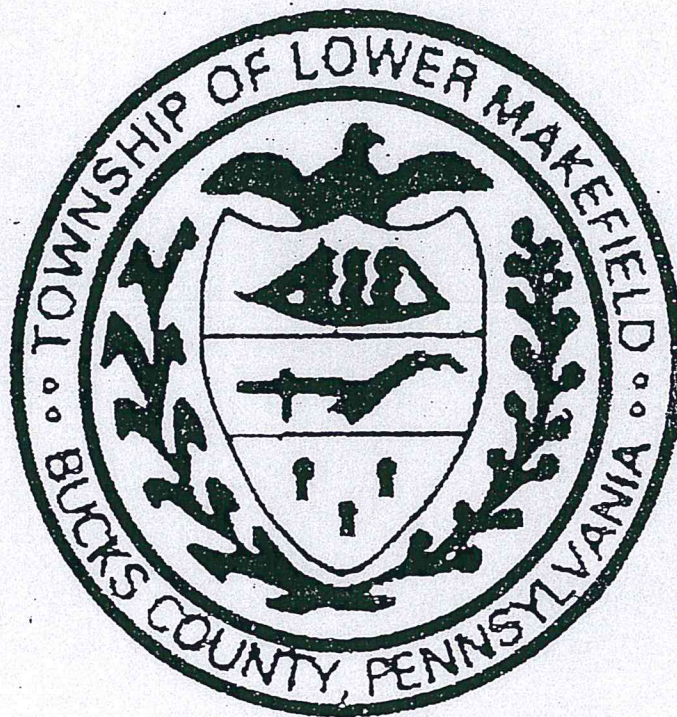


LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN OF ACTION



SEPTEMBER 15, 1995

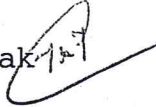
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Township of Lower Makefield

DATE: November 21, 1995

TO: Jeffrey Garton
✓ Park & Recreation Board
Karen Forster

FROM: Terry S. Fedorchak 

RE: **PARK & RECREATION STUDY**

Enclosed is a copy of Resolution No. 918 which was approved by the Board of Supervisors at the public meeting of November 20, 1995. This resolution accepts the Rettew Study dated September 15, 1995 to be used as a guideline in future park and recreation planning.

ms

attachment

RESOLUTION NO. 918

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP ACCEPTING A REPORT FROM RETTEW ASSOCIATES, INC., RELATED TO PARK AND RECREATION IN THE TOWNSHIP.

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors retained the services of Rettew Associates, Inc. and Toole Recreation Planning to assess current potential parkland for its recreation possibilities along with reviewing the Township's programs, maintenance and staffing as it relates to recreation; and

WHEREAS, the report was prepared and submitted to the Board of Supervisors on or about September 15, 1995; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has reviewed the report, discussed its contents with other advisory groups within the Township, and has conducted a public discussion at a Board of Supervisors meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Lower Makefield Township that the report known as the Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Plan of Action dated September 15, 1995, and prepared by Rettew Associates, Inc. and Toole Recreation Planning is herein accepted by the Board of Supervisors as a guideline and/or planning tool for utilization by the Township for the future in areas associated with park and recreation.

This Resolution was duly adopted at the Board of Supervisors meeting on this ^{20th} day of November, 1995.

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP**

By: *James L. Goddard*
By: *Scott J. Legler*
By: *Wesley W. Whitman*
By: *Frank J. Fazzaloro*
By: *Michael D. ...*

LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN OF ACTION

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Township Manager

Terry S. Fedorchak

Recreation Coordinator

Karen Forster

Consultants

RETTEW Associates, Inc.
Toole Recreation Planning

September 15, 1995

LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN OF ACTION

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1. Assessment and Recommendations for Recreation Lands | 3 |
| Recreation Lands | 3 |
| Parkland Standards | 3 |
| Park Location | 4 |
| Park Type | 4 |
| Recreation Facilities | 5 |
| 1. Need for a Balance of Recreation Facilities | 5 |
| 2. Need for Additional Organized Sports Facilities | 8 |
| 3. Need to Connect Bikeways and Provide Access to the Towpath, Canal, and River | 9 |
| Lower Makefield Recreation Lands | 9 |
| Oxford Valley Road and Roelofs Road Site | 10 |
| Edgewood Village Site | 11 |
| Woodside Road and Dolington Road Site | 12 |
| Potential Recreational Lands in Northern End of Township | 12 |
| Macclesfield Park Enhancements | 13 |
| 2. Programs and Services | 17 |
| Leisure Services | 19 |
| Private, Non-Profit and Commercial Enterprises | 23 |
| Lower Makefield Township | 24 |
| Program Analysis | 25 |
| Program Management | 28 |
| Conclusions | 29 |
| Course of Action | 30 |
| 3. Administration and Management | 32 |
| Current Administrative Structure | 32 |
| Administration for the Future | 35 |
| Finance | 38 |
| 4. Related Park and Recreation Issues and Opportunities | 40 |
| Five-Mile Woods | 40 |
| Bexley Orchards | 40 |

Table of Contents Continued

Falls of the Delaware 40
Bikeways 41
Golf Course 41
In-Line Skating/In-Line Hockey 41
Mandatory Dedication of Land 42
Recreation Center 42
Park Names and Signage 42
Art in the Park 42
Gift Policy 43
Concession Policy 43

Tables

Table 1 Core Recreation Land Needs 4
Table 2 Organized Sports Inventory for 1995 20

Figures

Figure 1 Lower Makefield Township Organization Chart 33
Figure 2 Organization Chart with Full-Time Park and Recreation
Department 38

Appendix

Appendix 1 Community Center Photos

LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

INTRODUCTION

Lower Makefield Township is a special place, located within a region having resources not found anywhere else in the United States. The Township has beautiful scenery; the Delaware River, canal, and towpath; rich agricultural landscapes; historic and cultural treasures; and a mix of federal, state, county, and local park and recreation facilities. The natural resources in Lower Makefield are remarkable in their variety and quality despite tremendous development pressure. The unique blend of scenic, cultural, and recreational opportunities make the Township a wonderful place in which to live. Recreation is a key factor in establishing the high quality of life in Lower Makefield.

Lower Makefield Township has a tremendous park and recreation system. Macclesfield Park, as a sports complex, is the envy of many communities far and wide. Community Park has a pool complex so popular that an additional swimming pool had to be added to accommodate over 600 families on a waiting list: Miles of bike paths enable people of all ages to cycle safely through many of the neighborhoods. Small neighborhood parks provide easy access to tot lots, game courts, playing fields, and sitting areas. Five Mile Woods covers 285 acres of nature preserve that is a treasure for the entire region. Picnic facilities and a boat launch operated by the Commonwealth provide recreation opportunities not normally found in municipal park systems. The canal and towpath are part of the Delaware & Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor.

Despite the richness and diversity of this system, the Township is facing tremendous pressure from development that is projected to result in an ultimate build-out with a population increase of 55 percent over the next two decades. The present facilities indicate a great amount of use. Given the projections for development in Lower Makefield, there will be a need for additional facilities; a balance of recreation facilities for people of all ages and interests; and preservation of open space and greenways.

Within the next two decades, Lower Makefield will essentially complete its development. The decisions made by the Township in the late twentieth century will provide the enduring landscape of Lower Makefield in the twenty-first century. Entrusted with the inheritance of the future, community leaders will be making hundreds of short-term decisions regarding recreation that will have long-term impact. In order to ensure that the recreational needs of the Township's projected population of 42,000 citizens are met, Lower Makefield commissioned this project to assess current and potential park land for its recreation possibilities along with a review of programs, maintenance, and staffing. The goal was to determine how all citizens can receive the highest quality recreation experiences possible through the municipal system. This report includes the following:

1. Assessment and Recommendations for Recreational Lands
 - Oxford Valley Road & Roelofs Road site;
 - Edgewood Village site;
 - Woodside Road & Dolington Road site;
 - Potential recreational lands in northern end of Township; and
 - Macclesfield Park Enhancements.
2. Programs and Services
3. Administration and Maintenance
4. Related Parks and Recreation Issues and Opportunities.

| TABLE 1 CORE RECREATION LAND NEEDS: 10 ACRES 1,000 RESIDENTS LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Core Recreation Lands | To Serve Year 1995 Population - 27,000 | To Serve Year 2000 Estimated Population - 35,000 | To Serve Year 2010 Estimated Population - 42,000 |
| Core Recreation Acres that should be provided | 270 | 350 | 420 |
| Existing Acres of Core Recreation | 165.2 | 165.2 | 165.2 |
| Additional Core Recreation Acres Recreation Needed | 104.8 | 184.8 | 254.8 |

