. Japanese Knotweed begins to send up shoots in April and flowers in August and September. Seeds appear two weeks after it flowers.

Control - Japanese Knotweed requires perseverance. Do not try to remove the rhizomes, but instead try to reduce vigor by cutting to the ground repeatedly. This will also limit seed production. Remove cut material from the site as these can root and sprout.

For definitions of relevant terms and other useful information, visit Weeds Gone Wild at: www.nps.gov/plants/alien/bkgd.htm

Additional Facts Sheets are available at: http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/plants/invasiveplants/

Unnamed stream separates the lower tier from the northern most part of the park
Surrounding Land Use

Wind Gap Park is located within a residential area of the Borough of Wind Gap. The roads bracketing the park have single-family homes fronting the park. There is also some limited light commercial in the vicinity along Broadway/PA Route 512 as well as a self-storage facility located across Lehigh Avenue from the park near the unnamed tributary. There is also a former quarry site located adjacent to the park site to the northeast where a potential residential development project is being considered.

The park is situated in a manner that residential properties are oriented towards the park, making the park an integral component of the adjacent neighborhoods and the borough as a whole.

Zoning

Zoning near the park site is primarily residential with the Wind Gap Park parcels being included within the area marked “Single Family Residential.” The properties to the south and east across and along Third Street are also designated R-12 Single Family residential. To the west of the site, across Lehigh Avenue, the land is zoned R-8 “Medium Density Residential,” though some commercial, including the self-storage facility, are located in this zone. Going a block away from the park, the areas along the west side of South Broadway are zoned commercial. North of the site, across West Street, is designated R-10 “Medium Density Single Family Residential” near the park. The former quarry site mentioned to the northeast of the site is still, according to the most recent information available, currently zoned I-ME for “Extractive Industry,” though that would presumably be rezoned for any land development plan for the parcel. Based on the current zoning designation for the park, the park is not currently protected as permanently protected public open space.
**Key Findings**

**Site Features**

- The park site contains a healthy mix of active and passive recreation, including athletic fields, pavilions, playground areas, and other amenities.
- Site topography causes the park to be separated into separate tiers with different uses.

**Circulation**

- Pedestrian access via sidewalks is present but spotty in areas adjacent to the park. Within the park, circulation is limited between tiers.
- Vehicular access to Wind Gap Park is enabled by two separate parking lots on Lehigh Avenue. The lots, however, lack buffering from the neighborhood and have limited capacity, necessitating the use of on-street parking.
- No bike trails or routes connect directly to the park, though the significantly used Plainfield Township Trail is relatively close to the park about a mile and a half to the east.
- Area transit is somewhat limited, but the park is just a block away from several bus stops for LANta Route #217, which terminates in downtown Bethlehem.

**Hydrology**

- The lower tier of the site has some delineated wetlands present and an unnamed tributary, which periodically floods, running through it.
- The site has local drainage issues in a number of areas, due to a combination of factors including improper grading, soil/geological impediments, and a lack of conveyance.

**Soils and Geology**

- A shallow bedrock layer likely limits the runoff storage capacity of the site soils, contributing to some of the ponding and local drainage issues observed throughout the site.
- The presence of low-permeability soils in the lower-lying portions of the site likely contributes to some of the existing wetland conditions.

**Vegetation**

- The majority of the vegetation in the park consists of mature: white oak, pin oak, red maple, ash and black pine. Inter-planting of younger trees will help sustain the park’s canopy tree coverage as the current mature trees die out.
- Gateway plantings contain a wider variety of trees, shrubs, and flowering plants including: hasta, daylilies, dwarf Alberta spruce, burning bush, hydrangeas, roses, flowering pear, and others.
- Most of the undeveloped wooded areas are designated as Palustrine Forested Wetlands which presents some challenges for future park development and expansion towards these designated areas.
- Invasive species are mostly found along the edges of the woodland and grass areas of the park.

Japanese Knotweed frequently dominates the woodland edges

Japanese Knotweed along the gravel road in the lower tier
Land Use

- Wind Gap Park is situated within a largely residential area with some limited commercial uses nearby along South Broadway Avenue.

- The orientation of the homes adjacent to the park and the park's location within the borough make it essential to the fabric of the neighborhood and to Wind Gap as a whole.

Zoning

- The park and the surrounding blocks are all zoned residential, with the exception of the quarry site, which remains zoned industrial but is likely to change upon redevelopment.

- Wind Gap Park being currently zoned residential is an issue, as that prevents it from being a permanently protected public open space.
ALL parcels, road edges, right-of-ways, and existing structural elements were traced from the provided PDF survey from Retlaw Associates, Inc. dated 02/11/2006, and from available GIS data and 2010 USGS aerial imagery. Currently all FEMA floodplain data shows the entire sites is located in zone "X" 0.2% or less chance of a flood event annually.
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All parcels, road edges, right-of-ways, and existing structural elements were traced from the provided PDF survey from Bettez Associates, Inc. dated 02/11/2006, and from available GIS data and 2010 USDA aerial imagery. Currently all FEMA floodplain data shows the entire site is located in zone "X" 0.2% or less chance of a flood event annually.
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND DETERMINING THE NEEDS/DESIRES FOR PARK IMPROVEMENTS

There were several public engagement aspects to the master planning process that aided in informing the direction and decision-making process as schematic plans were developed.

Key Person Interviews - Key person interviews were performed with Borough staff as well as others identified throughout the planning process including the park board, representatives from Pen Argyl School district (PASD) and Wind Gap Athletics Association.

Focus Group Meeting - A focus group meeting was held on the topic of active sports and sports organizations. Due to the level of involvement of a small group of interested community members, attendance at this meeting was limited, so individual key person interviews were attempted to receive input from those invited to, but could not attend the focus group meeting.

Public Visioning Meeting - This meeting included a project briefing presentation highlighting the planning process, timeline and physical analysis work performed to-date. Two major interactive activities were performed by the public. A visual preference survey was displayed that showed 36 different images focused on potential park programming elements and activities. Each community participant was provided with a score card and asked to rank each image based on the level of desirability and applicability each image had to Wind Gap Park, from low to high.

The participants were also broken into working groups of 4-8 people and asked to answer four questions by writing and/or drawing on large scale maps of the park or providing written responses on questionnaires at each table.

This information was then utilized to aid the design team in understanding a range of topics related to the park, from what aspects are most sacred and should not be changed, to what issues exist and need to be address, to what new uses or changes should be considered.

Steering Committee - A steering committee with representatives of the community, the Borough and the school district met several times to provide input and direction into the development of the master plan. Minutes of these meetings are included in Appendix D.

The Visual Preference Survey allows the community the opportunity to express general design aesthetics and program expectations.
Finding from the Analysis and the Community Engagement – The Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) Analysis

The following analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges were gleaned from research, field investigation, interviews with key stakeholders, focus group, and public meetings. The public meeting involved citizens who participated in interactive exercises to identify why they like the park, parks aspects that they enjoy and are important, and what should be changed or improved.

**Strengths**

- Ballfields are extensively used.
- Basketball.
- Playground area is very popular.
- Pavilions – Large & Small / Parties.
- Summer sounds in the park.
- Lights in park, Christmas tree.
- Swings.
- Concession stand.
- Walking/jogging.
- Sporting events.
- Open spaces.
- Band shell.
- Fireworks.
- Car Show.
- Wetlands, trees, plants, vegetation.
- View of the Blue Mountain.

**Weaknesses**

- The band shell needs significant improvements and doesn’t function well as it currently exists – seating is uncomfortable and the alignment is poor due to the sun.
- Restroom facilities – Some of the restrooms are in poor conditions and even the newer ones are a less than desirable experience.
- Drainage issues – puddles and ponding issues occur throughout the park including fields and the band shell lawn area.
- Dog policy.
- Gazebo.
- Bench repair – fence repair.
- Need for more parking especially when all fields are in use or during fairs and festivals.
- Fix tennis courts - weed control.
- Trees that were removed need to be replaced – park needs more shade.
- Security is a concern.
- Vandalism.
- More equipment for older children (5 to 12 year olds).
- Play area needs more shade.
- Maintenance of equipment is a concern.
- Fencing along ballfields.
- Large wetland area.

**Opportunities**

- Athletic fields are very popular and heavily utilized. Synthetic turf/multi-purpose field would be ideal.
- Lighting / bleachers / fenced-in facilities.
- Concession stands are an opportunity to raise more funds to support park maintenance.
- Parking must be added – parking is an issue.
- Walking trail(paths).
- Long distance jogging.
- Improved connections to bike/regional trails – route signing.
Summary of Findings that Informed the Master Plan Development

Wind Gap Park Vision Statement

Wind Gap Park provides:

- Diverse active and passive recreational opportunities;
- The ability for interaction within naturalized and well-maintained landscapes; and
- A setting that attracts visitors of all age groups through traditional and unique forms of recreation.

Environmental

- Focus on the trees, tree canopy and shade as the hallmark features of Wind Gap Park.
- Develop a tree management program that should be phased in over time in a 20+ year and beyond framework.
- Use native plantings.
- Diversify canopy tree plantings and consider long-term resiliency.
- Focus shrub and herbaceous (perennial plants) at gateways and high visibility nodes in the park. Limit perennial plants to a small palette of plant species and plant in large masses of each type.
- Integrate sustainable design and materials into each implementation element of the master plan.

Challenges

- While some of the facilities are structurally sound, they are outdated and without the potential to establish Wind Gap Park as a premiere park and a jewel of the Borough.
- The tiered levels in the park limits the ability to reconfigure the existing facilities in a substantial manner.
- Wetlands are an amenity but their extent and the fact that they are wooded wetlands precludes the ability to significantly incorporate those areas into the primary park design.
- Amount of active versus passive recreation facilities based on the available suitable land for supporting facilities. There is more demand for park programming than the site can support on its own.
- Cost of improvements and the ability of the Borough to raise funds, even matching funds for grants is limited, so smaller, incremental projects are important.

Park Facilities

- Expand the existing play area as a single facility for easy supervision and maintaining its central location. Design the playgrounds to be unique to this site, not strictly out of a catalog equipment.
- Upgrade fields with drainage, grading, and turf improvements.
- Evaluate the consolidation of restrooms into a single facility for improvement and expansion to meet ADA and to be a more attractive facility.
- Expand parking in ways that do not dramatically increase impervious surface but provide for greater efficiency and capacity.
Consider stormwater management improvements as a part of each improvement project, for example permeable paving versus impervious surface treatment such as asphalt.

Create a pathway system that would establish this park as a great destination for walking. Consider a perimeter path and/or loop trails and provide more formal paths to facilities within the park.

**Park Amenities, Sense of Place, Character**

- Establish a uniform palette of park fixtures including benches, waste receptacles, architectural lighting, signing, etc.
- Use landforms to create interest and provide interesting seating and ballfield bleacher opportunities.
- Consider park branding and signage system that would be a model for the Borough.

**Programming**

- Look at ways to maintain car shows around the perimeter of the park while reducing the potential for significant damage to athletic facilities.
- Coordinate athletic facility use to reduce the potential for large parking demands at a particular time.

**Management and Operations**

- Develop a tree management/conservation plan focused on both the regular planting of new trees and the removal of declining trees.
- Develop an operations and maintenance plan for all parks and recreation facilities.
- Develop a consistent permit program for all applicable park activities and facilities.
- Explore new partnerships to expand the community reach of the park and building a volunteer base to support programs, maintenance and improvements in the park.
- Develop a 5-year capital improvement plan (CIP) that is updated on an annual basis. Emphasis should be placed on planning for local funding sources that can be leveraged with grants to increase the impact of every dollar budgeted for park improvements.
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Perpetuating Mature Tree Canopy

Main Park “Gateway”

Lack of Park Edge Definition – “Street Trees”

Importance of Central Events/Gathering Space

Prominence of Galvanized Chain-link

Visual Connection to “The Gap”

Prominence of Galvanized Chain-link

Abundance of Asphalt

Lack of Shade in Play Area

Limited Seating and Social Gathering In and Outside of Play Area
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Wind Gap, PA

- Multiple Small Structures – Inefficiently located and maintenance issues.
- Very Utilitarian Restroom Facility
- Prominence of Galvanized Chain-link
- Play Area Layout Could Better Utilize Available Space and Create Play Interaction
- Paving and Canopy Trees
- Issues with Performance Area Location, Orientation, Drainage, Etc.
- Poorly Defined Circulation
- Turf, Gravel and Canopy Trees
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Inefficient Use of Key Lawn Area
- Lack of Visual Buffering
- Inefficient Parking Configuration

- Continuing Loss of Tree Canopy
- Inappropriate Plantings for Parking Buffering

- Need for Additional Circulation
- Opportunity Area

- Lack of Park Edge Definition – “Canopy Trees”
- Lack of Park Entry Signage
CHAPTER 4

MASTER PLAN & PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
WIND GAP PARK MASTER PLAN NARRATIVE

The master plan concept for this park maintains most of the current programming and facilities yet recommends design approaches which improves upon the balance between active and passive (such as sitting, performance, and walking) recreational facilities. The overall approach focuses on upgrading underlying infrastructure and the condition of existing facilities and emphasizes ways to “tie everything together” into a more functional and visually pleasing experience for a park-user. The park currently suffers from having a lot of facilities and programming elements squeezed into a relatively small parcel of land, due to the need to meet many different community needs and recreational desires. As the Borough’s only major park, it must fulfill a lot of disparate needs ranging from the day-to-day walker, children’s play, organized sports, musical performances, fairs and festivals, and large car shows.

Park Zones

The topography and layout of Wind Gap Park facilitates the feeling of several tiers or zones, with the separate areas of the park being divided by both elevation and the different uses contained within those parts or zones. The park features a mixture of both active and passive recreational uses with a series of athletic fields concentrated at the center of the park with other uses such as pavilions, play equipment, and open/event space located mainly at the park’s south end on its uppermost tier, elevation-wise. This mixture of potential uses makes the park an attractive and versatile gathering place for the community. For the purposes of the master planning effort, three separate zones with different characters were identified: the Upper Tier Green and Events Zone, the Active Athletics Zone, and the Northern Passive Recreation Zone. The master plan also aims to better connect these park sections, that are currently somewhat disjointed, through improvements to the park’s pedestrian circulation. A summary of the proposed improvements in each of the areas are as follows:

Upper Tier Green and Events Zone

- Reconfiguration and re-grading of the existing lawn area into a main “events green” including the relocation and replacement of the current amphitheater and pavilions and installing drainage improvements.
- Circulation improvements to create a more functional network that includes greater pedestrian circulation opportunities and aspects such as distinct park entryways as well as create safer and visually distinct separations between various park amenities.
- Improved optimization of current upper parking lot to improve vehicular flow and increase parking capacity.
- Consolidation of park restroom and concessions buildings into a singular and greatly improved facility.
- Expansion of, and improvements to, the play area with introduction of new creative play equipment and additional shade trees/structures to protect parents and children from the sun.

Active Athletics Zone

- Address drainage issues on and around the ballfields through grading and introduction of strategic stormwater elements.
- Improvement of circulation adjacent to fields to allow for better access around the fields and courts and overall connectivity through the park.
- Re-grading and improvements at the lower concessions area to create a new plaza-like hardscape area that addresses drainage issues for restroom and concessions facilities and accommodates the concentration of use and people-gathering in this location.
- Introduction of gaga pits for additional recreation opportunity in an underutilized area.
- Replacement of existing seating areas in need of repair for ballfields with more modern and safer seating elements.

Northern Passive Recreation Zone

- Creation of new circulation and improvements to the existing path system to create a complete walking loop and allow for better access to this section of the park property.
- Introduction of pavilions that will allow for gatherings in a more quiet and subdued atmosphere.

All Zones

- Circulation improvements to create better connectivity between all park zones and introduce a full pedestrian walking loop network around and through the entire park.
- Replacement and augmentation of tree canopy throughout the park to enhance the sense of place as a park experience and to offer more shade opportunities for park patrons.
**Circulation**

One of the major areas of necessary improvement identified during the master planning process for Wind Gap Park is the current configuration of the park’s circulation system and the overall connectivity of the park. The tiered nature of the park and the existence of large format athletic facilities on much of the park site present some natural limitations to the park’s circulation patterns. Based on the analysis of the existing conditions combined with what the public expressed as desired enhancements within the park, there are several improvements that can be made to create a more contiguous and well-connected public amenity. It is important to note that walking as an activity was expressed as a highly desired way for the community to utilize that park, so these improvements serve a fundamental need to move through the park and provide an increased recreational opportunity for park visitors.

Though the topography and layout of the athletic fields within the park limits the opportunities for direct connections between the park’s separate tiers, especially within the core spine of the park, the design team has identified some potential remedies that would allow for better movement between park areas along the periphery of the park. These proposed improvements to the park’s overall pedestrian circulation involve upgrading some existing features within the park’s current layout and filling in some of the missing segments.

The first of these proposed improvements is the expansion and upgrading of the current sidewalk on the western edge of the park that borders Lehigh Avenue. The replacement of the current Lehigh Avenue sidewalk is proposed because the current sidewalk is the only paved surface that currently connects the various levels of the park site and it is significantly undersized to effectively serve that purpose. There are also concerns with the current sidewalk width, from an ADA accessibility standpoint due to the location of utility poles within the already narrow sidewalk in multiple locations. The current sidewalk would be replaced with a 10-foot wide concrete sidewalk bordering the entire length of the park from 3rd Street to West Street. This would greatly improve the sidewalk’s functionality and ADA accessibility as a circulation route between park tiers and it would allow for pedestrians to pass one another without having to step onto the street or grass to do so.

On the opposite, eastern side of the park, the existing gravel service access drive adjacent to the densely wooded area would be improved as a fully upgraded asphalt multi-use path that would also function as a controlled access service drive. The current gravel access drive would be replaced with a 12-foot wide asphalt treatment to also support service vehicles. The upgrades to the path would stretch from the upper park tier near the playground area, north to West Street. By improving this connection, a fully connected loop around the park that goes from the upper tier at 3rd Street to the other end of the park could be established, allowing for greatly improved circulation to park amenities, as well as a walking loop that is an amenity in itself. This will also provide for a connection to the proposed housing development on the former quarry site adjacent to the park. In order to prevent unauthorized vehicles from traveling down the path/access road, the connection would be gated or have drop-down security bollards where it meets with West Street.

In addition to lacking a complete path network to travel around the park on foot, the current park also could be improved through more functional and visually prominent gateway connections to the surrounding neighborhood. The master plan proposes design improvements of the pedestrian park entrance at the intersection of 4th Street and Lehigh Avenue, to create a very prominent and enticing “front door” entrance into the park. The existing central landscape planting island near this entrance would be removed in favor of a widened singular promenade that allows for an uninterrupted view into the park. This traditional midway-type entrance would be framed by an allée of canopy trees on either side and would be wide enough to host fair activities like craft stands and food vendors yet still be an appropriate scale for the park. The entry promenade would also feature decorative...
A main goal of the circulation improvements will be to create a less cluttered, visually attractive, and more functional pedestrian infrastructure for the park. The park will be well served by circulation defined in a clear way that accentuates the primary routes while establishing clear edges for the park that separate it from the street and establish a greater sense of place. The way the current lawn area and amphitheater is configured, it doesn’t capitalize on the great value of the lawn space within this intensely used area of the park. The entire lawn area is filled with various elements that appear to have been place randomly over time, as resources were available with no overall thought as to how everything could work together. By reconfiguring the amenities in this area and introducing a very visually distinctive and formal oval circulation loop that clearly defines the events green, a visually apparent logic can be established that will make it a much more attractive public amenity. Establishing a loop that is separate from the sidewalk along 3rd Street and the other park circulation will help create an intimate events space within the park that also utilizes space more efficiently for the configuration of multiple pavilions, swings and a small performance stage at the perimeter of the green. The end result will be a landscape form referred to in the master plan as “the green” that will be very visually apparent as a place in the park and will be uncluttered for flexible programming for events as well as informal use.