The core recreation acreage includes Community Park, Macclesfield Park, Schuyler Road, Revere Road, Edgewood Village, Heacock Meadows, Heacock Field, and the land on Oxford Valley Road, Bexley Orchards, and Woodside/Dolington Roads. Analysis of the core recreation acreage needs shown that there is an immediate need for an additional 42.7 acres of core recreation land. Within the next five years, the Township will need a total of 104.3 acres. The population growth is already exceeding projections done for planning purposes since 1981. When the Township is fully built-out, Lower Makefield will need 158.2 acres of core recreation land in addition to the existing 165.2 acres.

PARK LOCATION

Since existing parks are located southwest of Yardley-Langhorne Road, there is a need for parkland in the Northern part of the Township. Because I-95 traverses Lower Makefield, cutting off about a third of the community, parkland is especially needed northeast of I-95 and Yardley-Newtown Road.

The Township has been pursuing the location of neighborhood parks in residential subdivisions as the Township developed. This policy should continue in the future if the land is a minimum of five acres and useful for game courts, playing fields, sitting areas, and playgrounds. Neighborhood parks that have significant recreation facilities such as tennis courts appear to be well-used by local residents. Neighborhood-type park sites that appear to be under-used were those with isolated play equipment or no facilities at all.

PARK TYPE

Lower Makefield has a mix of park types ranging from vest-pocket parks of less than a quarter acre to a large nature preserve of over two hundred acres. The identifiable park types include:

1. Vest-pocket parks, less than an acre in size, with play equipment and game courts;
2. Neighborhood parks, up to 15 acres in size with a 1/4 mile service radius, containing playing fields, game courts, or play equipment but no mix of facilities at any one site;
3. Special use facilities including:
 - Macclesfield Park which serves primarily as a sports complex;
 - Community Park which provides intense active recreation facilities including the swimming pool, lighted game courts, and ball fields with lighting. Kid's Kingdom is also a special type of playground that draws from throughout the Township and beyond because of its size, quality, and amenities.
 - Five Mile Woods which serves as a nature preserve.

Absent from this list is a traditional community park. By definition, community parks are 25 acres or more with a combination of natural features for scenic enjoyment and relaxation as well as areas for active recreation. They generally serve residents living within a two mile radius, although in many suburban communities, community parks actually serve the entire locality.

RECREATION FACILITIES

Lower Makefield Township is a community with high participation levels in all forms of recreational activities ranging from organized sports and aquatics to the newly formed senior adult program to relatively new pursuits such as in-line skating. There were three resounding themes throughout the planning process for this project which are described below:

1. There is a need for a balance of recreation facilities to accommodate all ages and interests.
2. Additional facilities to support organized sports are needed.
3. Preserving greenways and linkages is essential. Especially important is completing bikeway connections and creating access to the Canal and Delaware River.

1. NEED FOR A BALANCE OF RECREATION FACILITIES

Lower Makefield has been developing active recreation facilities over the years to meet immediate needs for playing fields while simultaneously seizing major opportunities such as the acquisition of Five Mile Woods and the construction of Kid's Kingdom through volunteers. The need to develop a balance of recreation facilities for all ages and interests is emerging and will be important to address in the future. To achieve a balance of facilities in the park and recreation system, the Township should consider adding areas for scenic enjoyment with seating and shade, game courts for self-directed activity, amenities such as drinking fountains, lighting for extended hours where

appropriate, flower plantings and landscaping, and public art. Other ideas may emerge through citizen involvement.

Basketball Courts

One of the most immediate needs in the Township is for additional basketball courts. The Township has only two basketball courts. One of these courts is located in Heacock Meadows. An undersized court, it has limited use for the residents. Because of the heavy demand, many people cannot use the existing courts. Lighting of future basketball courts should be considered in areas that are easily patrolled, publicly visible, and compatible with surrounding land uses.

Tennis Courts

Although existing tennis courts appear to meet current needs, there have been reports of players having to wait beyond the accepted one hour to get on occupied courts. Population growth in a community with Lower Makefield's population characteristics dictates that additional courts will be needed to keep pace with the demand of new residents.