Circulation improvements are also proposed in other areas of the park to help with the connectivity to various amenities. Paths will be introduced between the three park tiers which will allow pedestrians to more easily travel from the front (western boundary) of the park to the back (eastern boundary). These paths will connect the rear multi-use path and provide better access from the lower parking lot on Lehigh Avenue to the sports fields and a new improved lower concession area and restrooms in the Active Athletics Zone, as well as new route options to the Upper Tier Green and Events Zone.

A new path is proposed around the perimeter of the lower parking lot that improves accessibility to all areas of the park. The currently underutilized open space in the Northern Passive Recreation Zone at the northern end of the park is also proposed to have a pedestrian path connection established to make it more connected to the other zones of the park and part of the overall circulation network. West Street should be improved with a multi-use path when the residential development is constructed.

**Landscape Plantings**

With many public parks, an important component of the layout and design that often goes overlooked is the approach for plantings, vegetation, and their relationship to park maintenance. The Wind Gap Park master plan includes planting upgrades that will help the park, both aesthetically and functionally. The upgrades to the planting throughout the park are not overly intensive and efforts were made to avoid plantings that require constant and significant maintenance. For the most part, the plan encourages the bolstering and overall improvement of the tree canopy throughout the park to help define edges and provide shade for various park elements. Beyond a few small planted beds, the only areas in the park where perennials are proposed are the rain garden facilities, where concentrated native plantings should prevent the need for excessive mulching and weeding after being established in areas that are difficult to mow.

The creation of a significant, healthy tree canopy within the park can enhance the sense of place that can be hard to achieve otherwise. To achieve this, the Borough has been working to identify the trees that are unhealthy, dying, or damaged, and systematically removing them. In conjunction with this effort to remove any problematic trees, new canopy trees should be planted in their place, allowing for the replacement of shade that is being removed and re-planting in a manner that is consistent with the master plan. Beyond just replacing unhealthy trees, though, it is also recommended that a program to further expand and replenish the tree canopy throughout the park be established. By planting a few trees each year, the Borough can eventually create an extensive
and inter-connected healthy tree canopy that greatly improves the park. There are also specific locations indicated within the plan where new trees should be planted to help establish boundaries between park elements and enhance the park atmosphere. Among these locations are the 4th Street entry promenade, the edges of the reconfigured events green, and around the playground area. These trees will help frame views throughout the park and enhance the sense of place that people have while they are there.

The management of the park’s landscape, which includes all aspects of vegetation, is by far the aspect that the community is most focused upon. The master plan proposes several key management or design principles that would shape a cohesive and viable long-term strategy for vegetation within the park. This discussion emphasizes aspects for each layer of a typical forest ecosystem from top to bottom: Super Tree Canopy/Canopy; Understory Trees; Shrub; and Herbaceous (ground layer).
Wind Gap Park Landscape Management Principles

1. Maintaining and improving the health of existing canopy trees.

2. Minimizing the removal of existing trees unless they are in declining health or are in direct conflict with the fundamental components of park infrastructure.

3. Increasing native and indigenous plants and plant communities within the park.

4. Increasing plant diversity, including among each layer within the landscape structure, in order to potentially minimize the impacts of unknown/future plant threats. This especially means that many different tree species should be planted, with a consideration of ensuring that the mature tree forms (i.e., vase, broad canopy, leaf type, etc.) are consistent to reinforce the master plan’s design intent.

5. Reducing labor intensive and less-sustainable activities such as mechanical mowing and line-trimming through clustering of trees where appropriate and the use of ground cover plantings other than turf.

6. Utilizing a simple palette of understory shrub and herbaceous perennial plants, mostly through mass-plantings of a few species to create dramatic visually impact, reduction in clutter, and maintenance efficiency.

7. Promoting community awareness (of all ages) of local and regional ecology through scientifically based landscape management.

Landscape Management Protocols

Canopy Tree Management and Diversification - The monitoring of the existing trees should be performed to classify each canopy tree by its overall health. Understanding the overall composition, especially in terms of diversity, of each layer of the vegetation ecosystem can aid in determining both their health and their potential risk for long-term survival and resiliency to future threats.

For example, during the first decade of the twentieth Century, the chestnut blight fungus (*Cryphonectria parasitica*) was introduced to the eastern USA and Canada. Prior to the introduction, American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) was a dominant tree species in North American temperate deciduous forests (Douglass and Severeid 2003) including in the Northampton County Region. However, over the course of a few decades, virtually all of the stands with mature chestnuts were killed. The blight largely affects older trees, so chestnut is still present across much of its former range but was reduced to an understory tree (i.e., shrub/sapling). Even as the chestnut was being removed as a major ecosystem component, oaks (*Quercus* spp.), maples (*Acer* spp.), ashes (*Fraxinus* spp.), and other species were filling the gaps left by the chestnuts. *Fraxinus* sp., *Quercus* sp., *Carya* sp., and *Acer* sp. all have wide natural ranges and each is highly adaptable to individual site conditions. These forests have regenerated following the disturbance, and over time, tree species replacement within the stand filled the functional role of lost species, suggesting high resilience.

Currently, *Fraxinus* species (ash) are subject to large scale decimation in Pennsylvania as a result of the emerald ash borer and Northeastern deciduous forests are subject to large scale adjustment in composition. The application of these facts to Wind Gap Park, however, is not directly applicable because there is nearly no natural regeneration of the tree canopy, since the park is mostly managed as a “cultural park landscape” with the exception of the dense woodland areas not accessible by the public. It is not, in fact functioning as a true forest, therefore it is important to expand the management protocols to introduce an aspect of natural forest regeneration, albeit man-made, to replicate in some form, natural regeneration through the form of regular tree plantings. Through this process, care should be given to promote diversity now, not after an unforeseen threat to a particular species may arise, therefore increasing the resiliency of the park’s vegetation as time passes.

A recommended tree species planting list is provided in Appendix B which emphasizes native species indicative of the regional forest in which Wind Gap Park is located. In addition to this list, the Borough can also work with the forest ecology resources available through the Northampton County Penn State Cooperative Extension which can provide additional technical support related to evaluating tree canopy health and species selection. Input from a landscape

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Parking Improvements

The need for additional parking was one of the major concerns expressed to the design team during the master planning process. Currently there is sufficient demand for parking that the off-street lots are often full during regularly occurring peak athletic sports use, with cars overflowing to the on-street parking on the surrounding streets. As a result of these conditions it was determined that it was important not to maintain the current parking totals available at the park and if possible improve on the configuration to potential increase the parking yield without significantly increasing the area required for off-street parking.

The main upgrades proposed to the on-site parking facilities are located in the upper lot near the corner of 3rd Street and Lehigh Avenue. The master plan proposes to create a more efficient layout and intuitive circulation pattern for vehicles. The upgraded lot will be similar to the current lot's footprint with the northern edge of the lot expanded slightly to create enough additional area to support two full perpendicular parking bays within the lot. The parking bay connected to 3rd Street will be narrowed to eliminate unnecessary asphalt and impervious cover and allow for some new buffer planting between the lot and the adjacent private property owner located at the corner of 3rd Street and Lehigh Avenue. The new lot configuration will become a more rectilinear shape versus the current irregular configuration and the improvements will allow for the introduction of 17 additional parking spaces for a total of 101 parking spaces, including four ADA accessible spaces. The current evergreen trees surrounding the lot would be removed and later replaced with canopy trees and other buffer plantings to create a more effective visual separation from the park. These trees have matured to a point that many of the lower limbs have died so they no longer provide buffering of the parking area and several are in decline.

Unlike the upper lot, the master plan proposes that the lower parking lot situated along Lehigh Avenue will remain largely unchanged, since the parking cannot be reduced and no additional parking yield can be achieved without a significant increase in its size. The one proposed improvement to the lot will be the introduction of pedestrian circulation along its edges to improve its accessibility to the surrounding park areas.

On-street parking will remain an important aspect to the park's overall parking strategy and should be maintained to provide adequate parking supply, especially for larger events. The accessible parking station architect should be part of the selection of tree species and planting location to ensure that overall master plan design intent is maintained. It is important to note that planting more numerous smaller plants, i.e. sapling or whips, will be less expensive and will likely result in greater species diversity and long term tree canopy success. In addition, the plantings can be done as volunteer efforts with oversight, to further reduce the financial burden of tree canopy plantings.

Increasing Understory Tree, Shrub and Herbaceous Vegetation

The vast majority of the park's ground layer consists of mowed turf/lawn. The perceived “value” of the turf grass varies wildly within the community; ranging from the desire to keep exactly what exists today to adding more accent plantings. The master plan proposes to maintain turf in areas where it would best support park user activities and be easiest to maintain, especially within the Active Athletics Zone. The introduction of areas of layered vegetation as a replacement for turf is proposed at the park entry gateways and along key paths, especially in the Upper Tier Green and Events Zone. The eastern boundaries of the park that abut private properties are also identified for greater buffer plantings as well as areas of steep slopes. Several variations of the layered planting “zones” are proposed depending on specific conditions. They include a fully layered vegetation condition; a modified layered condition, without a shrub layer; and a managed view-shed condition without understory trees and the strategic placement of shrubs. In all cases the plantings in these areas should consist of native and indigenous species as much as possible, with the possibly minimal inclusion of disease or pest resistant cultivars that closely match the straight species.

Linear rain garden areas are also proposed, especially between the park’s tiers and around the “green” as a component of the site’s stormwater management and drainage improvements. These landscape elements would include diverse plantings that promote water retention, infiltration, and evapotranspiration and provide aesthetic value as well.
providing as pull-in off street parking from Lehigh Avenue, adjacent to the basketball courts, should be redesigned. Ideally, accessible parking for this area of the park would be included in the lower lot with improved ADA accessibility between the lot and the ball court area. As a part of the proposed sidewalk upgrades along Lehigh Avenue, the existing parking spaces should be moved further into the park and the pedestrian/ramp circulation in this area should be redesigned. This would eliminate the existing potential conflict of parked vehicles blocking the sidewalk, which would be compounded once the sidewalk is widened to 10 feet.

**Park Buildings**

As part of the park master plan, the design team performed a cursory review of the current building stock within the park and evaluated the need for potential improvements. One thing that stood out during the design process was the random and inefficient arrangement of buildings and pavilions within the park. The combination of poorly placed structures and the superfluous nature of the design of many of the buildings has led to an inefficient use of valuable area and some cases the creation of “dead” spaces that have little value. By improving the configuration and consolidating some of the structures within the park the Upper Tier Green and Events Zone especially can be improved to be more attractive and more functional.

In the upper tier of the park, there are two concession buildings and two restroom buildings, all of which are need of some level of improvement. The master plan proposes effectively reducing all of these separate buildings by consolidating them into two structures with appropriate upgrades that enhance functionality and aesthetics. The main concession building near the upper parking lot would remain while the smaller concession building closer to the rear of the site would be removed. The main building would be upgraded to receive necessary safety upgrades to its electrical system and kitchen space and would become the location for all concessions in the upper tier of the park. An open-air canopy structure is proposed to be introduced to the concession building as an addition to provide shade and some covered seating for patrons of the facility. The restroom buildings would also be consolidated, with the older building being removed and the newer, DCNR-funded structure remaining in place with a significant addition built around it, essentially wrapping the newer existing facility with a much more attractive architectural facade. The addition would include additional restrooms and a family changing room as well as storage space for the park. Consolidating and upgrading these buildings will greatly improve the heart of the park and will also free up space for the expansion of the play area (as discussed below).

Another structure that was identified during the master planning process as needing major improvements was the band shell and amphitheater. The current structure is poorly placed, has uncomfortable seating, and a visually closed-off nature in the band shell that invites unwanted behaviors in the park. The master plan proposes a complete removal of the current amphitheater and a full reconfiguration of the event space. The band shell would be replaced by a new, lower profile stage area that could have a tensile fabric structure. The stage would be repositioned from the eastern side of the main green to the northern side where the sun will have less impact on performers. This repositioning would also provide a vista that looks out toward the “gap” in the distance mountains, for which the town is named. Instead of the uncomfortable bench seating of the current space, the lawn would be left as an open green that gently slopes towards the stage making it suitable for lawn chairs, allowing for greater flexibility in the use of the space when not in use for performances.

The other recommended improvement to the park’s buildings is the proposed reconfiguration and addition of new picnic pavilion structures. The two current pavilions located near the center of the green would be removed to allow for more efficient use of the events green space. In their place, a new series of up to five pavilions could be constructed along the southern edge of the events green. This proposed location strategy allows the center of the green to remain open and therefore more suitable as a venue for various events and use. The pavilions are also located so they can all be oriented toward the stage making them great viewing points during events.

Additional pavilions are proposed in the Northern Passive Recreation Zone. These pavilions would allow more pavilion rental space as well as a different, more subdued and naturalized park atmosphere away from the heart of the park, yet with the introduction of the proposed circulation improvements, would be more directly connected and accessibility then the current condition in this part of the park.
Play Area

One of the most heavily used features of Wind Gap Park is the children's play area in the park’s upper tier. The master plan aims to improve on this popular portion of the park by upgrading and expanding the current facility to meet the needs of a broader segment of the public. The current play area configuration limits the opportunity to expand the playground area but with the proposed changes and consolidation of additional canopy trees be planted around the perimeter of the playground area to provide more cover from the sun for park goers and their children. Root barrier should be installed to protect the play surface from root encroachment. Moveable shade “sail” structures following the same design theme as the performance stage are also proposed.

Outside of the main playground area, the master plan recommends a few other changes to the site for additional play opportunities. Swings are currently located next to the existing amphitheater. With the events green being reconfigured, the master plan calls for swings to be located to the perimeter to maintain the obstructed character of the green. The swings would be relocated to just outside of the green, on the other side of the proposed circulation around the perimeter. They would be located in an area where new canopy trees are proposed and would be adjacent to several picnic pavilions, providing a nearby play opportunity for groups using the pavilions for events or gatherings. A swing design which incorporates an age group is becoming a very popular park element in many communities and is something that should be considered.

A small fountain plaza water feature is proposed near the consolidated concessions building. This water feature would be small and generally low profile, but will likely be an attractive site attraction that would provide a cool-down opportunity for park patrons and their children during the summer months and visual and audio element in spring and fall.

Stormwater Management

Throughout Wind Gap Park, there are locations where there is a lack of stormwater drainage impacting various park features. While there are some larger flooding issues on the lowest tier of the park due to the topography and presence of water courses that can overflow, the areas that cause more frequent and persistent issues are more localized in nature. The athletic fields, lower concession area, and upper events green are all among the areas that are impacted by poor drainage. To address these issues the master plan recommends the re-grading of several park areas and the introduction of low-impact stormwater management features that will help collect and convey stormwater in the future. The emphasis of the proposed approach is to limit engineered systems, i.e.
traditional piping and conveyance systems and instead utilize rain gardens, vegetated swales, and surface grading as much as possible. All of the approaches are consistent with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Best Management Practices (BMPs) strategies advocated by the department.

The athletic fields represent the most significant undertaking from a stormwater management perspective. On the upper shared-use fields, the current grading needs to be evaluated through detailed design and engineering, and efforts to grade the fields to shed water to the edges should be undertaken. This will require detailed site topographic elevation data to understand the exact existing conditions. To compliment the re-grading of the fields, the master plan proposes the introduction of linear rain garden swales at the edges of the upper two tiers of athletic facilities in order to aid in the collection of runoff during storm events. Between grading and potentially limited piped conveyance systems, water from the upper shared-use fields and basketball/tennis courts would be collected within these rain garden swales where runoff could be infiltrated and/or ultimately conveyed to the adjacent wetlands areas after peak storm events. These vegetated swales would be situated near the top of each of the two significant slopes between tiers in order to collect runoff before it can cause erosion, ponding or flow onto the next tier below.

Beyond the athletic fields, the other major undertaking would be the re-grading of the upper events green and introduction of rain garden infiltration facilities. This re-grading of the events green would occur in conjunction with the reconfiguration of the amphitheater, circulation, and pavilions. The green would be graded so that water would flow to and collect in a series of rain garden elements situated on the northern side of the area, in line with the new events stage. These rain gardens would be designed to infiltrate as much stormwater as possible and convey any potential overflow away from the green. In addition to the rain gardens on the events green, there is also an opportunity for a rain garden in a buffer planting area created by the reconfiguration of the upper parking lot. Currently stormwater infrastructure is very limited for the park, so further study on potential conveyance connections would need to be conducted during design development stages.

One other small area has proposed stormwater upgrades in the master plan based on drainage issues identified by the public. This is at the lower concession stand and restroom area. The current configuration leads to the flooding of the restrooms and standing water during many significant rain events. The proposed improvement include expanding the area near the restrooms using retaining walls and adding hardscaping to create a small plaza area that handles the intense concentration of pedestrian use in this area and eliminates erosion issues. Trench drains and conveyance systems are also proposed in order to direct water away from the plaza area and into the nearby natural flow pattern. These improvements would likely be performed in conjunction with other grading improvements to the lower ballfield facilities.

**Athletic Fields**

The athletic facilities are a major component of Wind Gap Park, occupying the largest overall area within the park and supporting various organized sports. The master plan proposes upgrades that allow these facilities to better serve both spectators and competitors in the future. The stormwater management upgrades to the facilities are one of the major components to the improvements but other upgrades are proposed as well.

Chief among the non-stormwater upgrades proposed in the plan are upgrades to the spectator areas of the fields. For both the upper and lower baseball fields, upgraded sets of bleachers are recommended, as the current seating is in need of repair and/or replacement. In addition to new seating, the addition of canopy trees to the seating areas is recommended to provide shade for spectators during gameplay. The dugouts are outdate and are in need of repair. One dugout in particular is recommended to be replaced so that it does not conflict with the proposed multi-use path along the eastern edge of the park and is not as separated from the field. Upgraded bleacher seating at the lower ballfield in the form of a series of small terraces is recommended to be built into the slope to allow for additional seating and as a potential gathering place and amenity for the park as a whole when games are not occurring.

While various improvements have been recommended to the athletic field areas, no large scale reconfiguration of the facilities is proposed. The Borough should coordinate with the Athletic Association and the school district to determine if the current field configuration is still the optimal one for the community. During the master planning process, it was indicated to the design team that the shared-use configuration of the upper fields has become problematic for both scheduling and upkeep of the facilities. A potential solution to this problem is to coordinate with the other regional sports entities and determine if there is capacity
available at other existing facilities (or potentially new locations) to take on the activities from the baseball/ softball diamonds or the soccer field. For instance, if there is room elsewhere to locate the baseball and softball diamonds, the upper athletic field could be converted into two non-overlapping soccer fields, eliminating the constant conflict between sports and making it easier to maintain the fields. This is just one possibility, but the Borough and other stakeholders must reach a consensus on the best configuration of the fields before any large-scale reorganization can happen. It also strongly suggested the non-athletic events, specifically car shows, not occur on the sports fields due to the significant potential for damage and compaction to occur from such use and the potential costs to repair the fields.

**Site Fixtures**

**Lighting**

Appropriate architectural lighting fixtures should be selected and used throughout the site to ensure that all lighting is consistent and lighting levels are appropriate to the specific application areas. In addition, security lighting should be installed.

**Benches and Waste Receptacles**

The park currently has a proliferation of benches of varying designs and materials. In general, one bench type and design and a corresponding waste receptacle should be used throughout the entire park. It is important that all elements that are placed into the park feel like they are part of the same family and not just randomly picked from a catalog based on what might be least expensive at the time. The ability to repair and obtain replacement parts should also be considered as a part of the selection as well as the overall long-term cost to the park’s maintenance. Ideally a few repair elements should be kept as “attic stock” for quick and easy repair. If all benches, waste receptacles, etc. are the same, it means that they will be easier to repair if needed.

*A few words about the potential for unplanned “improvements” to Wind Gap Park.*

It is common for communities such as Wind Gap to receive requests by community members to perform improvements to the park. This is especially common from Eagle Scouts and other service organizations and represents the community’s strong interest and desire to invest time and effort into the park. These projects also represent a potential set of future problems. They can create future challenges based on what, how and where they are constructed. Only projects which directly reinforce the vision and specific recommendations of the master plan should be approved. This does not in any way mean that the Borough should turn away volunteers. Instead it should direct those interested in participating by providing specific direction of what projects are most needed and what is required. The Borough’s staff and the Parks Board should be well versed in the master plan and should be defining every improvement that occurs in the park. They should not rely on others to advocate their own personal vision, without the context of the extensive master planning effort.
Branding and Signing

The Borough should consider updating the branding and signing of the park, possibly as a part of an overall Borough gateway and branding effort, especially as a designated Appalachian Trail Community. The intent of the signing is not to promote the use of more signs throughout the park, but instead to provide proper signing information in a visually cohesive and un-obtrusive manner and to convey a sense of high-quality and also reinforce an overall Wind Gap brand.

A potential signing system could include the following sign types:

- Primary and secondary identification/arrival
- Parking arrival and orientation
- Park destination signing for special gardens, buildings, etc.
- Trail signing and trailblazing signing (to and from the regional trails)
- Botanical identification
- Informational kiosks
- Regulatory

Open Space Protection

The parcels of land that constitute Wind Gap are currently zoned R-12-Single Family Residential. The parcels the include parkland should be either rezoned as permanently protected parkland/open space or have a deed restriction applied to the properties to ensure that their uses is limited to public parkland or open space protection in perpetuity.
OPERATIONS, MANAGEMENT, AND FINANCING PLAN

Introduction

As part of the park master planning process, Wind Gap Borough identified the importance of addressing the operation, management, and support of the community park. About 75 percent of the cost of a park over its lifetime goes to operations and maintenance. By focusing on operations, maintenance, and financing while creating the park master plan, the Borough will be able to make informed decisions about improving the park, allocating resources, budgeting, staffing, policies, and partnerships.

In establishing this Operations, Management, and Financing Plan, the consulting team worked with the Plan Study Committee and conducted interviews and work sessions with key stakeholders in the community, park maintenance staff, and the Borough Manager; researched benchmarks and best practices; and reviewed Borough information on operations, management, and budget.

The Borough of Wind Gap's Parks and Recreation System

A Renowned Park

Located in Pennsylvania's slate belt in the Lehigh Valley, Wind Gap is known as the “Gateway to the Poconos”. As such, outdoor recreation is a way of life here. With easy access to the Appalachian Trail, state parks, state forests, game lands, and fish and boat access, the residents can enjoy a wide variety of recreational experiences.

While all of these opportunities add to the quality of life for Wind Gap's residents, the one that is arguably most used by Wind Gap residents is Wind Gap Park. A community survey for this master plan found that nearly nine out of ten residents use the park. It offers prime recreational opportunities for walking and fitness, socializing, playing and watching sports, enjoying concerts, and relaxing in the great outdoors close to home.

Wind Gap Park is the crown jewel of the community occupying a scenic and spacious 25 acres in the 1.4 square mile municipality. The park features ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, a playground, amphitheater, pavilions, kitchen, restrooms, and beautiful trees. The annual car show and Fireman's Carnival are held here attracting people from throughout the Lehigh Valley. The bandshell offers an exciting venue of concerts throughout the summer. The Wind Gap Athletic Association provides sports leagues for baseball, softball, soccer and basketball.

Recently Wind Gap Borough was named as a Trail Town for the Appalachian Trail. This is a major accomplishment, which will bring many visitors into the community and the park. Maintaining the park as a premier recreation facility is crucial in successful tourism. The visitors will spend money in town so having an attractive, clean, well-maintained park will support the Borough's economic development goals.

70th Anniversary Approaching

Established in 1947, Wind Gap Park is approaching its 70th anniversary. With the completion of the Master Plan, it is the ideal time to plan for a signature park improvement project and a celebration to note this important achievement.

Parks & Recreation Organization and Staffing

As a Borough, Wind Gap operates with a Mayor, the seven-member Town Council, and a professional Borough Manager. Town Council sets policy and the Borough Manager is responsible for implementing policy and managing daily operations.

The Park Board is an advisory board of residents established by ordinance in 1955 and amended in 1955 and 2014. The Town Council appoints the seven members for a five-year term. Two members may be members of the Pen Argyl Area School District Board of Directors. The main purpose of the Park Board is to make recommendations to the Town Council concerning the operation, conduct, and maintenance of Wind Gap Park.

The Streets and Park Department maintains the borough streets and Wind Gap Park. The Department has two full time workers and one part-time worker who works 80 hours per month.

Financing

In 2016, the Wind Gap Borough operating budget was $1,501,390. This does not include capital funding. The total Park Budget was $67,400 which included $36,000 for the Park Master Plan and $5,000 for Capital Equipment. Therefore, the operating budget for Wind Gap Park's materials, supplies, utilities,
and recreation programs was $26,400. Labor is not included in this budget. Interviews with borough staff found that about 1200 hours are dedicated to park maintenance by the Streets and Park Department. This is about $46,800 annually for a total estimated maintenance budget of $73,200.

**Benchmarks Give Perspective**

Wind Gap Borough is allocating about 4.8 percent of its budget on Wind Gap Park maintenance and the concert series. Statewide the average municipal investment in parks and recreation as a ratio of the overall municipal budget is three percent. Municipalities managing very successful parks and recreation systems allot a minimum of five percent of the municipal operating budget to parks and recreation. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources recommends that municipalities allocate five percent of their operating budget for parks and recreation. The Borough is spending about $26.91 on parks and recreation per capita. In Pennsylvania, the average municipal investment is about $36 per capita. Nationwide, it is $65 per capita.

In systems similar to Wind Gap Borough, the typical cost of maintenance per acre for active recreation areas ranges from $1,500 to $3,000 per acre. In national award winning systems the cost per acre is more in the $8,000 range. For natural areas, the annual cost of maintenance is around $500 per acre. The Borough’s $67,200 (the Park Budget less $6,000 for recreation programs) Park Budget supports the maintenance of Wind Gap Park. The active acres of the park total about 22 acres while 14 acres of the park are largely wetlands that are not maintained. The per acre maintenance cost for the 24 active acres is about $2,800 which places borough maintenance within the range spent by other municipalities in Pennsylvania.

This information merely presents some benchmarks in order to frame parks and recreation planning in Wind Gap Borough. The figures are not inherently good or bad, but instead offer perspective in considering how to move forward. Nor do the figures include the value of volunteers who contribute important knowledge, time, and support for public parks and recreation in Wind Gap. The 2015 value of a volunteer hour is about $23.56 to the Independent Sector. The value of volunteer time presented here is the average wage of non-management, non-agricultural workers.

**Revenue Sources**

The Park Budget is largely funded with tax support. The sponsorships for the Summer Sounds concert series and rental fees for the pavilions generate about $9,220. This is about 12 percent of the budget. In parks and recreation systems that provide programs and services that generate revenues through fees, charges, admission, rents, leases, fund-raising, sales and other means, about 35 percent of the budget is raised from non-tax sources. Without staff to provide programs and facility rental fees limited to pavilions, this is about the amount that the Borough can expect to generate from non-tax sources.

**Importance of Volunteerism in Wind Gap Park**

Wind Gap Park is fortunate to have the volunteer services of two dedicated baseball enthusiasts who maintain the three baseball fields. Based upon the maintenance value estimated for baseball fields of $10,000 per field, their services have an annual value of $30,000. This is a very generous service. However, the Borough must be cognizant of the fact that they are volunteers who undertake this service with their generous spirit. Should they decide to stop volunteering to perform the maintenance in the Wind Gap Park ballfields, this responsibility and expense would fall to municipal workers.

**Recreation Opportunities, Management, and Maintenance**

The improvement of Wind Gap Park will occur over many years. The Borough will phase in improvements as funding becomes available through municipal funds, grants, gifts and donations. As the park is revitalized, recreation opportunities will expand, maintenance responsibilities will evolve, and new partnership opportunities will emerge. The projections for recreation, maintenance, and costs are based upon current operations and park improvements as depicted in the Park Master Plan.

**Recreation Opportunities**

Wind Gap Park will offer expanded opportunities for fun, health, fitness, and building strong family and community bonds through socialization. About 78 percent of the use of public recreation facilities is by park visitors using facilities at their own discretion. About 22 percent of use is for organized scheduled programs. The Wind Gap Park’s main purpose is to provide facilities for the residents to use as they wish.

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OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT

for recreation. Other uses will include league sports with athletic games and practice by the Wind Gap Area Athletic Association, the Car Show, the Firemen's Carnival, Boy Scout Jamboree, and concerts offered by the Borough. The following describes the recreational activities that visitors can experience in the park.

Playground - The playground emerged as the most important facility to the respondents of the community survey. About half of the respondents indicated that they use the playground.

Walking - Walking was the second most preferred use of Wind Gap Park by the survey respondents. This is borne out by observation in which people walking in the park year round in all kinds of weather is evident. The park will offer a total of over a mile of trails in a combination of paved, aggregate, and natural surfaces.

Playing and Watching Sports - The ballfields offer the opportunity for citizens to play and watch league sports including baseball, softball, and soccer. Game courts for tennis and basketball are used for drop-in play. They do have the potential for organized programs such as leagues, instruction, and competitions.

Getting and Staying Fit - According to the U.S. Surgeon General, the lack of physical activity is a major factor in the obesity epidemic in America. In Wind Gap Park, nature will provide an added value to the known benefits of physical activity - and repeated exercise in nature is, in particular, connected to better physical and emotional well-being. From park bench pushups to open air runs, fitness experts say the workout possibilities of parks are worth the consideration of even the most diehard gym users.

Family Play and Building a Sense of Community - Trends show that Americans have a strong desire to spend more time with the people they love. Opportunities for families to recreate together abound in Wind Gap Park. In addition to the general recreation areas, the park features event space and pavilions that function as venues for performances and special events that bring out families.

Enjoyment of Natural Resources, Scenic Borough Character, and the Great Outdoors - Wind Gap Park preserves the Borough’s unique scenic charm and natural resources. About one-third of the park will continue to remain undeveloped because it is largely wetlands. Park visitors are able to “get away from it all” by enjoying nature and serenity close to home.

Special Events - Wind Gap Park is a regional hub of special events. Fairs, festivals, and concerts all happen in the park. Care must be taken to ensure the safety of the visitors and the security and protection of public property.

Recommended Changes

As park improvements are phased in, the Borough will be investing significant funds from various sources. This investment and the quality of the facilities resulting from the revitalization of the park must be protected.

To protect this investment, and the park, it is essential to permit park activities and programs that are appropriate for the type of use the park is designed to accommodate. One of the Borough’s showcase programs, the annual car show, is now held on turf areas of the park that are intended for sports, team play, and as a great lawn for informal recreation. They do not have the capacity to support the weight and number of cars required for the car show. This is especially true when the grass is wet. During the last two years, the turf was wet and soft from rain. Consequently, Borough crews had to go in and re-grade areas to remove ruts caused by cars on soggy surfaces.

Heavy weight on the flat field area also has safety concerns. The heavy weight causes compaction of the soil creating hard playing surfaces with the potential to injure players who fall on it.

This plan recommends that the annual car show remain near the park so that the park’s amenities such as restrooms, pavilions, kitchens, seating and play equipment are available to car show attendees. However, the cars should be located for exhibit on Lehigh Avenue. Closing Lehigh Avenue for the purpose of the car show would enable the show sponsors to transform the car show into a block-party-like event. Additional parking could be provided on Fourth and Fifth Avenues as well as in the park. This would enable the car show to continue using the park’s support facilities, while protecting the park and the Borough’s investment.

Management

The Wind Gap Borough Manager is responsible for managing parks and recreation largely through the Streets and Park Department. They will continue to schedule facilities, work with community sports leagues, oversee park maintenance, and coordinate with the Park Board regarding the park and recreational services. The Park Board serves in an advisory capacity in the operation of the park.
Maintenance

Maintenance management is the process by which Wind Gap Borough plans, directs, controls, and evaluates the care of parks and recreation facilities. Wind Gap Park should reflect an inviting, clean, and attractive appearance; an effective level of service; and the reality of fiscal and human resource limitations of the Borough.

Routine scheduled maintenance provides the foundation for effective park maintenance, security, safety, and risk management. A park that is well-designed and maintained attracts visitors. The more use a park gets, the less vandalism occurs and the safer it is. When park visitors see that a park is well cared for, the risk of vandalism and other undesirable anti-social behaviors tends to diminish. Parks that are not well tended get fewer visitors and more vandalism.

Vandalism

Vandalism, particularly around the bandshell, has been a problem. The installation of the cameras that the Borough has already purchased should help to deter vandalism. Vandals should be pursued, prosecuted, and required to pay for their damages. Such prosecution and restitution should be heavily and widely publicized as a message that the Borough will not tolerate such destructive, anti-social, and expensive damage of public parks.

Maintenance Challenges and Opportunities

The Streets and Park Department maintains the parks. Volunteers maintain the baseball fields. The maintenance of Wind Gap Park requires a variety of skill sets including sports turf management, natural resource management, custodial care, and customer service. The conservation of the natural resources, especially the trees, and scenic beauty of this park are crucial to community goals. Other tasks for this park include: citizen outreach and response, budgeting, procurement, personnel management, contract management, policy development, programming, and promotion. Most of these administrative tasks fall to the Borough Manager. The Park Board meets monthly providing feedback to the Borough Manager about the park conditions. They make recommendations on park improvements such as playground equipment. Volunteers support activities such as tree lighting. However, when the volunteers cease their service, their efforts fall to Borough staff. An example of this is the park holiday lights. A volunteer group of the Lions Club and the Fire Company has formed to sponsor Christmas programming that is not possible for local government due to religious reasons and the separation of church and state.

Sustainable Park Design and Maintenance

Protection of the environment and unique character of this park is a primary goal of the park master plan and its future maintenance. Too often park design and maintenance focus on active recreation to the detriment of the park’s natural features and scenic beauty. The focus of this plan is on establishing and managing the park in a way that facilitates responsible public use in harmony with the natural features. Traditional park maintenance in the Borough has been focused on mowing and trimming to attain a manicured appearance. While the public may come to expect a manicured appearance, it is important to educate them on why it is important for parks to set the bar in practices that promote the healthy natural elements of public lands such as water, wildlife, and vegetation. Adopting maintenance practices that conserve natural resources require planning, training, expertise, and public education.

Volunteers

Volunteers are often considered the means to managing parks. However, volunteers are not free. Volunteers require recruiting, training, supervision, recognition, and support. Someone must be in charge of volunteers and volunteer management. Borough staff is lean and does not have the capacity for extensive volunteer management. Any efforts in volunteerism should be limited to major groups that can support the volunteer work and provide a solid chance of long-term sustainability. Care in selecting volunteer program is crucial to avoid Borough staff inheriting maintenance responsibilities beyond their capacity should volunteer efforts end.

Continued Need for Partnerships

Partnerships are crucial to sustain over time. The partnership with the Wind Gap Area Athletic Association is vital for community sports. the Borough also works in conjunction with Pen Argyl Borough and Weona Park in complementary park sues. For example, Weona Park and Wind Gap Community park offer their concerts series in tandem so that area residents have expanded opportunities to enjoy concerts in both locations. Potential partnerships should be evaluated for the benefits, support required, and likelihood of sustainability for the life cycle of the project or program.
All maintenance will be accomplished in a manner displaying respect and concern for the environment as well as public and private property. Maintenance practices that are rooted in a strong conservation ethic are to be instituted.

1. Maintenance tasks will be accomplished in a way that does not endanger the health or safety of the employees nor the public.

2. All maintenance tasks will be performed as quickly and economically as possible without any loss in efficiency.

3. All equipment and materials will be operated and maintained in such a way as to insure safe, effective use and long life.

4. Work will be scheduled in such a manner as to make the most use of the resources of other community organizations who are involved or who may become involved.

5. Preventive maintenance will be used in a continuing effort to avoid major problems and correct minor ones.

6. All maintenance work will be performed with a sense of pride.

**Funding Challenges**

The major challenge for this park is capital and operating funding. The Borough has already invested in Wind Gap Park for nearly 70 years. Obtaining funding to improve the facilities is relatively easier than securing the funds to maintain the park over its lifetime. Trends statewide show reluctance in local government to hire staff that require salary and benefits.

Typically, revenues in parks and recreation are derived from special use facilities such as campgrounds, pools, skating rinks, sports facilities as well as from programs and activities. The small Borough staff also precludes the generation of significant revenues from programs and services as that would require additional staffing. Borough staff already volunteers to undertake activities such as the Egg Hunt which is well beyond their call of duty.

**Establish Maintenance Goals**

The goal of park maintenance in Wind Gap Borough is to provide clean, safe, and attractive facilities and natural resources as well as the healthful and enjoyable use by the people who live, work, and visit here through implementation of an efficient and effective management program.

Currently, park maintenance is carried out through daily scheduling that has been made routine. This includes mowing the park on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and daily restroom cleaning and playground equipment inspection. Mowing includes trimming and weed whacking. There is no formal written maintenance plan, annual work calendar or workload cost tracking in place. Developing an annual work calendar and a formal maintenance plan should be undertaken. This is especially important because park maintenance is provided by a department with dual functions: streets and park. The tension between undertaking street work and park work will always be there and is especially evident in the sporting when parks are made ready for the peak season and road work is necessary following the harsh winter weather.

The following guidelines can formalize the Borough’s approach to park maintenance operations. The guidelines would apply to municipal employees, contractors and volunteers who assume responsibility for park maintenance tasks.