Bocce Courts and Horseshoe Pits

Bocce and horseshoe courts should be added in facilities along with shaded sitting areas and picnic facilities. Such facilities are great amenities for people of all ages, family outings, group picnics, and leagues.

Volleyball Courts

Volleyball is proving to be a great success with a typically difficult-to-serve age group: teens and young adults. The new program started off with eight teen and six adult teams. While the Master Plan recommends only two volleyball courts for the Township's ultimate population, the popularity of sand volleyball indicates that more courts be added to neighborhood and community parks.

Indoor Recreation Facilities

There are no year-round indoor recreation facilities in the Township. While the schools fill this purpose to some extent, there is not enough gym time nor day-time activity space available. The new and growing senior citizens program launched a mere six months ago, already has over 180 members. This provides further evidence that there is a need for some type of community center in Lower Makefield. Should the Township want to consider the possibility of a community center, further exploration would be needed.

Community recreation centers have been enormously successful in other municipalities. Enclosed in this report is a photograph and a floor plan of a recreation center. As shown in this photo, community centers have entered a new era of bright, cheerful, clean and

friendly places that compel people to want to be there. Such community centers typically provide an indoor family aquatics center, fitness and wellness facility, indoor track, gymnasium(s), activity areas, teen and senior area, babysitting, community meeting rooms, and gathering place. Photographs of community centers are shown on Appendix 1.

Community Center Examples

Most of the examples of the state of the art in community recreation centers are from the western states where trends in recreation generally begin and drift to the East. Colorado is a leader featuring with the twenty successful community centers and more on the drawing boards. They are in communities such as:

- Castle Rock, population 11,000, built a 39,500 square foot center and is in the process of adding on additional facilities.
- Lafayette, population 15,000, constructed a 43,500 square foot center.
- Louisville, population 13,000, built a 57,000 square foot recreation center and is also in the process of enlarging it to meet the demands.

While the centers were constructed with public funds, the operating costs are largely self-supporting through fees and charges. It is interesting to note that the centers in Lafayette and Louisville and one other in a nearby town are within five miles of one another. Rather than being competition for one another, each served as a catalyst for building another. Citizens in communities near these wonderful facilities began to ask their legislators why they couldn't have one of their own.

Closer to home, there are two examples of community recreation centers in Pennsylvania that were built with private funds and are operated through fees and charges and fundraising:

- Lititz, population 8,280, in Lancaster County raised all of the funds privately before the ground was broken to build the center.
- Ephrata, population 12,133, also in Lancaster County, generated the capital development funds through private fund-raising and fund-raising events.

Feasibility studies are underway in a number of communities in Pennsylvania to develop recreation centers similar to the successful models in Colorado.

These municipalities include Plymouth Township in Montgomery County, Muhlenberg Township in Berks County, The Penn Manor Community Recreation Center Foundation in the Lancaster area, and the City of Wilkes Barre.

Playgrounds

The popularity and success of Kid's Kingdom demonstrates the importance of providing playgrounds. As residential development continues north of I-95, there will be a need

for a second major playground in the township. Additionally, playgrounds are essential complementary recreation facilities to athletic facilities. A mix of facilities for different ages provides a desirable leisure destination for people of all ages and interests.

2. NEED FOR ADDITIONAL ORGANIZED FACILITIES

The rapid growth of citizens participating in leagues is projected for the future. New leagues and sports are being added. There is an immediate need for three additional softball fields. This study strongly recommends that the Township consider adopting a policy to build single use fields. The use of the overlapping and dual purpose fields results in the field overuse and user conflicts. Another way to eliminate user conflicts is to adhere to the policy of having one sanctioned league per sport.

While the fields on Pennsbury School District property are available for league play, groups are hesitant to use them because of their poor condition. Investment in school fields is questionable at this time because of the tenuous situation of school fields being lost due to school expansion. For the Township or private groups to make investments in school-owned fields, there needs to be an agreement with the school district about the control and tenure of the fields.

Softball

The immediate need is for 60 foot softball fields. This can be approached through a combination of adding additional fields as well as by lighting fields in areas compatible with surrounding land uses. This type of facility is essential to meet the current and projected needs of female participants as well as softball play by older age groups and mixed leagues.