**Importance of Assigning Maintenance Standards**

Assigning maintenance standards will enable Wind Gap Borough to maintain Wind Gap Park with respect to needs and resources. Targeting the appropriate level of care will enable the Borough to direct resources to balance public use with cultural and natural resource conservation. The maintenance standards provide a common frame of reference for the community including elected and appointed officials, Borough employees, maintenance staff, administration, contractors, partners, sponsors, park visitors, and the citizens. The common agreement will facilitate discussions and communications about the parks. This will enable elected and appointed officials and Borough management to establish and implement policies on use, fees and charges, volunteer requirements, staffing levels, potential contractual service requirements, and other issues that may emerge. It will also enable the Borough to communicate with the public about the capacity of the municipality to undertake actions in response to citizen demands on the park(s), park maintenance...
tasks, natural resource protection actions, and requests for additional facilities and/or services.

**National Recreation & Park Association Standards: An Approach**

The National Recreation and Park Association advocates a system of maintenance modes for parks. Modes refer to the “way of maintenance” ranging from most intensive to least intensive. The modes range as follows:

- **Mode I** - State of the Art Maintenance
- **Mode II** - High Level Maintenance
- **Mode III** - Moderate Level Maintenance due to moderate levels of development
- **Mode IV** - Moderately Low Level Maintenance
- **Mode V** - High Visitation Natural Areas
- **Mode VI** - Minimum Level Maintenance

To protect Wind Gap Borough’s investment in Wind Gap Park, to protect the natural beauty and resources of the site, facilitate safe and enjoyable use by park visitors, provide efficient and effective public service, and ensure park security, the following standards are proposed:

**Inspections** - **Mode I** - Park inspection of Wind Gap Park’s core visitation areas such as the playground should be done daily during peak season. Mode V should be done every other week in the natural areas. All formal playgrounds should follow CPSC (Consumer Product Safety Commission) guidelines. Recommendations for playground inspections are daily or weekly during non-peak seasons.

**Turf Care** - Turf care for the Park would include general park areas.

- **Mode I** turf care would include the majority of the park with its 22 acre acres used for recreation. They are highly visible on a daily basis. The intent would be, however, that any landscape design minimize mowing and turf management. Small areas with the park are being planned as rain gardens but due to their size will not reduce mowing significantly. Already 14 acres of the park is maintained in a natural state so the mowing is already limited to active recreation areas which have high public use and visibility.

**Disease and Insect Control** - Modes would vary by facilities.

- **Natural Areas - Mode III** - Disease and insect control is done only to insure public safety or when a serious problem discourages public use. It is crucial for Wind Gap Borough to develop a natural resources management plan for the Park.

**Forestry** - A forestry management program should be developed to provide short, medium, and long-range management for the care of the trees, an important asset of Wind Gap Borough. Typically, municipalities obtain the services of county conservation district or a Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry Service Forster and a private consultant. Wind Gap Park has a significant number of trees that are safety hazards and must come down. This is especially important in high use areas such as by the playground. The Emerald Ash Borer has hit the area causing the loss of Ash trees. At present, there is no treatment to prevent or ameliorate the damage caused by the borer so the trees must come down. Fortunately, the Streets and Park Department is able to remove trees and in fact has a 34’ bucket truck that can be used for this purpose. Trees that are deemed too large to be safely removed by Borough crews should be taken down by arborists on contract from outside sources.

**Floral Planting** - **Mode V** - Floral planting should only be introduced where there is a community group to maintain them in accordance with a written agreement.

**Tree and Shrub Care** - **Mode IV** requires no pruning and care only to remove safety hazards.

**Litter Control** - **Mode I** which is once per day during peak season, weekly during non-peak, and monthly in cold weather months. Litter is always picked up after a special event. For special use facilities such as a picnic pavilion, the permittee should be responsible for litter pick-up while Wind Gap Borough would remove it from the park.

**Surfaces and Paths** - **Mode II** so that surfaces are cleaned and repaired when appearance has notably been affected.

**Repairs** - **Mode II** - when safety, appearance or function is in question, repairs are made.

**Restrooms** - **Mode I** - Should be done at least once per day. Special events or times of high use may warrant more than one service per day.
Achieving Borough Goals Through Parks and Recreation

Fortunately, the level of public support and interest in Wind Gap Park is high. Research into successful park and recreation systems elsewhere conducted by the Trust for Public Land and the National Recreation & Park Association offers guidance for how Wind Gap Borough can organize its operations to undertake the revitalization of the park over the next ten years and beyond. The factors common in successful award winning parks and recreation systems throughout the United States include the following:

1. Parks must rank high on the political agenda to get funded. ²
2. The public is involved in the planning, design, and operation of the park.
3. The park design conveys a strong vision and purpose for the park.
4. The parks are programmed with many and varied activities for visitors of all ages.
5. The parks and each of their facilities are safe and clean. Clean, attractive appearance is crucial to a park’s success and positive perception by the public and the business community.
6. A mix of public and private funding sources support park improvements and operation.
7. Community parks are an organizing element for initiatives such as economic development, neighborhood improvement, increasing livability of the municipality, tourism and so on.
8. Parks & Recreation departments, advisory boards, directors and staff must play a leadership role in insuring that parks are part of overall community and economic planning. ³

These factors can serve as the model for Wind Gap Borough’s parks and recreation system. The key recommendations detailed below were derived from the involvement of the Master Plan Study Committee, input from Borough management, key person interviews, and the experience of planning team.

1. Formalize the Core Values and Mission for Wind Gap Park

Elected and appointed officials need to have a clear vision for the Park in order to get behind the revitalization of the park. In defining the vision and mission for Wind Gap Park, the community public participation process identified important values as the foundation for planning and operating the park. These included:

Core Values

- Safe, clean and ready to use;
- Providing for the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens is the core duty of the Borough which can be made possible in part through the Park providing opportunities for active healthy living; for families to form strong bonds vis shared recreational experiences; by reducing the isolation of the elderly through recreation and community gathering areas; and facilitating building a sense of community by people coming together and sharing positive experiences;
- Fiscal responsibility;
- Partnerships through collaboration with citizens and community based organizations; and
- Contributions to the outstanding quality of life of Wind Gap Borough through parks and recreation.

2. Continue to Involve the Public in Park Planning, Design, Programming, and Operation.

Public support is vital to park success.

- Continue to involve the public in park planning as the master plan is phased in over time.
- Consider the establishment of a Wind Gap Park Friends group to support the park and its future development, programming, and operation. Establishing such a group as a private non-profit organization under the IRS code of 501-C-3 will enable the group to fund-raise and for contributions to be tax deductible. Consider transitioning the current Park Board into such a group. Then instead of a Park Board, organize committees for dedicated purposes that manage the specified project until it is completed and then cease to exist. The implementation of the master plan should dictate the nature of the committees set up to achieve identified goals and purposes.
- Join the Pennsylvania Parks & Recreation Society to take advantage of the current information available about parks, recreation, funding, and technical support. One of their services is a “no match” grant program of $2500 called RecTAP. The RecTAP grant can be used to solve a problem, tackle an issue

5. Establish a Standardized Maintenance and Management Program.

Over the years that Wind Gap Borough has been maintaining Wind Gap Park, the maintenance requirements have become somewhat normalized. Developing additional maintenance resource requirement standards would help to strengthen the capability of the Borough in planning for and allocating the resources necessary to perform maintenance functions. A sample annual park maintenance calendar is shown in Figure 1 (page 5.10). This information will also help in planning the phasing in of the master plan and other park developments or improvements. Information that should be quantified includes:

- Workload
- Labor requirements and contracted services if any work is contracted out. Routine tasks such as mowing or janitorial work such as restroom cleaning are the types of tasks that are easily contracted out.
- Material and Supply requirements
- Equipment – We recommend the development of a five to seven-year equipment replacement program. In order to do this, request an assessment by the Borough’s equipment supplier of the existing equipment in conjunction with the tasks and frequency with which they are undertaken in Wind Gap Park. Develop a replacement program based upon the hours of use the equipment gets, its optimum life for resale value, and replacement. This will help to avoid expensive repair costs and downtime.
- Utilities and Energy – The upgrading of the park’s electrical system will be the basis for improving the lighting system for the park. The lighting system will include facility and security lighting. The new lighting will be energy efficient resulting in cost savings. The equipment supplier would be able to provide cost projections for utilities.

Since the operation of park and recreation facility maintenance is conducted as part of other maintenance for the streets in a way that works well for the Borough now based upon the level of parks and recreation development, it is not currently quantified. The following section outlines and approach for formalizing the park maintenance management system.
OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT

needed to ensure sustainable operating practices but the point is to spend time on policies that are needed to be in place regarding park operations and use. Other policy needs will emerge over time. Policies should make operations easier, smoother, facilitate the generation of public support, and build understanding by various community organizations, boards, and committees. Examples of policies that should be considered in the immediate time frame based upon the current park operations scenario include the following:

- **Revenue Policy** – Develop a formal revenue policy for parks and recreation that specifies the Borough’s philosophy on alternative revenue sources and policies on fees and charges, grants, gifts, donations etc.
- **Gifts and Donations Policy** – It is the intent of Wind Gap Borough to encourage and facilitate public and private gifts, bequests, and such contributions that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit the Borough via Wind Gap Park. The true costs of installation, maintenance, and cyclic replacement for park donations should be considered as part of the donation price. Provisions regarding the repair and replacement of such equipment should be defined.

Policies

As Wind Gap Park is revitalized, official effective policies need to be in place regarding park operations and use. Other policy needs will emerge over time. The point is to spend time on policies that are needed to ensure sustainable operating practices but not to spend time on generating prolific rules and regulations. Policies should make operations easier, smoother, facilitate the generation of public support, and build understanding by various community organizations, boards, and committees. Examples of policies that should be considered in the immediate time frame based upon the current park operations scenario include the following:

- **Routine park tasks such as mowing, snow-removal, leaf pick-up, litter pick-up, vandalism repair**
- **Set up and take down for special events**
- **Special use facilities such as ballfields that can be configured as cost centers**
- **Natural resource management such as trees and the wetlands area**

---

**Figure 1, Wind Gap Park Annual Park Maintenance Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
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<td>Personnel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget &amp; Finance</td>
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<td>Management</td>
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<td>Inspections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turf Management</td>
<td>Schedule any contract work</td>
<td>Aerate fields.</td>
<td>Overseed.</td>
<td>Apply pre-emergent and fertilizer.</td>
<td>Apply post-emergent and fertilizer.</td>
<td>Aerate fields.</td>
<td>Pre-emergent and fertilizer.</td>
<td>Mow and trim every five days</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mowing &amp; Trimming</td>
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<td>Rain Gardens</td>
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<td>Meadows</td>
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<td>Courts and paved surfaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pavilions &amp; Bandshell</td>
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</tbody>
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**Figure 1**

**Workload Cost-Tracking**

The first step in standardizing work in the development of planned maintenance management system is to quantify the workload and costs of associated materials, supplies and equipment, sometimes known as workload/cost tracking. This can include:

- Routine park tasks such as mowing, snow-removal, leaf pick-up, litter pick-up, vandalism repair
- Set up and take down for special events
- Special use facilities such as ballfields that can be configured as cost centers
- Natural resource management such as trees and the wetlands area

- **Revenue Policy** – Develop a formal revenue policy for parks and recreation that specifies the Borough’s philosophy on alternative revenue sources and policies on fees and charges, grants, gifts, donations etc.
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Sponsorships - Wind Gap Borough seeks sponsorships for events and services. Because of the small size of the Borough, the donor pool is relatively small and the object of many organizations seeking private support. The purpose of such sponsorships is to increase the Borough’s ability to deliver services to the community and/or provide enhanced levels of service beyond the core levels funded from the municipal general fund. In Wind Gap Borough in appreciation of such support, the Borough should set forth a formal policy to provide sponsors with suitable acknowledgement of their contributions. However, such recognition for park and recreation facility improvements should adhere to the aesthetic values and purpose of Wind Gap Park and its master plan. In addition, such recognition must not detract from the visitor’s experience or expectation, nor would it impair the visual qualities of the parks or be perceived as creating a proprietary interest. The following link connects to Portland, Oregon’s policy on sponsorships that can be a model for Wind Gap Borough: http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=155566

Naming Rights - Naming Rights are a financial transaction and form of advertising in which a corporation, business, individual or other entity purchases the right to name a facility or event, typically for a defined period of time. For large properties like the new amphitheater, the term ranges from three to 20 years. The distinctive characteristic for this type of naming rights is that the buyer gets a marketing property to promote products and services, promote customer retention, or increase market share. The following link connects with the San Angelo, TX naming rights policy: http://www.sanangelotexas.us/vertical/sites/%255EBBD27ED61-E710-4F56-8954-CC319F012B3D%255B257D/uploads/%255EB44D52FEE-D53C-44D4-ABFA-5EBF6E7DE67B%255B257D.PDF.

Advertising - The intent of an advertising policy is to generate revenues from paid advertising and sponsorships to offset some of the costs associated with producing program brochures and other informative literature, maintaining and improving athletic and other recreation facilities, and procuring capital equipment related to recreational facilities which would not otherwise be funded in the department budget. The policy must be rooted in the aesthetics and mission of the parks as well as the visitor experience. Advertising is sold by WGAAA and displayed as banners on the outfield fences. The following link provides a model of an advertising policy from Los Alamos for adaption in Wind Gap Borough. http://recreationguy.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Recreation-Advertising-Policy.pdf

Risk Management

Having safe facilities for visitors as well as protecting the public investment is essential to Wind Gap Borough. Public perception that the parks are safe is important to their success. As part of establishing safe parks that limit the Borough’s exposure to liability, effective risk management can help to protect both park visitors and the municipality. Coordination with Wind Gap Borough’s insurance carrier is helpful in reducing risk. Supportive insurance carriers offer advice, on-site assessment, and sometimes grant funding to sustain safe facilities through proper maintenance management. Their advice would be helpful in identifying and adopting practices to insure visitor and park safety.

Risk Management is a standard operating practice of parks and recreation agencies. Risk includes the possibility that harm could result from a hazard that would cause personal injury, death, property damage, economic loss, or damage to the environment. To manage risk in Wind Gap Park, three steps are needed:

1. Risk Identification and Assessment – It is necessary to identify all of the sources of potential hazards in the parks. The Borough must have knowledge at all times of any risk related to the park. This includes park conditions as well as the employees or volunteers that might make the Borough subject to liability as the result of how they complete their duties, and any other liability.

2. Risk Assessment – The Borough should inspect and evaluate the parks and each facility as part of its ongoing park and recreation system operating practices. This would also include tracking of the incidents of injury reported in the parks. Consider having the two employees in the Streets and Park Department obtain their certification as playground inspectors, Certified Playground Safety Inspectors. Until they obtain their certification, consider securing the services of a CPSI to conduct an annual safety inspection of the Wind Gap Playground.

3. Risk Management Plan - The Risk Management Plan is important for both safe operations as well as establishing credibility in case of litigation. The plan should include the following documents all of which should be reviewed by The Borough solicitor:
   - Statement that The Borough is committed to safety for citizens, municipal employees, and Borough facilities
   - Accident forms
   - Participation forms and waivers
   - Rental agreements and leases
   - Program dates and documents
Outside Contractors - The Borough could consider contracting out two tasks: mowing and trimming, and tree care. The other routine task to consider contracting out is the custodial care of the restrooms. This could be a cost saving measure but it would still be important to have access to Borough staff for other park maintenance needs.

Utilities and Energy

The utility and energy budget needs to be based upon the park improvements, not present conditions. This plan recommends developing a cost projection for energy for the parks. The addition of any lighting and lighted outdoor facilities should include the cost of energy or energy alternatives as a factor.

Equipment

A capital replacement program for park equipment such as trucks and sports field maintenance equipment should be undertaken.

Training

Since most of the parks and recreation expenditures are devoted to personnel, ensuring that they have state-of-the-art information and training in parks and recreation would be an important investment. A suggested formula for staff development is one to two percent of the parks and recreation budget annually. Training can include a mix of conferences and seminars as well as planned in-house meetings in which staff would request an outside guest to address of topic of interest to The Borough related to parks and recreation. For Wind Gap Borough, the training budget should be about $1,500 based upon budget projections.

Cyclic Maintenance

In addition to daily, monthly, seasonal, and annual repairs, the park requires cyclic maintenance repairs. Having support and the justification to adequately plan for the regular capital repair and equipment replacements in park is a challenge. Cyclic maintenance deals with the normal replacement of a capital item such as a roof. Cyclic repairs are a function of weather, use, and other circumstances such as natural events. The cyclic repairs are shown in the following table. Because the time frame is years away, projecting actual costs is not possible. The American Public Works Association recommends budgeting two to four percent of the development costs annually to establish as a capital reserve account for cyclic repairs. Advances in technology will also impact the future costs based upon changes in design and materials.

Emergency Response

Consultation with emergency responders about the parks’ operations and design features would be important. The proposed park design includes access for emergency response vehicles. Many emergency response teams are using GIS to establish methods for identifying locations where people are in need of assistance.

6. Funding: A Mix of Public and Alternative Resources

The Maintenance Budget

The park budget guides decision-making, staffing, setting of fees and charges, policy formulation, resource allocation, and securing non-traditional methods of supporting park operations such as partnerships. Most of the park budget goes to mowing, trimming, litter pick up and trash removal, and restroom cleaning. There is no natural resource management, sports turf management, urban forestry, or other specialized areas of park care. The Borough Council is very supportive of the park by investing nearly five percent of its budget for the Park. The high percentage of parks to Borough spending vs. a low per capita investment underscores how lean and austere the Borough’s overall budget is.

Management and Staffing

Park Maintenance Staff - Currently, the Streets and Park Department is mainly geared toward streets, providing basic park maintenance of mainly mowing. In successful park systems elsewhere, the municipalities have a dedicated park maintenance worker for every 14 – 18 acres of parkland. Should the borough continue in its current staffing for park maintenance, these workers should participate in an employee development program to expand their knowledge, expertise, and experience in parks such as turf management, natural resource management, and so on.
Cyclic repair and replacement considerations include the following:

- Infrastructure: Roads, parking lots, trails, utility lines for water, sewer and electric. 10 – 30 years.
- Play Equipment: 10-15 years.
- Buildings and Structures: Roofs, furnishings, picnic tables and benches, shelters, bridges, and fencing. 10-30 years.
- Equipment: trucks, cars, tractors, trailers, and other large units based upon number of hours of operation, miles used, and repair costs.

**Security**

Security is the one area in which the Borough appears to be most vulnerable in park operations. Borough staff report ongoing vandalism particularly around the amphitheater. The Borough has purchased cameras and their installation is pending the completion of the master plan in order to determine their best placement. However, serious security planning is required when the new amphitheater is installed and other park improvements are made. The development of a security plan should be undertaken in conjunction with the Police Department. The recommendations of the security plan may result in the need to allocate funds for an onsite presence in the park or patrolling more frequently.
**Budget Projection**

**Table 1** presents the projected operating budget of $93,010 for the maintenance of Wind Gap Park. This budget comes out to about $1,374 per acre cost overall. This is below the typical range of about $1,500 to $3,000 per acre in Boroughs in the area. Workload and budget analysis offers further refinement in the budget for this park, which would bring it in line with costs in similar park systems. The cost of maintaining the park hub area in which active facilities are concentrated translates into about $3,000 per acre while the cost of the natural areas would be about $477 per acre. With a population of 2,720, this equates to about $34.19 per capita. The statewide average is about $36. In these economic times, the topic of financing is challenging. At the same time public recreation close to home is very important for citizens especially for families looking for ways to spend time together that do not cost too much money. Public parks and recreation offer many opportunities for that. If high quality facilities are available, that is a tremendous public service and in line with the opinion of Wind Gap Borough residents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labor - Increase to the equivalent of one full time employee even if several employees provide the full-time equivalent.</td>
<td>$79,560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment - value of equipment used for tasks (currently not tracked)</td>
<td>$32,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs, Materials and Supplies at $6/labor hour</td>
<td>$12,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities - water, gas, electric</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation programs, events, advertising</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$144,020.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP Reserve Budget - 2% of development costs annually in fund dedicated to cyclic repairs and park improvements with phasing.</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2** presents the revenues for Wind Gap Park. Potential revenues for parks and recreation could be derived from pavilion rentals, programs, and friend’s organization and user fees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pavilions - Rental</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Use Fees</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorships</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Friends - 100 at $25</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL Projections</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,500.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT

Capital Funding

Wind Gap Borough has $46,000 available in the Northampton County Open Space Program which must be spent by the end of 2017. This should be used as a match for a DCNR and/or DCED grant.

Recommendations for Moving Forward

To keep pace with the revitalization of the Park and community expectations as well as to allocate resources effectively, enhancing capacity and expertise in the functional areas of park management is crucial. Consider the following:

A. Safety first. The priority for all improvements and maintenance tasks should be safety. This includes the protection of people and the security of the property.

B. Use the eight-point model of successful parks and recreation systems to pattern Wind Gap Borough’s operation of Wind Gap Park. Having this vision of successful parks and recreation systems in mind will help in planning, decision-making and in the allocation of time and resources.

C. Develop an implementation plan for the Park Master Plan. Include in this plan an action plan for year one with specific steps, roles, and responsibilities defined and funding sources determined including plans for grant applications. This should include the selection of one priority project.

D. Join the Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society. Consider seeking $2500 non-match RecTAP grants to help The Borough work on special issues or opportunities related to Wind Gap Park.

E. Formalize the park maintenance management system with a formal written maintenance plan. Develop a workload/cost tracking system for the Borough parks and recreation facilities. By generating information to understand the real cost of labor, equipment, supplies and utilities, The Borough will be able to allocate resources most effectively. The Borough would also be able to establish policies on fees and charges based on actual cost recovery. It is impossible to manage what you do not count and track. This information is vital for making decisions such as contracting out tasks, charging fees, setting policy, deciding service levels and so on.

F. Work on developing policies on revenues, gifts and donations, and naming of facilities.

G. Create an employee development program related to parks, recreation, and natural resource management. Establish a five-year program that will enhance the expertise of staff working on parks. This could include seminars, workshops, training programs, memberships, and visitation to other municipalities to see their parks and recreation operations. Devote a percentage of the annual operating budget for training. One good idea obtained at a training program often more than pays for the cost of the training.

H. Offer programs in Wind Gap Park to attract park visitors who will hopefully turn into park supporters and stewards. Since there is no recreation staff, the strategy would be to provide the park facilities as the venue for other recreation providers.

I. Strive to track the testimonials and benefits of Wind Gap Park to the community. This kind of information helps elected officials to make informed decisions based upon real public sentiment of actual users. This is much different information that what is generally captured at public meetings.
CHAPTER 6

PROBABLE COSTS AND PHASING
WIND GAP MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Infrastructure and Circulation: Package A, Package B, Package D, Package F

Field and Facilities Upgrades: Package C, Package E, Package G, Package K

Recreation Area Upgrades: Package H, Package I, Package J

For any master plan, the possibility of implementing the entire vision at once is typically an impossibility for a municipality, so it is important to break up the plan into smaller packages which can more easily be funded and implemented over time. For the most part, the implementation packages presented in this report do not need to follow any exact order (i.e. - it is not necessary to implement the packages alphabetically in order from A to K), though a few packages will require some level of sequencing. The plan does identify high priority improvements with respect to the park's infrastructure that should be enacted in the near term. Beyond these key projects, much of the ordering will be dependent upon the Borough's priorities and the availability of funding in the future. By breaking-up the overall master plan into individual project packages, the Borough will be able to more effectively construct the park's proposed improvements, especially based on the Borough's ability to secure local matching funding and grant funding based on the funding strategies outlined within this report. The Borough can regularly evaluate the master plan as projects are completed and prioritize the upcoming project packages and start implementing the improvements as it sees fit.

The Priority Project – Safety and Maintenance Improvements

The initial implementation package recommended for Wind Gap Park will include some immediate improvements but also an ongoing effort to make upgrades to the park that do not involve large construction operations. The Borough has identified the electrical issues on site as one of the largest concerns at present within the park, so the Borough should implement those upgrades as soon as possible, particularly as it pertains to the main concession/kitchen building, where the current electrical panel poses a significant safety risk and is likely not in compliance with applicable codes.

Beyond these immediate upgrades, this package of improvements includes maintenance procedures the Borough should begin following to improve the park. Among those changes is the limiting of non-sports uses (such as car shows) on the athletic fields, instead opting for a “block party”-type arrangement that utilizes Lehigh Avenue as an alternative location for events. Additional incremental items would include removal and infill of canopy trees to establish a healthy tree canopy, systematic replacement of chain link fencing with more attractive vinyl-coated options, seating upgrades for sport spectators, and the introduction of safety and architectural lighting.

Major points in the Priority Package will be:
- Electrical safety upgrades to park building(s)
- Tree canopy improvements: removal and infill planting
- Upgrades to fencing and other small elements
- Improved field maintenance for sports facilities and modify event layout
- Installation of upgraded lighting
- Upgrades to outdated bleacher seating at ballfields

Implementation Package A – Park Infrastructure Improvements

Most of the implementation packages do not have a recommended order, but Implementation Package A is intended to be the starting point and could be combined with components of the Priority Project Package, if possible. The most significant portion of Implementation Package A is the paving of the multi-use path along the eastern boundary of the site. This path is important, because upgrading it into a walkable multi-use path will create a full loop around the entire park that can be utilized by pedestrians. As walking is cited as one of the preferred uses of the park, establishing this walking loop would be a significant improvement for the park as a whole.

Other improvements in this package pertain to park drainage and utilities. The area around the lower concession/restroom building would be reconfigured as a small paved plaza with drainage upgrades to alleviate flooding concerns in the area. Any other drainage conveyance lines needed for the various stormwater elements (the athletic field swales and potentially the events green rain garden) in the plan would also be placed beneath the multi-use path at this stage so there is no need to tear up the path in future phases. Underground electrical runs for safety...
Implementation Package C – Sports Field Drainage Upgrades

This package would focus primarily on making upgrades to the stormwater management of the athletic facilities. This would include two main components. First of these would be grading improvements to the upper fields to limit areas of standing water and allow runoff to shed to the edges of the field. This runoff would then be collected and diverted to newly constructed rain garden-type stormwater swales situated on the slopes between the fields. These swales would serve to infiltrate the stormwater and, in larger events, convey it to an outfall point in the vicinity of the wetlands. Depending on whether the Borough decides to reconfigure these fields to eliminate the shared-use baseball/softball and soccer field sports setup, engineering design for this package could be incorporated into that effort.

Implementation Package C components:

▪ Re-grade the upper shared-use field to shed water toward edges
▪ Construct rain garden swales to collect field and court runoff at tops of slopes

Implementation Package D – Park Gateway Improvements

Implementation Package D contains much of the major circulation improvements proposed to the upper events green area of the park. This package will establish the new park gateway area and create a much more defined spine that the park’s amenities would be connected to. The current entry walks, including the large planting island at the 4th Street/Lehigh Avenue entry would be removed as well as a number of the trees adjacent to those paths. In their place would be much better defined entry and spine for the park as well as a new set of canopy trees lining the entries which will better frame the park and welcome visitors. These adjustments to the park’s primary entries and circulation would help create a much better sense of place versus the somewhat haphazard existing circulation pattern. This package would likely be sequenced or potentially combined with the parking lot improvements in Package F as the new layouts are somewhat dependent on one another.

Implementation Package A components:

▪ Construction of new asphalt multi-use path along the eastern boundary of park
▪ Construction of new hardscape plaza for lower concession building with drainage improvements
▪ Install necessary drainage conveyance infrastructure for proposed rain garden swales
▪ Reconfigure utility runs and under-grounding of electrical service where possible
▪ Relocation of dugout to remove conflict with path

Implementation Package B – Lehigh Avenue Circulation Upgrades

Implementation Package B is focused largely on upgrading the circulation for the park by expanding the sidewalk along Lehigh Avenue. The current undersized sidewalk would be replaced by the new 10’ wide sidewalk that creates a robust pedestrian connection along this side of the park. Combined with the new multi-use trail on the opposite edge of the park, this will create an attractive walking route around the perimeter of the park. Beyond that main upgrade, circulation connections would also be made through at the base each of the two major slopes between the athletic facilities, fostering better connectivity for the park and creating smaller potential walking loops for pedestrians. Outside of the circulation improvements, this package would also seek to improve the small parking and concession area near the basketball courts by establishing some additional space and seating through the use of small retaining structures.

Implementation Package B components:

▪ Expansion of sidewalk along Lehigh Avenue
▪ Reconfigure and improve accessible parking and concession area by basketball courts
▪ Make pedestrian connections from Lehigh to multi-use trail
Implementation Package D components:

- Removal of existing entry planter island
- Construction of new 4th Street Gateway and plaza to concession building
- Construction of new entry walkway from 3rd Street to concession building
- Installation of plantings to frame new park gateway entry approaches

Implementation Package E – Concession Building Upgrades

Implementation Package E focuses on making upgrades to the park’s main concession/kitchen building that are not directly related to the electrical safety upgrades. These efforts would include improvements to the kitchen as well as potential architectural upgrades to the exterior of the building. The focus would be on making the building more functional as the main concession building in the park which would include the addition of an open air covered area with seating for park patrons to have shade and a pleasant place to eat. With these upgrades, it would also be recommended to remove the additional concession building located nearby and fold its function into the main concessions building.

Implementation Package E components:

- Concession building consolidation and upgrades
- Addition of new open air covered addition to main concession building

Implementation Package F – Upper Parking Lot Reconfiguration

Implementation Package F includes the improvements proposed to the upper parking lot that would provide for additional parking and a more efficient layout. Ideally, this package would follow or be performed in conjunction with the adjacent circulation upgrades, since the parking lot’s footprint would shift and push into some of the existing circulation. This phase will also require the removal of some of the adjacent evergreen trees. This buffer will be replaced by the new canopy trees proposed in Implementation Package D. In addition to the reconfiguration of the lot, Package F would include the establishment of a planting buffer and potential rain garden between the lot and the adjacent private property owner on the corner of 3rd Street and Lehigh Avenue.

Implementation Package F components:

- Parking lot reconfiguration for improved layout and optimized parking capacity
- Tree removal and replacement with new plantings as dictated by new parking area layout
- Installation of new planting buffer/rain garden feature in area between parking lot and adjacent private property

Implementation Package G – Restroom Building Upgrades

Implementation Package G nominally includes the consolidation of the current upper restroom buildings into a single, upgraded facility. The exact extent of these improvements will be somewhat dependent upon how they are funded. The public identified the restrooms as a park element in dire need of significant improvements, but the newer of the two restroom buildings was constructed using DCNR funds approximately 15 years ago meaning that as a condition of its funding, it must remain through the extent of its functional life-span. Keeping this facility will need to be considered in any plans for an upgraded/consolidated facility. Whether the new restroom building is constructed as a new facility or an expansion off with an architectural facade “wrapping” of the existing newer restroom building, it is desirable to consolidate these facilities to create space for the proposed playground expansion and to replace the older restrooms that the public identified as an issue.

Implementation Package G components:

- Removal of older restroom building and consolidation of facilities and creation of new expanded restroom/storage facility around (or in place of) current newer restroom building
- Supporting circulation improvements for the new building
Implementation Package H – Playground Expansion

Implementation Package H focuses on proposed improvements and expansion for the play area and is one of the three major upgrades proposed for the park’s passive recreation facilities. This package includes the expansion of the play area facility into a portion of the park that is currently under-utilized area where some buildings are proposed to be removed. This new play area would include creative and natural play elements to offer a contrast to the current stock equipment and have greater play appeal to an older age group 5-12 year old children. This package would also include the replacement of any equipment deemed out-of-date or unsafe within the current facility. A separate element which could be included in this package or in another effort is the water feature/jet fountain plaza proposed near the main concession building. This architectural/recreational water element could be included with this playground upgrade or potentially with the adjacent circulation improvements.

Implementation Package H components:

- Play area expansion into space created by consolidation of restroom and concessions facilities
- Upgrade any current play equipment determined to need replacement
- Installation of new water feature/jet fountain plaza near concession building

Implementation Package I – Revitalized Events Green

Implementation Package I, which includes the reconfiguration of the park’s main events green and supporting infrastructure, is likely the largest single package of improvements proposed for within the master plan. The project includes a complete overhaul of this main green space and events area that addresses the shortcomings of the area including the current band shell/amphitheater, poor drainage, inefficient layout of park elements, lack of supporting circulation, and the absence of defined edges for the space and the park as a whole. In order to redevelop this area with the included improvements, the current park elements in the green must be removed, the area needs to be re-graded to include new stormwater facilities, a new stage as well as pavilions constructed, the swing set replaced or relocated, and perimeter circulation installed. This package, perhaps more than most others, will require planning and significant financial commitment, but it could help completely redefine the upper park space into a truly functional and attractive facility for both special events and informal gatherings.

Implementation Package I components:

- Grading activities to create better drainage and accommodate new green configuration
- Removal of existing band shell/amphitheater and pavilions
- Construction of new events stage and pavilions
- Construction of new circulation bounding the green
- Replacement of swing set in new location at edge of new events green
- Construction of rain garden planters for stormwater management
Implementation Package J – Northern Passive Recreation Zone

Implementation Package J, the third of the three major passive recreation upgrades, is the most low-profile and consists of converting the currently mostly unused northern area of the park into an attractive public amenity. This will be achieved by establishing walking trails through the area as well as pavilion facilities that can be used for events seeking a more low-key or private feel. Canopy trees would also be introduced to set a definite park edge along the street and provide shade.

Implementation Package J components:

- Construction of new circulation route through northern park area
- Construction of new pavilions for smaller events
- Planting of canopy trees and limited landscape plantings to create shaded atmosphere for passive recreation

Implementation Package K – Lower Ballfield Terrace

Implementation Package K would include improvements adjacent to the lower ballfield area within the Active Athletics Zone. It would create a series of terraces through the construction of seat walls that could serve as both an area for spectators when the field is in use as well as an amenity where people can gather at other times. The seat walls would be small retaining structures and would be built into the already existing slope in that location. In addition to the creation of the terraces, the package also includes the newly proposed gaga pits as an additional amenity in a currently underutilized space outside of the outfield fence of the ballfield.

Implementation Package K components:

- Grading and construction of new terraced seat walls at lower ballfield
- Installation of new gaga pits near lower parking area
- Landscape plantings
# Probable Costs and Phasing

## Wind Gap Park Master Plan

### Wind Gap Park Phasing Breakdown and LOM Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Package</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Level-of-Magnitude Construction Costs</th>
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**TOTAL** $2,650,000 $265,000 $2,915,000

* - Does not include ongoing yearly operation and maintenance costs. See Chapter 5 Operation and Management for annual maintenance cost considerations.

Note: These level-of-magnitude costs are for master planning purposes only and should only be used to guide phasing and funding strategies for the park. Numbers are subject to change as more detailed engineering design is performed for park components. Costs are based on 2016 estimates and an escalation rate of 3% to 5% annually should be used to project future costs.
PROBABLE COSTS AND PHASING

Wind Gap, PA

Package A - Park Infrastructure Improvements
Package B - Lehigh Avenue Circulation Upgrades
Package D - Park Gateway Improvements
Package F - Upper Parking Lot Reconfiguration
PROBABLE COSTS AND PHASING

Wind Gap, PA

Package C - Sports Field Drainage Upgrades
Package E - Concession Building Upgrades
Package G - Restroom Building Upgrades
Package K - Lower Ballfield Terrace
Wind Gap Park Master Plan

PROBABLE COSTS AND PHASING

Wind Gap, PA

Package H - Play Area Expansion
Package I - Upper Tier Events Green
Package J - Northern Passive Recreation Zone
CHAPTER 7

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
RESOURCES ROADMAP FOR PARK REVITALIZATION IN WIND GAP

This section of the master plan report provides recommendations on how Wind Gap Borough can organize itself to be effective and competitive in your efforts to identify, pursue, and secure grant funding and other resources for your parks projects. Success in funding is a process that takes a well-honed strategy and effective implementation. We provide recommendations below on how you can create and implement such a strategy.

This section provides a matrix that outlines specific, potential funding and resource opportunities which match Wind Gap’s vision for Wind Gap Park, including the most promising opportunities for federal, state, philanthropic, and private resources. The matrix also suggests key issues and next steps for pursuing and obtaining the identified resources. This matrix does not provide exhaustive information on the potential sources of funding identified below. Instead, this matrix is meant to be the overall, initial blueprint for ideas and opportunities for the borough.

Unfortunately, many traditional sources for parks and recreational funding have been eliminated or greatly reduced over the past decade, and there are few sources available that could provide significant funding amounts for the large capital-intensive projects. Typically, a community will need to use bonding or other local capital resource strategies for the build-out and development of these types of projects. Also, some projects can incorporate components that produce revenues over time to repay capital costs, such as event center components that can earn rental or event fees. These kinds of parks and recreation projects can also be supplemented and enhanced with seed funding, planning funding, technical assistance resources, or funding that gives a project the bona-fides that can be used to leverage further support and funding. This section of the report recommends some of the best potentials for these catalytic resources.

A Strategy for Obtaining Resources for the Wind Gap Borough’s Park Projects

The Borough should consider the following key steps for organizing the community to be effective and competitive for securing park project funding:

Step 1: Confirm Priority Projects, Identify Key Components & Estimate Project Costs: It is critical that Wind Gap Borough and its key stakeholders reach agreement on the priority projects to be pursued at the park. Which ones would make the most important contributions to the overall master plan? Which ones can leverage funding, and gain the support of local, state, and federal officials? Once priorities are clearly identified and confirmed, it is critical to establish preliminary cost estimates for each project which is provided in the report. Likewise, it is important to break each project down into individual phases. For example, a project typically has phases including community engagement, design, engineering, permitting, construction documentation, construction, and operation and management – and each of these phases may have different grants that can be used for the particular stage of project development. In short, Wind Gap Borough will not be effective in pursuing funding sources if it does not have well-estimated costs for each significant component and phase of each project that has been confirmed as a priority by the Wind Gap community.

Step 2: Match Community Priorities to the Best Resources: Once the highest priorities have been confirmed and the right team has been established to pursue resources, the Borough can match the best sources of grants, bonds, low-cost loans, technical assistance, and other resources for those projects. The Borough should consider the resources immediately below as top opportunities, as well as the other potential resources identified in the more detailed matrix later in this master plan report. Each one of these funding programs involves its own sets of requirements, competitive factors, and processes, which go beyond the scope of this plan.
These are the top funding opportunities to consider for high priority funding for the project recommendations listed in this master plan report.