Soccer

Although the need for soccer fields appeared to have been met through the development of Macclesfield Park, the need for more fields is projected to increase. The reasons for this include the growth of the Township's population by another 55 percent, the increasing participation in soccer overall, and the emergence of new leagues for football and lacrosse. With a growth rate of six percent annually, the leagues could double in size by the Year 2004. Communities outside of Pennsylvania that have experienced similar growth patterns have seen programs also form for field hockey and rugby. The emergence of leagues in Lower Makefield for lacrosse, football and t-ball as well as unscheduled play have created extra use now on the fields that the Township has been trying diligently to keep under control. While the Township's goal has been to limit field use to ten hours per week, there is a perception that the actual use exceeds this time allotment. Ultimately, the Township should strive towards a goal of creating single use fields wherever possible. Such a policy will provide good quality fields as well as to help eliminate user conflicts.

Planning for growth requires long range thinking that will enable the Township to acquire land before it is gone. Even if the land were to be land-banked it would provide Lower Makefield with the flexibility to develop recreation facilities many years down the road. With a finite amount of land in Lower Makefield if it is developed, the community will have no options for building recreation facilities in the future.

3. NEED TO CONNECT BIKEWAYS, AND PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE TOWPATH, CANAL, AND RIVER

Through ambitions and thoughtful planning, the Township is in the forefront of bikeway planning. The next step should be for the township to complete the bikeway system throughout the Township to connect residential areas with parks, schools, and other public use facilities.

Improving access to the towpath and canal should be explored. While the Black Rock Road picnic area is a great facility, recreation managers along the canal have reported that the towpath and canal get the most use where there is an adjoining larger recreation facility and/or with access to a loop that people can walk. Identifying areas for recreation facilities near the canal and providing access points to establish loops would be important.

Lower Makefield Township borders the Delaware River providing waterfront opportunities that are a very desirable amenity in a community. Unfortunately there is limited access to the River because of River Road. The Pennsylvania Fish and Game Commission has a boat launch site near Yardley that is heavily used. The opportunity for a river front park in Lower Makefield has been discussed in the past but the idea has never been fully explored. The Township should consider doing a study to determine the options and feasibility for developing a park and/or creating other access points to the River.

LOWER MAKEFIELD RECREATION LANDS

A landscape architect and a recreation planner assessed five properties and/or areas in Lower Makefield to determine their suitability in meeting community recreation needs both now and in the future. Along with the Recreation Coordinator and Public Works Director, they conducted an on-site field study. As part of the process, they interviewed the Township Supervisors, Park and Recreation Board, Township administration, and selected community organizations for their ideas, concerns, and suggestions. The following section details the findings of the assessment.

Overview

The natural topography and physical characteristics of the Township are very compatible with parkland development. The gentle rolling to shallow sloping topography lends itself to development of park facilities. The agricultural heritage of the area provides potential sites of open fields with wooded areas existing in steeper sloped areas or areas of water resources. Several factors were considered in the assessment of each of the following park sites:

- Site location;
- Vehicular and pedestrian access;
- Topography;
- Parcel configuration and size;
- Adjacent existing uses and zoning district designation;
- Linkage to the bikeway system; and
- Adaptability to recreation development.

OXFORD VALLEY ROAD & ROELOFS ROAD SITE

Recommendation: Retain ownership of the Oxford Valley Road & Roelofs Road site. Develop the tract as a recreation area to meet the immediate critical recreation needs of Lower Makefield Township.

Location:

The Oxford Valley Road & Roelofs Road tract is located in the south-central area of the Township. The site is conveniently accessed from Oxford Valley Road which is an east-west connector in the southern portion of the Township. Oxford Valley Road connects to other Township connector roads; Stoney Hill Road, Edgewood Road, and Heacock Road. The tracts' location will help to serve the densely populated southeast area of the municipality which is almost fully developed with limited sites for additional parkland.

Tract Characteristics:

The tract is 22 acres in size and has topography and vegetative cover that is suitable for recreation development. The site is shallow sloped on the cultivated southern half which is suitable for active recreation and wooded with greater sloped areas to the north which are suitable for passive recreation. The shape of the parcel is adaptable for athletic field and court development on the open portion of the site and trails and picnicking facilities in the wooded portions of the tract. The site is located in the R-2 Zoning District and is surrounded by residential development or land considered developable by the Township. The Township Bike Way Map indicates that bike paths are proposed along the Oxford Valley Road frontage of the property.