A. Northampton County 21st Century Open Space Intiative Municipal Park Acquisition and Development Program - Northampton County adopted a program in 2007 based on the tax supported fund to support fund open space projects, including a dedicated portion for local municipalities to improve existing parks. In 2013 Phase 2 of the program was opened, focused on projects for the next 5-year period. Based on the availability of the funds and the proposed project meeting the program’s eligibility requirements, municipalities can apply for a grant equal to 50% of the project’s costs. The maximum amount a municipality may apply for is based on allocation per population. Using the program’s calculation, Wind Gap Borough is eligible to apply for an amount up to $45,678.20. Wind Gap Borough would need to apply no later than 2017 and would then have two years to complete the project, after the award is approved. These funds should be leveraged with PA DCNR funds as described below to serve as the combined local match. Therefore Wind Gap should apply for the county funding which would result in a local funds of $91,356.40, match 50%/50% with PA DCNR funding to support a total combined value of $182,712.80.

B. PA DCNR Parks & Recreational Resources - The most central and important funding pipeline for the Wind Gap Park initiative is the source that has already funded this park master plan - the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. DCNR regional manager Lorne Possinger as well as Leslie Sarvis, the Borough’s current grants manager at DCNR’s headquarters. These individuals can provide support and advice on the Borough’s ability to garner additional funds for implementation and should be invited for a site visit and discussion on funds that could include:

- **Construction Grants:** Wind Gap Borough could fund a variety of park construction projects through the Keystone Community Recreation and Conservation Grants (up to $200,000 or more for parks, recreation and trails projects); the PA Land and Water Conservation Fund (grants up to $200,000 for a variety of park and recreational projects; and/or the Recreational Trails Program (grants up to $250,000 for recreational trails). These grants are typically announced in December or January of each year, important funding workshops are held throughout the Commonwealth in February, and applications will be due to DCNR in mid-April. The match is typically 50% local/50% DCNR funding.

- **Capacity-Building Grants:** The DCNR Partnership Program and the DCNR Peer-to-Peer program could provide valuable technical assistance and resources to CRPR in the effort to build capacity for a volunteer coordinator and your local capacity to improve and administer these parks.

C. PA DCED Funding - Pennsylvania Act 13 established a Shale Impact Fee that, among other programs, funds the PA Department of Community and Economic Development’s “Greenways, Trails & Recreation Program” fund, which provides grants for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation, improvements and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, public parks and beautification projects. These grants can be for up to $250,000. The match is typically 15% local/85% DCED funding although a slightly higher match is recommended to increase the likelihood of receiving this competitive funding.

D. PA DEP Pennsylvania Growing Greener (PLUS)-Commonwealth leaders are optimistic that the state legislature will re-authorize funding for the Growing Greener program, which can be used for preserving open space; watershed planning; recreational trails and parks; and other uses. Although the next round of this program is not yet released, average grants under past rounds have been $350,000. The match is typically 15%local /50% DEP.

**Step 3: Prepare a Detailed Resource Strategy:** With priority projects and targeted resources to pursue, the borough’s funding team should prepare a detailed, written resources strategy guide your ongoing funding efforts and identify key actions. A resources strategy is essentially a detailed memo with all target resources identified and a step-by-step game plan for how to pursue each fund. This strategy should slice each project into its fund-able components and key phases, establish timelines and deadlines for funding applications, and lay out action strategies for pursuing the funds. Wind Gap Borough should also produce a 1- or 2-page summary of all the resources that are being sought, which is a useful sheet that can be shared with local, Commonwealth, and federal officials who are interested in supporting your initiative.

**Step 4: Prepare Briefing Materials:** Short, effective briefing sheets of 1-2 pages can be a critical tool for describing your projects to potential funders whom you are trying to recruit for support. This includes agency officials, stakeholder organizations, and elected representatives. Each sheet should generally provide a concise description of the project and its chief components, the need for the project, the benefits that will result, the stage of development.
of the project, a list of key stakeholder supporters, a nice graphic or picture or two, and – importantly – a listing of the specific types of funds and other assistance that Wind Gap Borough is seeking to move the project forward.

**Step 5: Organize Stakeholder Support:** Funders will always want to see support for your project from a variety of stakeholder organizations. Don’t wait until the grant applications are due to cultivate them. The Borough should use its public outreach efforts already conducted in this planning effort to build a list of people from key stakeholder organizations including governmental entities (especially at the County level), businesses and business organizations, community groups, community institutions, the press, and other organizations. Maintain a stakeholder contact database that is easy to access and use on a quick turnaround. Use these supporters for letters of support to funding agencies, letters to the editor, community meetings, calls to agencies and political representatives, visits to governmental officials, and other support for funding applications. These organizations should also be developed as potential sources of matching fund commitments.

**Step 6: Budget and Seek Matches Early:** It is a simple truth that a locality will not be competitive for grants without being ready to meet grant matching requirements – or exceed the minimum matches – and to leverage other cash and in-kind support for funding applications. Federal and Commonwealth grants typically require matches of between 15-50%, depending on the program. That requires budgeting in the capital and general fund process, and typically requires the willingness to bond funding to meet big capital project matches. Obviously, these kinds of matches will not materialize easily in the few short days between the announcement of a grant opportunity and the submission deadline, so the Wind Gap community needs to plan its matching strategies early. The need for matching also confirms the need to develop relationships and support from key stakeholder organizations, particularly the Commonwealth and the private development sector, because these allies may be necessary to meet matching requirements.

**Step 7: Coordinate with Federal Agency Leaders & Program Managers:** We cannot emphasize enough how important and valuable it is for Wind Gap Borough to build relationships with state and federal agency officials who run these funding programs or who can otherwise support your projects. This should be done by reaching out to them, requesting phone calls, visiting them in their regional and Washington D.C. offices, inviting them to site tours and local meetings, asking them for guidance on their grant programs, sending them progress reports and tales of success, and otherwise cultivating them as champions. Your federal elected officials can assist you with this process too. Over time, these agency officials may refer funding opportunities your way, recommend your programs to other funding agencies, and mark the success of their own programs by success in your locality.

One way to cultivate agency officials is to convene multiple federal (and Commonwealth) officials together in a well-organized “Resource Roundtable” that is meant to problem-solve and create cooperative strategies for resources. In the case of Wind Gap, this could be done in conjunction with effort of Northampton County to promote parks, trail and open space preservation.

**Step 8: Collaborate with Key Commonwealth Leaders and Program Managers:** Likewise, Commonwealth agency officials are critically important to your funding success, not only when it comes to state-led grants, but also for their very important endorsements for federal grant applications. Indeed, some federal agencies rank the endorsement of the state in which the project is located as a top factor in where to direct funds. Also very importantly, state officials can be critical in providing pledges of matching funds for your federal applications. All of the means of outreach and collaboration listed above with respect to federal officials should be used with Commonwealth officials.

**Step 9: Write Strong Grant Applications:** Obviously the Wind Gap Borough community needs to submit well-written grant applications in order to obtain funds. A primer on grant-writing is beyond the scope of this plan, but a few key principles should be kept in mind. First, make sure that a person (or persons) are selected early to handle grant-writing. The person should be a good writer, a person that can follow instructions carefully, and a person who
has the ability and backing to communicate across departments/boards and jurisdictions to develop grant applications. The person should also be given the opportunity to receive grant-writing training, and given sufficient resources to write grants when the deadlines are approaching. This grant-writer can also be a contracted firm that specializes in grants. Second, an effective grant should always focus on developing a compelling narrative, a theme, for why your community and your project is unique, innovative, most needed, most able to bring big benefits, or otherwise distinguishable from the hundreds of other grants that will be submitted. You need to “brand” your project and its unique qualities, and make sure that branding flavors every page of your grant application, every stakeholder support letter, and every call to the agency about the project. Finally, you must follow directions and answer every question correctly. Seems like an obvious point, but the vast majority of grant applications that we have seen skip questions or required submissions, violate rules for the grant application or, most often, do not answer the questions that are actually asked. These problems can be avoided with up-front preparation, using a skilled grant-writer, and paying meticulous heed to the directions.

**Step 10: Advocate:** Even with strong projects, solid relationships with funding agencies, stakeholder support, and well-written grants, you need to advocate to political officials for your applications for funds. Members of Congress, Senators, and Commonwealth elected officials truly matter when it comes to highly competitive funding contests, even for park improvement projects. Do not wait until a grant is due to ask for their support and involvement in your project, but instead build an ongoing cooperative relationship with them. Your Commonwealth and U.S. congressional elected officials (and their staffs!) should be briefed on your projects early and often, given opportunities to support your funding requests, and given credit for their advocacy. Visit with each of your state and federal elected representatives at least once a year, invite them to your community regularly, and keep in touch with newsletters, email reports, and calls as appropriate.

**Step 11: Celebrate success:** It has been said that “nothing succeeds like success”, and that is certainly true when it comes to obtaining funding. Success comes in two ways - when significant project milestones are accomplished, and when you obtain the next grant. This means that Wind Gap Borough should always be looking for opportunities to celebrate success, thank your agency and political supporters, hold groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings, cultivate media coverage, send newsletters, and spread the word in other ways. Progress on projects and success in obtaining grants can also lead to more success by sending signals to other agencies that Wind Gap Borough’s projects are worthy of further grants. Public agencies like to give grants to localities that are leveraging different sources of funding together, and that have used grants effectively and are seeking more to complete a project. A final thought about resources is that, as your success builds toward completion of your visions and plans, the community may be able to accelerate your ability to gain more resources. This is why a systematic, dedicated strategy to obtain resources, using steps such as the ones outlined above, is a worthy investment of time and effort.
**Parks and Recreation** - Funding for parks and recreation, although critical for communities, has taken severe cuts during the economic downturn. Wind Gap Borough must have strong, well-conceived projects, and work closely with funding agencies, to be able to compete.

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<th>POTENTIAL RESOURCES</th>
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| **Northampton County 21st Century Open Space Initiative Municipal Park Acquisition and Development Program** - In 2013 Phase 2 of the program was opened and is focused on projects for the next 5-year period. Based on the availability of the funds and the proposed project meeting the program’s eligibility requirements. The funding would support the priority improvements identified in this plan for code and site improvements. The program is a 50% local/50% county. Using the program’s calculation based on population, Wind Gap Borough is eligible to apply for an amount up to $45,678.20. Wind Gap Borough would need to apply no later than 2017 and it is recommended that an application be submitted in the upcoming December 2016 round. The project would need to be completed within two years after the award is approved. These funds should be leveraged with PA DCNR funds that would result in local funds of $91,356.40, matched 50%/50% with PA DCNR funding to support a total combined value of $182,712.80. | ▪ Contact Bryan S. Cope, Open Space Coordinator  
Northampton County  
Greystone Building, 3rd Floor  
14 Gracedale Avenue  
Nazareth, PA 18064  
610.829.6290  
▪ Review Northampton County’s guidance on this program at http://www.northamptoncounty.org/northampton/cwp/view callerpage%7C35201%7C&northamptonNav_GID=2005  
▪ Required 50% local match (cash)  
▪ Use combined local/county funds to apply for PA DCNR funding. Once application is received by Northampton County they contact PA DCNR representatives to notify of intent to apply. |
**Parks and Recreation** – Funding for parks and recreation, although critical for communities, has taken severe cuts during the economic downturn. Wind Gap Borough must have strong, well-conceived projects, and work closely with funding agencies, to be able to compete.

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| **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** – Department of Interior funding administered by DCNR to provide 50% matching grants for general public outdoor park, recreation, and conservation projects. Additionally, projects funded through this program must be identified in or further the specific goal of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. An eligible project such as a large scale recreation complex may include: swimming pools, tot lots, playfields and paved courts, as well as the installation of utilities, park roads, landscaping, comfort stations, and other support facilities related to the outdoor use of the project site. | ▪ Contact Lorne Possinger in the DCNR Northeast Regional Office at (610) 746-5607 or lpossinger@pa.gov  
▪ Review PA’s guidance on this program at http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cs/groups/public/documents/document/d_001243.pdf  
▪ Determine whether the Wind Gap Park initiatives are in the State Outdoor Recreation Plan and, if not, get them in that Plan  
▪ Required 50% cash match  
▪ Grant ranges in size, with up to $200,000 or more per project possible  
▪ Project funds are reimbursed |
| **Keystone Community Recreation and Conservation Program** – The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) provides grant funds for public parks, recreation, and trails projects. This is funded by a combination of state resources and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program. One key source, the “Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund” was funded again this year by the state legislature. | ▪ Contact Lorne Possinger in the DCNR Northeast Regional Office at (610) 746-5607 or lpossinger@pa.gov  
▪ The next grant should be announced as of January 23rd, 2017 with applications due on April 12, 2017. Grant should be opened at beginning of 2017.  
▪ Planning grants are typically <$50,000  
▪ Construction grants are typically between $150,000 and $200,000  
▪ Match requirement is 50%, except for communities with a population <5,000 and a project of <$60,000, which can receive a lower match requirement to as low as 0% match. |
**Parks and Recreation** – Funding for parks and recreation, although critical for communities, has taken severe cuts during the economic downturn. Wind Gap Borough must have strong, well-conceived projects, and work closely with funding agencies, to be able to compete.

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<td><strong>Greenways, Trails &amp; Recreation Program</strong> – The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) provides grants for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation, improvements and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, public parks and beautification projects.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Grants up to $250,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ 50% match</td>
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<td>▪ Next round deadline expected in late summer 2017</td>
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<td>▪ Contact DCED’s Center for Business Financing, Site Development Division at 717.787.6245 or <a href="mailto:radcedcbf@state.pa.us">radcedcbf@state.pa.us</a> for more info</td>
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<td><strong>DCNR Recreational Trails Program</strong> – This program funds projects that help develop and maintain recreational trails, as well as, the creation of new trails and the purchase of equipment and related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use and provides for the purchase of trail related equipment. Additionally, projects funded through this program must be identified in or further the specific goal of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.</td>
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<td>▪ Contact Lorne Possinger in the DCNR Northeast Regional Office at (610) 746-5607 or <a href="mailto:lpossinger@pa.gov">lpossinger@pa.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Grant period will be opened at the beginning of the year with a close date set in early Spring</td>
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<td>▪ Must match at least 20%</td>
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<td>▪ Determine whether the Wind Gap Borough park initiatives are in the State Outdoor Recreation Plan and, if not, get them in that Plan</td>
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<td><strong>DCNR Partnerships Program</strong> – This program funds projects that help build professional capacity and provide education to the public on the benefit and value of recreation, conservation and heritage in Pennsylvania, assisting to better develop and manage recreation and park facilities, as well as, to promote the conservation of natural and heritage resources through plan implementation, education, and training. This program would serve as a way to generate best practices for park managers and community groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Contact Lorne Possinger in the DCNR Northeast Regional Office at (610) 746-5607 or <a href="mailto:lpossinger@pa.gov">lpossinger@pa.gov</a></td>
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**FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

**Parks and Recreation** — Funding for parks and recreation, although critical for communities, has taken severe cuts during the economic downturn. Wind Gap Borough must have strong, well-conceived projects, and work closely with funding agencies, to be able to compete.

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| **DCNR Peer-to-Peer Program** - This program funds projects that help municipalities improve their park, recreation, and conservation services through a collaborative process. Projects are accomplished through contracts with experienced park, recreation, and conservation professionals from nearby communities who will work closely with local leaders. Specifically, funds can be used to create a Recreation and Park Agency. | - Contact Lorne Possinger in the DCNR Northeast Regional Office at (610) 746-5607 or lpossinger@pa.gov  
- Maximum award $10,000  
- Minimum match 10% |
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<td><strong>National Park Service Groundwork Trust</strong> – The Groundwork Trust model involves strong partnerships between government, business, foundations, community groups, and residents to build safer and stronger communities, support local economies, and promote environmental sustainability. Groundwork USA is a network of independent, not-for-profit, environmental businesses called Groundwork Trusts linked together by the Groundwork USA national office. Locally organized and controlled, Groundwork Trusts provide cost effective project development services focused on improving their communities, environment, economy and quality of life. Services include community planning, project management, design and construction, fundraising, and support for maintenance.</td>
<td>▪ Enter into discussions with local businesses and constituents to generate “buy in” for the creation of a community trust. Establishing a new Groundwork Trust is a multi-step competitive process. An interested community establishes a steering committee of diverse stakeholders and applies to the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program for consideration. If selected, they work with NPS to evaluate Groundwork for their community and to submit a full proposal for Groundwork USA Pilot Funding and Technical Assistance. If their proposal is selected they then work with NPS on an in-depth feasibility study. Upon completion, if the final decision is to establish the new GW Trust, NPS provides seed funding and technical assistance. For more information, please contact Douglas Evans at NPS, <a href="mailto:douglas_evans@nps.gov">douglas_evans@nps.gov</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)</strong> – Technical assistance for community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. RTCA staff provides guidance to communities so they can conserve waterways, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. This opportunity can also be used as an entry point for gathering information and resources for further project development.</td>
<td>▪ Deadline August 1st. ▪ Contact the National Park Service RTCA office for an initial project discussion. ▪ Dave Lange, Program Manager, <a href="mailto:david_a_lange@nps.gov">david_a_lange@nps.gov</a>, (215) 597-6477</td>
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**Sustainability / Smart Growth** – The Wind Gap Park master plan has a strong connection to the principles of smart growth and sustainable development. Wind Gap Borough can seek additional resources that support these specific areas.