Potential Recreation Development:

The Oxford Valley Road & Roelofs Road tract is the one parcel that is immediately

available and of appropriate size to meet the current recreation needs of the community. Development of this tract will facilitate two immediate recreation needs in the Township; provide an area for softball fields and create a park which provides a mix of facilities on one site in a heavily populated area. The proposed recreation development of the tract includes a mix of active and passive facilities. Facilities recommended for development on the site include:

- Two Softball Fields
- Roller Hockey Court
- Walking/Biking/In-line Skating Trails
- Youth Playground/Tot lot
- Two Basketball Courts
- Picnic Pavilion
- Bocce/Horseshoe Courts
- Lighting if compatible with neighborhood

EDGEWOOD VILLAGE SITE

Recommendation: The tract has limited recreation value because of its size and location. The Township should consider the following choices for the tract:

- *Develop the site for use as a park with a historic theme. Add facilities such as a gazebo, bocce, horseshoe, seating areas. While it is not a typical neighborhood park, it is a special space for such activities as performing arts.*
- *Sell the site and use the proceeds to purchase land elsewhere.*

Location:

The site is located in the Village of Edgewood on the west-central side of the municipality. The tract is in the C-1 Zoning District, but adjacent to R-1, R-2, and H-C Zoning Districts. The surrounding land uses are commercial and residential. The tract has frontage on Edgewood Road.

Tract Characteristics:

The 2.8 acre site is essentially a flat open lawn area with scattered mature trees, configured in a rectangular shape. There is a proposed bike path link on the opposite side of Edgewood Road. The site is currently developed with a paved parking area, tot lot play equipment and open area for two small soccer fields.

Potential Recreation Development:

The small size of the site and its location and service area relative to residential areas result in Edgewood Village Park having limited value as a recreation facility. The National Recreation and Park Association states in their recommended standards for parks that mini-parks should be located within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse development or housing for the elderly. This park

does not meet this criteria and its small size prohibits the diverse variety of development required for a neighborhood park.

If the Township determines that the tract should be further developed as parkland the existing facilities should remain and the following site enhancements are recommended.

- Small gazebo or pavilion for shade;
- Safety barrier of landscaping or fence in historic context between roadway and parkland;
- Expand the Playground equipment; and
- Landscaping.
- Bocce

WOODSIDE ROAD & DOLINGTON ROAD SITE

Recommendation: The site has limited value as recreation land or open space because of its size and location. The Township should consider keeping this site only if additional land can be obtained from the developer adjoining the property. If contiguous land is not available, the Township should consider selling it.

Location:

The site is located at the intersection of Woodside Road and Dolington Road in the northern portion of the municipality. There is currently residential development planned or existing in close proximity to the tract and much more residential development is anticipated in this portion of the Township. The increased traffic could potentially create a safety concern at this intersection and the small size of the tract does not provide sufficient area to safely buffer recreation activities from the roadways. Additionally the small size of the tract does not lend itself to recreational development.

POTENTIAL RECREATION LANDS IN NORTHERN END OF TOWNSHIP

Recommendation: Purchase land at the northern end of the Township and develop as a community park with the theme of family recreation.

Size/Location/Characteristics:

Table 1, Core Recreation Land Needs on page 4 analyzed Lower Makefield Township's need for additional park acreage. There is currently a deficit of over 100 acres of recreation land in the municipality. An inventory of existing recreation acreage revealed that the traditional community park is missing from the available mix of recreation opportunities in Lower Makefield Township. Although a community park by definition has a minimum size of 25 acres the existing parkland deficit and projected continued growth in the Township justify a more aggressive approach by Lower Makefield Township to acquire and develop parkland.

The area of the Township north of I-95 is rapidly developing with residential subdivisions and does not have any existing recreation acreage. The Township should seek to purchase 50 to 75 acres of contiguous acres in this area of the Township for community park development. Potential tracts should be evaluated for adaptability to active and passive recreation development. Tracts should have a combination of natural features for scenic enjoyment and relaxation and open shallow sloped land for field and court development. The tract should be easily accessible to residents in the northern portion of the Township and should be served by public utilities.

Potential Recreation Development:

The proposed recreation development of the tract includes a mixture of passive and active recreation opportunities which provide family oriented recreation opportunities. Facilities recommended for development on the community park site include:

- Trails
- Picnic Areas/Pavilions
- Softball Fields
- Soccer Fields
- Baseball Fields
- In-Line Hockey Court
- Bocce/Horseshoe Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Tot Lot
- Youth Playground
- Volleyball Courts
- Open Areas
- Tennis Courts

MACCLESFIELD PARK ENHANCEMENTS

Recommendation: Capitalize on the focus of Macclesfield Park as a premier sports complex. Add amenities to the park that enhance the use of the complex by players, spectators, families and casual users.

Macclesfield Park is regionally recognized as a premier recreation facility. The focus of the park is athletic fields, and as such, functions as a sports complex more than a community park. The sports complex theme for Macclesfield Park is appropriate for the site because of the favorable topography and the drive-to nature of the facility. The 1994 park master plan has maintained the focus of the facility and taken the existing layout of primarily soccer fields and enhance it to provide game courts areas for diversity of sports opportunities. The park has recently been enlarged with an additional 30 acres contiguous to the east. This land brings the total park acreage to 91.9 acres and provides the opportunity to enhance the existing park layout with additional sports facilities, facilities that will complement the sports complex theme and overflow areas so that fields and practice areas can be rested.

The proposed enhancement to Macclesfield Park include the following:

- **Parking:** Provide additional parking at the eastern end of the property to be accessed via Oakhill Lane. Do not provide a connection between the parking on the east side of the property to the existing and proposed parking on the western side of the property. Overflow parking area should

be designated in the park plan and developed with stabilized turf. The layout of the stabilized turf parking areas would be defined with landscaping.

- **Playground:** Provide expanded playground opportunities for both tots (ages 2 to 5 years) and youth (6 to 12 years) in age segregated areas. Work with playground designers to develop a creative playground master plan that is dynamic in design, educational and stimulating to children and colorful. Utilize the color and material theme of the playground as a vocabulary for other park accessories (benches, trash receptacles, signs, etc.) Accessorize the playground with a sand area, story telling/gathering area, small pavilion, water feature and creative/educational features. Provide opportunities for both group and individual play.
- **Picnic Areas/Pavilions:** Multiple locations should be developed with picnic pavilions. Pavilions would be utilized by sports teams during tournaments and by groups for annual picnics. Pavilions will provide shade in the park.
- **Softball Field:** Field B is the only existing softball field in the complex and its orientation is not recommended by the PA Department of Community Affairs or the National Recreation and Park Association. The field is well developed and used in its current configuration. The location will not allow it to be reorientated in the same area. The Township should consider installing lights on this field so that it could be used as developed and afternoon and early evening use should be limited for safety reasons. The Township should consider developing two softball fields on the eastern portion of the site for a total of three softball fields.
- **Trail System:** Develop a trail system that loops around the park site while minimizing conflict areas with vehicular traffic. There should be shorter loops and longer loops. Develop the paths at minimum 10' wide to allow multiple activities and two-way traffic, paint a centerline on the trail. Design the trail to provide a variety of experiences such as through open areas, wooded areas, landscaped areas, near activity areas, and provide terrain changes (maximum 5% slope). The trail should access the canal tow path at the eastern and western limits of the park to provide a loop configuration to utilize the tow path. The paths should be paved with bituminous so that it is compatible with in-line skating use.
- **ADA Considerations:** All facilities must be accessible by the physically challenged and the route of travel must consider connections from the parking areas and neighborhood paths to the park facilities. Each sports facility should be provided with a wheel-chair viewing area that is accessible from a pathway.