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| **Pennsylvania Growing Greener** - Growing Greener, the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania’s history, is set to expire. Growing Greener directed nearly $625 million over six years to the new Environmental Stewardship Fund. Growing Greener funds can be used for preserving open space; watershed planning; recreational trails and parks; stormwater management, and other uses. Eligible applicants include non-profit groups, counties, and municipalities. A local match is encouraged, but not required. A Growing Greener III program may replace the existing program, but there is no certainty of a replacement at this time. | ■ Pennsylvania DEP Officials are optimistic that the State Legislature will fund this program, but there has yet to be an announcement.  
■ Contact Cheryl Snyder, chesnyder@state.pa.us, (717)772-5640  
■ Sign up to be notified when/if funding is made available [Link](http://www.ahs2.dep.state.pa.us/CentralListManager/Default.aspx?id=2)  
■ Funding levels could be highly variable, depending on the legislature’s decision  
■ On average, in the past 6 years, projects ranged from $10,000 to $1 million  
■ Average of 100 grants per year at an average of $350,000 |
| **National Endowment for the Humanities, America’s Historical & Cultural Organizations, Planning Grants and Implementation Grants** – For historic site interpretation, exhibitions, cultural programming. The program offers both early stage planning and implementation. Specifically, NEH’s “implementation” is for the production of more thorough and scholarly research, design development, production, and installation of a project for presentation to the public. | ■ While the site is certainly historic in nature, there will need to be a concerted effort made to align it with the advancement of the humanities.  
■ Deadline is January 8th and again in August  
■ Average 9 awards per year  
■ Scholarly consultation is essential  
■ Award amounts vary |
| **National Endowment for the Humanities, Challenge Grant** - Capacity building grant for humanities programs that support a non-profit effort to raise funding for building a humanities program, that can include facility rehab, expenses for collections, and fundraising. | ■ Deadline will likely be in early May with a draft proposal submitted 4 to 6 weeks in advance for review  
■ Grants range from $30,000 to $1 million, with any grant over $500,000 being significantly difficult to obtain  
■ Required match is 2:1 with competitive applications typically being 3:1. Match and expenditure may be spread over 6 years. |
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<td><strong>Wells Fargo / National Fish &amp; Wildlife Foundation “Environmental Solutions for Communities” Grants</strong> – Will provide grants of up to $250,000 to localities for, among other focus areas, community-based conservation projects that protect and restore local habitats and natural areas, enhance water quality, promote urban forestry, educate and train community leaders on sustainable practices, promote related job creation and training, and engage diverse partners and volunteers; and demonstration projects that showcase innovative, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly approaches to improve environmental conditions within urban communities by “greening” traditional infrastructure and public projects such as storm water management and flood control, public park enhancements, and renovations to public facilities.</td>
<td>• Wells Fargo/NFWF target specific localities and regions in each round. The region of Pennsylvania in which Wind Gap Borough is located is not in the targeted regions at this time, and thus we recommend that the borough consider this in future potential rounds. Must have a 1:1 match with the Wells Fargo grants.</td>
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| **EPA Green Infrastructure Program (“GIP”) Grants** – EPA provides technical assistance to design community green infrastructure programs and projects. There is likely to be a solicitation for applications in the first half of each year. | • They are released in the first half of the year.  
• Coordinate with EPA Region 3 officials working in green infrastructure in both the Water and Brownfields offices, and coordinate with the Green Infrastructure Program leads in EPA HQ’s Office of Water.  
• Funding ranges from $30,000 to $75,000 |
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<td><strong>Urban and Community Forestry Grants</strong> – This funding is used to encourage the planting of trees in Pennsylvania communities. Municipal challenge grants provide 50 percent of the cost of the purchase and delivery of trees. In Pennsylvania, grants for tree planting of up to $15,000 per municipality can be given under the “TreeVitalize” program. See <a href="http://www.treevitalize.net/SubGrant.aspx">www.treevitalize.net/SubGrant.aspx</a></td>
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<td>The Pennsylvania Community Forest Council also provides “Municipal Challenge” grants to cover the cost of planting up to 50 trees, “Municipal Tree Restoration Program” grants in partnership with utilities to help ensure tree planting that does not interfere with overhead wires, and “Tree Improvement Grants” to support better care of existing trees. See <a href="http://www.pacommunityforests.com/">www.pacommunityforests.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Contact the PA DCNR “Service Forester” for your county, at <a href="http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/yourwoods/serviceforesters/index.htm">www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/yourwoods/serviceforesters/index.htm</a>.</td>
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<td>• Wells Fargo/NFWF target specific localities and regions in each round. The region of Pennsylvania in which Middletown is located is not in the targeted regions at this time, and thus we recommend that the borough consider this in future potential rounds. • The NFWF had a dedicated program focused on improving the The Delaware River Watershed. The Delaware River Restoration Fund (DRRF) is dedicated to improving the water quality and accelerating restoration of habitats of the Delaware River and its tributaries. The fund was launched in late 2013 to help community-based nonprofits and government agencies efficiently work together to clean up and restore polluted waters and improve habitat in strategic geographies within the Delaware Watershed. The fund is supported by the William Penn Foundation. <a href="http://www.nfwf.org/delaware/Documents/NFWFdelawareFS20151203.pdf">http://www.nfwf.org/delaware/Documents/NFWFdelawareFS20151203.pdf</a></td>
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<td><strong>EPA Green Infrastructure Program (“GIP”) grants</strong> – EPA provides technical assistance to design community green infrastructure programs and projects. There is likely to be a solicitation for applications in the first half of each year.</td>
<td>• There released in the first half of the year. • Coordinate with EPA Region 3 officials working in green infrastructure in both the Water and Brownfields offices, and coordinate with the Green Infrastructure Program leads in EPA HQ’s Office of Water. • Funding ranges from $30,000 to $75,000</td>
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**Transportation Infrastructure** – The Wind Gap Park Master Plan includes walking sidewalks and paths as well as recommends complete street improvements along E. Third Street, S. Lehigh Street, E. West Street that could be funded with state and federal transportation infrastructure grants.

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<td><strong>PA DOT “Transportation Alternatives” Funding</strong> – The MAP-21 legislation mandates that each State must use 1% of its funding allocation and may use up to 2% of its funding allocation on these “Transportation Alternatives” projects which include non-motorized trails, sidewalks, transit stations, and other walkability/sustainability projects. In PA, that means $16-$32 million a year, for two years, for these projects. This “Alternatives” fund replaces the Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, and Safe Routes to Schools programs that have been traditionally funded by U.S. DOT through the states.</td>
<td>• The key to obtaining State transportation funding is to have your projects listed in the “Transportation Improvement Plan” established by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, and the corresponding “State Transportation Improvement Plan” established by PA DOT. In general, the more outreach and collaboration to the County and PA DOT, the better. Consider enlisting State reps and senators for help.</td>
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APPENDIX: PNDI REPORT
1. PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name: Wind Gap Park  
Date of review: 9/25/2015 10:10:38 AM  
Project Category: Recreation, Other  
Project Area: 24.0 acres  
County: Northampton Township/Municipality: Wind Gap  
Quadrangle Name: WIND GAP  
ZIP Code: 18091  
Decimal Degrees: 40.844528 N, -75.289441 W  
Degrees Minutes Seconds: 40° 50' 40.3" N, -75° 17' 22" W

2. SEARCH RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA Game Commission</td>
<td>No Known Impact</td>
<td>No Further Review Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA Department of Conservation</td>
<td>Potential Impact</td>
<td>FURTHER REVIEW IS REQUIRED, See Agency Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Natural Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA Fish and Boat Commission</td>
<td>No Known Impact</td>
<td>No Further Review Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</td>
<td>Potential Impact</td>
<td>FURTHER REVIEW IS REQUIRED, See Agency Response</td>
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As summarized above, Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) records indicate there may be potential impacts to threatened and endangered and/or special concern species and resources within the project area. If the response above indicates "No Further Review Required" no additional communication with the respective agency is required. If the response is "Further Review Required" or "See Agency Response," refer to the appropriate agency comments below. Please see the DEP Information Section of this receipt if a PA Department of Environmental Protection Permit is required.
Note that regardless of PNDI search results, projects requiring a Chapter 105 DEP individual permit or GP 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 11 in certain counties (Adams, Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Cumberland, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Schuylkill and York) must comply with the bog turtle habitat screening requirements of the PASPGP.

3. AGENCY COMMENTS

Regardless of whether a DEP permit is necessary for this proposed project, any potential impacts to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources must be resolved with the appropriate jurisdictional agency. In some cases, a permit or authorization from the jurisdictional agency may be needed if adverse impacts to these species and habitats cannot be avoided.

These agency determinations and responses are valid for two years (from the date of the review), and are based on the project information that was provided, including the exact project location; the project type, description, and features; and any responses to questions that were generated during this search. If any of the following change: 1) project location, 2) project size or configuration, 3) project type, or 4) responses to the questions that were asked during the online review, the results of this review are not valid, and the review must be searched again via the PNDI Environmental Review Tool and resubmitted to the jurisdictional agencies. The PNDI tool is a primary screening tool, and a desktop review may reveal more or fewer impacts than what is listed on this PNDI receipt. The jurisdictional agencies strongly advise against conducting surveys for the species listed on the receipt prior to consultation with the agencies.

PA Game Commission
RESPONSE: No Impact is anticipated to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources.

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
RESPONSE: Further review of this project is necessary to resolve the potential impacts(s). Please send project information to this agency for review (see WHAT TO SEND).

DCNR Species: (Note: The PNDI tool is a primary screening tool, and a desktop review may reveal more or fewer species than what is listed below. After desktop review, if a botanical survey is required by DCNR, we recommend the DCNR Botanical Survey Protocols, available here: http://www.gis.dcnr.state.pa.us/hgis-er/PNDI_DCNR.aspx.)

Scientific Name: Leucothoe racemosa
Common Name: Swamp Dog-hobble
Current Status: Special Concern Species*
Proposed Status: Threatened

PA Fish and Boat Commission
RESPONSE: No Impact is anticipated to threatened and endangered species and/or special concern species and resources.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RESPONSE: Further review of this project is necessary to resolve the potential impacts(s). Please send project information to this agency for review (see WHAT TO SEND).

* Special Concern Species or Resource - Plant or animal species classified as rare, tentatively undetermined or candidate as well as other taxa of conservation concern, significant natural communities, special concern populations (plants or animals) and unique geologic features.
** Sensitive Species - Species identified by the jurisdictional agency as collectible, having economic value, or being susceptible to decline as a result of visitation.

WHAT TO SEND TO JURISDICTIONAL AGENCIES

If project information was requested by one or more of the agencies above, send the following information to the agency(s) seeking this information (see AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION).

Check-list of Minimum Materials to be submitted:

- SIGNED copy of this Project Environmental Review Receipt
- Project narrative with a description of the overall project, the work to be performed, current physical characteristics of the site and acreage to be impacted.
- Project location information (name of USGS Quadrangle, Township/Municipality, and County)
- USGS 7.5-minute Quadrangle with project boundary clearly indicated, and quad name on the map

The inclusion of the following information may expedite the review process.

- A basic site plan(particularly showing the relationship of the project to the physical features such as wetlands, streams, ponds, rock outcrops, etc.)
- Color photos keyed to the basic site plan (i.e. showing on the site plan where and in what direction each photo was taken and the date of the photos)
- Information about the presence and location of wetlands in the project area, and how this was determined (e.g., by a qualified wetlands biologist), if wetlands are present in the project area, provide project plans showing the location of all project features, as well as wetlands and streams

4. DEP INFORMATION

The Pa Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires that a signed copy of this receipt, along with any required documentation from jurisdictional agencies concerning resolution of potential impacts, be submitted with applications for permits requiring PNDI review. For cases where a "Potential Impact" to threatened and endangered species has been identified before the application has been submitted to DEP, the application should not be submitted until the impact has been resolved. For cases where "Potential Impact" to special concern species and resources has been identified before the application has been submitted, the application should be submitted to DEP along with the PNDI receipt. The PNDI Receipt should also be submitted to the appropriate agency according to directions on the PNDI Receipt. DEP and the jurisdictional agency will work together to resolve the potential impact(s). See the DEP PNDI policy at http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us.
5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
The PNDI environmental review website is a preliminary screening tool. There are often delays in updating species status classifications. Because the proposed status represents the best available information regarding the conservation status of the species, state jurisdictional agency staff give the proposed statuses at least the same consideration as the current legal status. If surveys or further information reveal that a threatened and endangered and/or special concern species and resources exist in your project area, contact the appropriate jurisdictional agency/agencies immediately to identify and resolve any impacts.

For a list of species known to occur in the county where your project is located, please see the species lists by county found on the PA Natural Heritage Program (PNHP) home page (www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us). Also note that the PNDI Environmental Review Tool only contains information about species occurrences that have actually been reported to the PNHP.

6. AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry, Ecological Services Section
400 Market Street, PO Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA.
17105-8552
Fax:(717) 772-0271

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pennsylvania Field Office
110 Radnor Rd; Suite 101, State College, PA 16801
NO Faxes Please.

PA Fish and Boat Commission
Division of Environmental Services
450 Robinson Lane, Bellefonte, PA. 16823-7437
NO Faxes Please

PA Game Commission
Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management
Division of Environmental Planning and Habitat Protection
2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA. 17110-9797
Fax:(717) 787-6957

7. PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name:______________________________________________________________
Company/Business Name:______________________________________________
Address:____________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip:_______________________________________________________
Phone:(_____)_________________________Fax:(______)___________________
Email:_____________________________________________________________

8. CERTIFICATION
I certify that ALL of the project information contained in this receipt (including project location, project size/configuration, project type, answers to questions) is true, accurate and complete. In addition, if the project type, location, size or configuration changes, or if the answers to any questions that were asked during this online review change, I agree to re-do the online environmental review.

__________________________________________  _______________________
applicant/project proponent signature  date
APPENDIX: RECOMMENDED TREE SPECIES
## Recommended Canopy Tree Species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Botanical</th>
<th>Common</th>
<th>Mature Plant Form</th>
<th>Site Requirements</th>
<th>Plant Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platanus occidentalis</td>
<td>American Sycamore</td>
<td>Broad spreading crown</td>
<td>Tolerates most urban pollutants; plant in medium to wet, well-drained soils.</td>
<td>Creamy white exfoliating bark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gleditsia tricanthos ‘Skyline’</td>
<td>Skyline Honeylocust</td>
<td>Pyramidal form with ascending branches; more upright than most</td>
<td>pH adaptable; soil moisture tolerant</td>
<td>Dark green leaves; bright golden yellow fall color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus Alba</td>
<td>White Oak</td>
<td>Pyramidal in youth; becomes oval to round with age</td>
<td>Deep, moist, acid, well-drained soils, but is adaptable</td>
<td>Outstanding specimen tree, good russet-red to red fall color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus palustris</td>
<td>Pin Oak</td>
<td>Strongly pyramidal with a central leader</td>
<td>Requires acidic soils for best performance. One of the easiest Oaks to transplant</td>
<td>Russet-red to red fall color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus phellos</td>
<td>Willow Oak</td>
<td>Oval to round habit</td>
<td>Very tolerant to heat, drought, and stress.</td>
<td>Not messy, brownish to orange-yellow fall color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus rubra</td>
<td>Red Oak</td>
<td>Rounded growth habit</td>
<td>Adaptable to poor soils but prefers acid and well drained sites.</td>
<td>Russet-red to red fall color.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus coccinea</td>
<td>Scarlet Oak</td>
<td>Upright-spreading and open</td>
<td>Adaptable moist well-drained to dry sandy soils; acid soils</td>
<td>Brilliant reds and scarlets in fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer saccharum</td>
<td>Sugar Maple</td>
<td>Upright-oval to rounded</td>
<td>Prefers evenly moist, well-drained acidic soils. Does tolerate less than ideal conditions but not a tree for high stress environment</td>
<td>Brilliant fall color of yellows, oranges, or pale reds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer pensylvanicum</td>
<td>Striped Maple</td>
<td>Upright becoming arching</td>
<td>Prefers partially shaded woods; well drained, cool, moist, slightly acidic soils</td>
<td>Young trees are conspicuous marked by long, vertical greenish white stripes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer rubrum</td>
<td>Red Maple</td>
<td>Pyramidal in youth; becomes oval to round with age</td>
<td>Very tolerant of soils, prefers slightly acid, moist conditions</td>
<td>Brilliant fall color of yellows, oranges, or reds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botanical Common</td>
<td>Mature Plant Form</td>
<td>Site Requirements</td>
<td>Plant Interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betula nigra River Birch</td>
<td>Single or multiple trunks, with stout arching limbs</td>
<td>Adaptable to most soil textures including fine heavy clays</td>
<td>Handsome bark character, with exfoliating papery plates that expose inner bark</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpinus caroliniana American Hornbeam</td>
<td>Multiple trunks, low branched, wide-spreading</td>
<td>Prefers deep, rich, moist, slightly acid soils; does well in heavy shade</td>
<td>Stately and neat form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carya glabra Pignut Hickory</td>
<td>Short ascending branches with irregular habit</td>
<td>Prefers well drained to dry, fairly rich soils</td>
<td>Pear shaped nut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carya ovata Shagbark Hickory</td>
<td>Short, stout ascending branches, with an irregular or oval habit</td>
<td>Prefers rich, well drained loams but is adaptable to a range of soils.</td>
<td>Gray to brown bark breaks up into thin plates with free ends lending to an overall “shaggy” appearance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celtis occidentalis Common Hackberry</td>
<td>Long clear trunk with abruptly upright limbs and round habit</td>
<td>Prefers rich, moist soils but very adaptable</td>
<td>Excellent park tree that performs well under adverse conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cladrastis lutea American Yellowwood</td>
<td>Usually low branching with round habit</td>
<td>Prefers well drained soils, tolerates high pH and acidic soils</td>
<td>Fragrant, white, inch-long flowers that bloom in loose pyramidal clusters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euonymus atropurpureus Eastern Wahoo</td>
<td>Multiple trunks, with wide, round habit</td>
<td>Prefers well drained soils, tolerant of most soils</td>
<td>Small, dark purple, four petaled flowers with small red fruit capsule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liriodendron tulipifera Tuliptree</td>
<td>Irregular ascending, with high crown</td>
<td>Prefers deep, moist, well-drained loam with full sun and slightly acidic soil</td>
<td>Golden yellow or yellow fall foliage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyssa sylvatica Black Tulepo</td>
<td>Horizontal branches, with irregular round or flat-topped crown</td>
<td>Prefers moist, well drained, deep, acidic soils; locations sheltered from wind are preferred</td>
<td>Brilliant summer and fall foliage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ostrya virginiana American Hophornbeam</td>
<td>Twisting trunks with large burls, irregular horizontal branches</td>
<td>Prefers cool, moist, well drained, slightly acidic soils, but does tolerate dry soils</td>
<td>Nutlet is enclosed in easily identifiable hop-like sac</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botanical</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Mature Plant Form</td>
<td>Site Requirements</td>
<td>Plant Interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxydendrum arboreum</td>
<td>Sourwood</td>
<td>Tall straight trunk, with conical or columnar habit</td>
<td>Prefers peaty, moist, well-drained, acidic soils, but does reasonably well in dry soils</td>
<td>All season ornamental tree, white urn-shaped fragrant flowers that bloom in pendulous spikelets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populus grandidentata</td>
<td>Bigtooth Aspen</td>
<td>High slender, clear trunk with oval, open, irregular crown</td>
<td>Prefers rich, moist soils but will tolerate dry, sandy, or gravelly soils</td>
<td>Excellent yellow fall color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populus tremuloides</td>
<td>Quaking Aspen</td>
<td>Slender, long clear trunk, with narrow, rounded crown</td>
<td>Prefers moist, well-drained areas, and tolerates most soil conditions</td>
<td>Cream to greenish white bark, and brilliant yellow fall foliage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prunus serotina</td>
<td>Black Cherry</td>
<td>Ascending branches with oval habit</td>
<td>Prefers deep, moist soils, but does tolerate dry soils</td>
<td>White flower, blooms in pyramidal spikes, and dark, glossy black drooping fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prunus virginiana</td>
<td>Common Chokecherry</td>
<td>Multiple trunks, lateral branches, and oval-rounded crown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dark purple fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus muhlenbergi</td>
<td>Chinkapin Oak</td>
<td>Short, irregular branches, with irregular to round habit</td>
<td>Very tolerant to heat and drought</td>
<td>Golden yellow brown fall foliage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus decora</td>
<td>Showy Mountainash</td>
<td>Branching low to ground, with oval habit</td>
<td>Tolerates most soil conditions</td>
<td>Large white flowers that bloom in terminal clusters replaced by brilliant glossy red fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilia americana</td>
<td>American Linden</td>
<td>Divides near ground or multiple trunks, with low hung spreading branches and oval or rounded crown</td>
<td>Prefers deep, moist soils, but tolerates drier, heavier soils; pH adaptable</td>
<td>Dense, dark foliage and broad canopy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX: APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS
APPENDIX C

APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

As a public park, the Wind Gap Park must comply with numerous laws and regulations. Some of the laws and regulations applicable in consideration of park development are noted below but the list is not intended to be all-inclusive. As any improvements proposed in this master plan are advanced into more detailed design, construction documentation, and physical construction, compliance with applicable laws and regulations should be verified.

Public playgrounds should meet the guidelines of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Guidelines for Public Playground Safety. These guidelines establish the “standard of care” for public playground design, layout, and maintenance. An upgrade schedule should be developed based on the results of a playground safety audit. When replacement or upgrades are undertaken work must comply with the guidelines of the CPSC Guidelines for Public Playground Safety and the ADA.

The safety surfacing in playgrounds shall meet the requirements of the American Society for Testing and Materials F1487-05. Playground safety surfacing material and depth must comply with this standard.

Public areas of the park including parking areas, trails, picnic pavilions, picnic tables, restrooms, playgrounds, overlooks, and other areas must be accessible to physically challenged and visually impaired visitors to comply with the requirements of the CPSC Guidelines for Public Playground Safety and the ADA.

The protection of wetland areas and streams are regulated under Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) (Chapter 105) via General Permits regulates minor disturbance of wetlands and streams. Any improvements/modifications in the area of the delineated wetlands or encroachment of the wetlands will require a permit from PADEP.

The disturbance of earth is regulated both locally and at the state level. A General NPDES Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities is required for earth disturbance activities which disturb one or more acres or propose earth disturbance activities with a point source discharge to surface waters of the Commonwealth that disturb from one to less than five acres.

Construction activities that are not eligible for coverage under the general permit (PA Code Chapter 92) must utilize the Individual NPDES Permit Application for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities. These activities include, but are not limited to construction activities that require an NPDES Permit and which may affect existing water quality standards or threatened or endangered species and habitat, or construction activities that have the potential for toxic discharge. An approved Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan is required for the disturbance of soil in areas of 0.5 acres of more.

Federal and State agencies regulate the protection of endangered species. An environmental review of the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) listing is required to verify if there are animal or plant species of special concern. This review is initiated through wetland and stream encroachment permits, NPDES permits, and sewage planning module permits.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Sewage Planning Module permits are typically required for the expansion and/or development of sewage facilities. The park currently has restroom facilities, however, as the master plan’s recommendations for modifications to existing restroom facilities are implemented, conformance with sewer service unit permits should be confirmed.

Development of park improvements may require the approval of the Borough and the review of the County Planning agency. The need for land development plan approval will be based on the description of the improvement project and the municipality’s interpretation of their Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

The development of property, buildings, electrical, plumbing, site utilities, and structures are regulated by municipal building codes. As improvements are contemplated they should be discussed with the appropriate building code review entities/agencies. This includes third party code review entities if applicable.

Local Building Codes require Occupancy Permits for structure for fire and panic safety requirements.
The pavilions proposed at the park sites will require architectural drawings for the site specific nature of their design and needs and therefore will require code review and approval.

The access to or improvements within the right-of-way of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PADOT) roadways requires a Highway Occupancy Permit issued by PADOT. 3rd Street is a PADOT roadway.

Pennsylvania laws require notification of construction activities through the Pennsylvania One Call system. Three working days notice is required for construction phase work and ten working days for design stage work.

Depending on the funding source for improvement projects, additional permitting may be required. Each funding entity should be consulted to ensure projects are designed in conformance with all applicable laws and regulations.
Meeting Minutes

PROJECT: Wind Gap Park Master Plan
DATE: September 28, 2015
ATTENDEES: Sean Garrigan (SGA), Ann Toole (TRP), Michael Stromberg (SGA), Louise Firestone (Wind Gap), Dave Valley (Wind Gap), Joe Weaver (Wind Gap), Nicolas Calabrese (WG Film Club), Deb Setar (WG Parks Board), Tim Egan (Pen Argyl HS Athletics)

SUBJECT: Study Committee Kickoff Meeting Minutes

Project Admin/Study Committee
- This study committee has been convened to help identify any issues or areas of need within Wind Gap Park and to inform the design as the master planning process progresses.
- Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates and Toole Recreation Planning will be conducting this planning effort, with SGA focused on the design and layout of the new master plan and TRP focused on the park operations and maintenance aspect going forward.
- The study committee may want to try to recruit a few more members as the project gets going to try to get as many stakeholder voices as possible
  - A few organizations specifically mentioned by committee members were Boy Scout Troop 33 and the Wind Gap Athletic Association

Project Schedule
- SGA is in the midst analyzing the site’s existing conditions and is preparing the base plan on which the park design will ultimately be placed.
  - Digital data is somewhat limited, but the plan is being generated from available survey information and supplemented with site observations. Michael Stromberg and Sean Garrigan conducted an extensive field visit at Wind Gap Park earlier in the day
  - Borough to try to locate any utility location plans from recent installations in the park and give them to SGA
- SGA is tentatively planning to hold a public meeting on or around October 27 to get input on the project from the community.
  - Meeting will be a workshop, where attendees will be broken down into smaller groups around tables to answer questions about what they would like to see in the master plan.
  - Study committee members will need to help get the word out to boost attendance from the public at such a meeting. Other avenues that should be explored to boost awareness include:
    - Postcards/fliers mailed to community households with meeting details
      - Approx 1,000 households in WG
    - Include details on the meeting in the borough’s newsletter
    - Put a notice about the meeting somewhere on the Wind Gap Borough website if possible
Get in contact with a local newspaper to see if they will do a feature on the Wind Gap Park Master Plan effort

Try to get word out through the school district

At some point in the coming months, SGA will set up a “virtual town hall” website which will allow continuous interaction with the community on the plan progress

Next study committee meeting TBD, will likely happen sometime in November

Key Persons/Stakeholders

SGA will need to conduct interviews with interested parties as the master plan progresses. A list of interested parties who should be interviewed or, in some cases, approached about becoming a study committee member are:

- Tony Borger – Wind Gap Athletic Association (Director)
  - Joe Gennusa – Baseball
  - Josh Guthrie – Baseball
  - Car show organizers
- Wind Gap Parks Board (7 additional members)
- Jason Keenhold – Owner of house located on corner of Wind Gap Park
- Attendees to Wind Gap Film Club events
- Local fire and police departments
  - Fire dept runs a carnival in the park
- Local church groups
- Frank Jones - Families First
- Special Olympics
- Tortise & Hare 5K (Held at park, Kevin Dolan race director)
- YMCA
  - Silver Sneakers
- Local hospitals

Data

The borough does not have extensive data or surveys for the park, so SGA has been assembling information based on publicly available data sources, field visits, and the paper survey files provided by Wind Gap

Borough will try to find any plans from recent utility modifications to give to SGA

Borough to also provide any approved site plan for the adjacent development at the former quarry

Discussion

The plan will be based on the needs and wants of the community in and around Wind Gap

Comments from steering committee representatives:

- HS Athletics
  - Uses the park a lot for soccer teams, which have been growing, though it can be tough to play over the overlapping baseball fields and team has had to reduce field use to prevent excessive wear on the turf surface
  - HS needs more space in general for its field sports, including soccer and field hockey
  - There is lack of lit fields to play night games on right now
  - Currently no middle school sports programs
- Parks Board
The park needs some more equipment/programming elements which would appeal to some older kids than the current equipment does (larger playground equipment, other activities)

- Walking trails could be a popular element to add
- Tennis courts need repainting
- Possibility of dog park should be explored; dog parks can often garner grassroots support that can prevent extensive maintenance needs from the borough
  - Should get the Parks Board’s “Wish List” for the park

- Film Club
  - Amphitheater could use better seating
  - A good screen/wall to project movies
  - Look into sustainable design elements, such as solar, wind, and energy efficiency

- Other discussion on park needs
  - Borough needs to look into what the current energy consumption of the park is; could possibly reduce those costs greatly by installing high-efficiency lighting
  - Guying straps should be removed from the trees near the playground as the trees could be damaged if they are left the way they are much longer
  - The park needs more shade as it can get very hot in the summer and there isn’t much relief
    - Could look into “shade sails”
  - Might want to consider relocating band shell/amphitheater; location isn’t great relative to sun, and could also be situated better relative to other programming
  - There are some drainage issues at the lower level fields
    - Lower restroom facility there often floods
  - Summer Sounds show series is a big draw to the park during the summers
    - In improved band shell, could maybe look into sound system or projection capabilities
  - Upper restroom facilities are always very hot
  - Look into exercise area (or stations along a given route) for the park
    - Could get sponsorship interest from local health care providers
    - Possibly installed in conjunction with walking trail
  - Parking gets very full for bigger events and street parking is crucial for meeting needs right now. Currently street parking does not seem to be an issue with the community.

This memorandum was prepared by:

Michael Stromberg
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Email: mstromberg@s-ga.com

September 30th, 2015
**Meeting Minutes**

**PROJECT:** Wind Gap Park Master Plan  
**DATE:** December 2, 2015  
**ATTENDEES:** Sean Garrigan (SGA), Ann Toole (TRP), Michael Stromberg (SGA), Louise Firestone (Wind Gap), Dave Valley (Wind Gap), Joe Weaver (Wind Gap), Nicolas Calabrese (WG Film Club), Deb Setar (WG Parks Board), Tim Egan (Pen Argyl HS Athletics)

**SUBJECT:** Study Committee Kickoff Meeting Minutes

---

**Discussion**

- Public meeting/workshop was held in late October and design team received feedback via breakout groups, visual preference survey, and general comments on park issues.
- Drainage issues are a main overarching concern of the park as a whole, there are various locations where local flooding occurs
  - Soccer/baseball field often floods towards the south end
  - The area around the band shell and swing set has frequent drainage issues as well
- The overlapping nature of the soccer/baseball field has been a bit of an issue for the sports orgs
  - Is it possible for the orientation of these fields to be adjusted?
- Policies need to be looked into which will address the issue with the car shows damaging the sports fields.
- The planting in the park needs to be addressed overall.
  - Biggest component is tree replacement
    - Could even have a program where volunteers from the scouts or a community group are planting bare-root seedlings around for a low-cost option
  - Need to have a more cohesive approach to the landscape of the park
- Park needs a deed restriction or to be zoned open space in for DCNR purposes.
- Sport forum will be held on 1/13 (snow date 1/20)
  - Would like to have representatives from each sport at the meeting
- Design team will look into potential options for the relocation/replacement of the band shell/amphitheater
- Energy efficient lighting is a feature the park will need, as electricity is a big maintenance cost for the park right now.
- Team will look at some of the small fixes which will start to improve the atmosphere of the park on a short-term basis
  - Also create some long-term larger recommendations that can be implemented further down the road with the right funding strategies
- There is currently ~$45K from the county with the borough has match available for, so it’s basically ~$90K that they can use to match DCNR funds
This memorandum was prepared by:

Michael Stromberg
Project Designer
Ph: 814.443.1073
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Email: mstromberg@s-ga.com

Meeting Minutes
Wind Gap Park Master Plan
**Meeting Minutes**

**PROJECT:** Wind Gap Park Master Plan  
**DATE:** January 20, 2016  
**ATTENDEES:** Ann Toole (TRP), Michael Stromberg (SGA), Louise Firestone (Wind Gap), Tim Egan (Pen Argyl HS Athletics)

**SUBJECT:** Wind Gap Park Sports Field Meeting

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**Discussion**

- Involvement in the master plan process from sports team coaches and officials is currently lacking
- May want to look into alternative field surfaces like composite soil or turf
- Teams have issues with the shared use fields so best option may be to, at some point, split up soccer/field hockey and the baseball fields
- Sports organizations are worried about losing their fields from changes on both a temporary and permanent basis
- Currently only soccer and baseball use the fields at Wind Gap Park
- Shared use problems are considered the biggest issue currently, with drainage being an issue as well
- Borough needs to figure out an optimal utilization of the fields and whether a reconfiguration is something everyone would buy into
- Turf field would likely get a significant amount of use
  - A lit turf field could get the use of several unlit grass fields
  - Turf installation is expensive though and would preclude car shows/other events
- Might want to look at tailoring the fields to one sport in particular to cut down on wasted space from shared use.
  - Could explore regional partnerships to optimize uses: have a complex of baseball diamonds somewhere and convert these fields to soccer/field sports
- Look into Peer studies through DCNR to explore the possibility of regional sports
  - There is some limited crossover currently, but generally before 7th grade, each municipality is running its own sports
- Should try to create a survey online and distribute to Wind Gap/Pen Argyl/Plainfield
  - Could contact Blue Mountain Library about survey as it has monthly newsletter that goes to the communities
  - Borough website or newsletter is also a potential survey opportunity
  - Survey should be tailored to the park as a whole, not just sports issues
- Amphitheater is something that very much needs to be upgraded, but the general amphitheater use should still remain within the park as the events are popular, despite the condition of the facility.
- The Green County, MO park system might be a good model to emulate.
• Phasing of all projects will ultimately be important.
• Borough might look into creating field hockey feeder league to generate interest.
• Tennis courts are in need of repair and could use some upgrades.
• Design team will provide some plan concepts to the committee by the next study committee meeting.

This memorandum was prepared by:

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January 21, 2016
**Meeting Minutes**

**PROJECT:** Wind Gap Park Master Plan  
**DATE:** June 1, 2016  
**ATTENDEES:** Sean Garrigan (SGA), Ann Toole (TRP), Michael Stromberg (SGA), Louise Firestone (Wind Gap Borough), Joe Weaver (Wind Gap Borough), Dave Valley (Wind Gap Borough), Deb Setar (Wind Gap Parks Board)

**SUBJECT:** Wind Gap Park Study Committee Meeting

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**Discussion**

- The design team received strong feedback from the survey that was posted and a number of people expressed interest in volunteering to help with the park in various capacities
  - The survey will be kept active for a little while longer to potentially get a few more volunteers
  - The volunteers from the survey responses could potentially be contacted directly about the upcoming public meeting
- The playground, walking, and events are the main draws for the park currently that people want to see continued/improved.
  - There were comments that the spectator areas for the sports fields need to be improved, including introducing more shade.
- Cleanliness and safety were seen as the most important attributes for the park
- Improvements for walking, the playground, and introducing a “spray ground” were among the things people most wanted to see happen with the park master plan
- Many expressed interest in allowing dogs in the park or even in a dedicated dog park area
  - This can be a divisive issue as it poses its own issues involved with dogs remaining secured and with the cleanliness of the park
  - Borough could consider opening park to dogs on a provisional basis, either full-time or perhaps starting with some specific dog-friendly events
  - If the borough does choose to introduce dogs to the park, they could try to see if there is interest in a “friends of the dog park”-type group that would deal with maintenance and other issues
  - If a dog park was built, it could potentially be controlled with registration and access to the area via key fob
- Some were concerned with park safety and wanted more law enforcement presence in the park
  - There is no local Wind Gap police force, it is a regional police department that covers the area
  - The borough did just purchase 3 new security cameras for the park that have not been deployed yet. Have been waiting for the master plan to figure out how they might want to configure them
  - Band shell is one of the main problem areas, security-wise
• There are conflicting ideas for the park, in that people have a desire for fields that are in better condition, but some of the largest draws are special events that cause major wear/damage to the facilities (i.e. – car show)
  o Borough could explore the possibility of potentially moving the car show off of the fields and into the street. Lehigh Street has significant potential to be a street that holds the car show, as it is wide and park-adjacent, but not a major thru road for the area
  o Could also explore event holders securing bonds for events like the car show to protect against damage (issue is that Athletic Association is the car show sponsor)
• Should look at two levels of improvements for the park
  o Should be a set of smaller/incremental improvements that can be enacted over time with smaller sums
  o There should also be a set of larger capital improvements which focus on improving the overall framework of the park
• Tree replacement is recommended for much of the park area, but this can be done in an incremental fashion
  o Having a healthy and extensive tree canopy is very desirable for a park such as this; will look into some locations where trees need to be added
• The newer restroom facility that was funded by DCNR is approximately 15 years old, and since it was constructed with DCNR funds, it may be an issue to remove it
  o Perhaps creating an additional structure around the building or some other improvement is possible
• The evergreen trees around the upper parking lot are not in great shape and should probably be targeted for removal. New parking lot configuration necessitates their removal anyway.
• Seating for the current amphitheater is almost looked at as a net negative
  o It occupies much of the events green space and the seating is deemed to be uncomfortable
• Borough would like to know the square footage of the current playground footprint versus the expanded one shown in the master plan.
  o There are potential ways to include trees within a playground area without impacting the surface/equipment
  o Master plan will look at making the expanded section a natural/creative play area
• It’s been mentioned that the Boy Scouts are looking at doing a jamboree of some sort in the park.
• The handicap spaces by the basketball courts were installed as part of a program that funded “shovel-ready” park improvements and was needed to get funds for improving the courts themselves.
  o The shed-type building in this space was built to be a concession building
• Would it be possible to relocate the DCNR restroom building to the lower area?
• For the concession plaza proposed at the lower concession building, may want to look at permeable paving as an option.
• Lower green space at north end of park does get a wet at times.
• Some incremental improvements that should be looked into include the replacement of fencing with vinyl-coated type fencing and replacement of outdated light fixtures with new led-type lighting.
• Should look into expanding the play area further beyond what is being shown.
• Design team should address cleaning up the batting cages somewhere in the master plan narrative.
- The promenade projecting from 4th Street is seen as the “spine” of the park to an extent and is being looked at as the main pedestrian entrance to the park.
- Major concern with the park in the near-term is the electrical needs that have to be addressed
  - Some electrical improvements could be done in conjunction with replacement of lighting
  - The main concession building/kitchen needs major upgrades, including the service panel as well as the connection to the building
  - The lower field lighting is relatively old but has been maintained by the AA
- The park has no consistent signage palette and one should be recommended. Will also need a donor recognition sign for any funded projects.
- Public meeting will be held on 6/13, then the draft document will follow and a final committee meeting will be scheduled
- DCNR contact is Lorne Possinger
- Borough should send email to volunteer list it has collected from the survey before the public meeting.

This memorandum was prepared by:

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Meeting Minutes

PROJECT: Wind Gap Park Master Plan
DATE: June 13, 2016

SUBJECT: Wind Gap Park Draft Master Plan Public Meeting

Presentation

- SGA discussed the major themes of the master plan and the methodology used to arrive at the plan.
- The master plan was based on several factors:
  - Public engagement findings/conclusions, including from the public workshop, key person interviews, and a public survey offered on the borough website
  - Discussions with the steering committee and public officials to establish current concerns
  - Analysis of available site data and field observation
- Creating an attractive walking feature, an improved playground, and special events emerged as main themes for the park improvements.
- It is important that there is a funding path for implementing improvements after developing a plan.
- Play areas with natural/creative elements will be looked at rather than traditional equipment out of a catalog.
- Draft version of master plan was fully presented and explained to public.

Comments

- What will be the maintenance requirements for the stormwater management areas?
  - Stormwater swales will need to be trimmed down to 12” each fall, but general maintenance will not include constant mowing. After initial planting, some minor infill may be needed but once swales are fully planted, they should require limited maintenance.
  - Upper stormwater areas near events green would include more ornamental plant species.
- It was noted that the lower slope area is sometimes used by kids for sleigh riding in the winter.
- Question posed if a dog park could be a possibility in the lower, northern area
  - Potential complications are there with the flooding aspects of that area.
  - There is also potential for looking at putting a dog park on a separate borough-owned parcel.
- It was pointed out that additional parking is needed within the park.
  - Plan tries to address that with expanded/more efficient upper parking area.
- Northampton County open space grant application comes due in September
- After this meeting, design team will work on breaking plan into implementation packages.

Meeting Minutes
Wind Gap Park Master Plan