- Soccer Fields: Discussions with the soccer leagues revealed that soccer fields E and G are short by ten yards in each direction and soccer field F is short five yards in each direction. If these facilities cannot be expanded safely in their current locations one of the fields should be relocated to the undeveloped eastern portion of the park. The Township should consider developing two additional soccer fields on the eastern portion of the site bringing the total number of fields at Macclesfield Park to seven soccer fields.
- Tennis Courts: Tennis courts should be added to the park as indicated on the 1994 master plan. The courts should be developed in banks of two with a separation fence between each bank. The courts should be lighted and have electrical outlets for ball machines so that lessons could be given at the site. The northwest winds should be screened from the courts by landscaping.
- In-Line Hockey Court: The popularity of in-line skating has created the need for in-line hockey courts in many communities. One in-line hockey court is recommended for Macclesfield Park. In-line hockey is an emerging sport with no existing standards for development. Courts are built at a variety of sizes as land permits. The largest area required for a court is 85' by 200' plus safety and viewing area surrounding the court. This size corresponds to an ice hockey court.
- Landscaping: Landscaping should be provided throughout the park for numerous reasons: to enhance the visual image of the park, to provide shaded areas, to separate non-compatible uses and/or create safety barriers, and to create areas of interest that enhance the park users experience. Landscaping is critical at Macclesfield Park because of the tracts large size and configuration as well as the nature of the proposed facilities. Active park facilities are typically large areas of flat land with few accessories beyond an occasional back stop to break up the area. Landscaping at Macclesfield will bring the large expanses of the site into a human scale and add interest to the site. Landscaping should be part of every phase of improvements planned for the park with highest priority placed on street tree and evergreen tree planting.
- Open Space: Non-defined open space is important for any community park. Macclesfield Park should have areas where park users can fly kites, play frisbee and recreate in non-defined ways. Open areas will also facilitate the use of the park for community events and sports tournaments.
- Storage: Adequate storage facilities are important in any sports complex. Leagues require convenient, secure, storage for equipment and supplies.

- Bocce/Horseshoe Courts: The addition of bocce and horseshoe courts will add to the diversity of recreation opportunities available in the park. Competitive leagues for these sports often emerge in communities where facilities are provided.
- Safety: Safety is a concern in any recreation facility and should be addressed at many levels. The size of Macclesfield Park will not allow the penetration of parking to be limited so that users do not have to cross vehicular areas to get from one activity area to another. Facilities for small children should be located to minimize vehicular area crossings. There should be no vehicular connection through the park which encourages through traffic. Pedestrian and vehicular circulation should be separated. The nature of the existing facility of primarily soccer and ballfields results in the park being used most heavily during late afternoon and evening hours. The addition of an expanded playground, trails, pavilions, bocce and horseshoe courts will increase the daytime use of the park and lessen safety concern by daytime users.

The 1994 master plan and the ideas presented above should be considered by the Township as it moves ahead with further development of Macclesfield Park. The park has been serving the residents of Lower Makefield Township for over five years.

2. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The people of Lower Makefield Township are active! A tour through the community shows people out running, walking, playing organized sports and pick-up games, and filling Kid's Kingdom with dozens of tots and their families. The numbers of participants signing up for activities are compelling: hundreds of people signed up for programs as soon as the program is announced. Examples of these numbers include: 180 in the Senior Citizens program, 100+ in volleyball, and 300 in football in 1995 alone. Programs operating in the Township over the past two decades have thousands of participants.

A number of things are happening in Lower Makefield Township that will have an impact on programs and services. These include:

1. Pennsbury School District's decision to divest the district of recreation functions will affect Lower Makefield Township. The District has provided many recreation programs for Lower Makefield, Falls, Tulleytown, and Yardley for decades. Over this time, the District has been incrementally dropping many of the programs, especially those that did not cover their costs. The District has made a commitment to assisting the municipalities with an orderly transition by providing technical assistance, discussion forums, and a guarantee of open door policies for the recreational use of school facilities. The District has been advocating the regionalization of recreation among the four municipalities producing a mixed response from the communities. Lower Makefield will ultimately need to make a formal decision about whether to participate in a regional recreation consortium or to provide a parks and recreation department for the township independently.
2. The services provided by the organized sports groups in Lower Makefield are exceptional. The cadre of volunteers provides thousands of hours of volunteer time that would not be possible to fund through tax dollars alone.

As a suburban community, Lower Makefield has experienced the common phenomenon of youth sports organizations pre-dating the municipal parks and recreation system. This pattern of growth springs from volunteers organizing to provide services not available through the municipality. As the Township is developed, additional needs emerge that require striking a balance of services to meet the needs and interests of organized groups with the needs and interests of the general citizenry. The challenge becomes one of providing facilities to support both organized sports and general recreation interests.

3. The population is projected to grow by 55 percent to about 42,000 within the next two decades. While suburban communities of 15,000 have full service parks and recreation department, Lower Makefield operates with a part time department.

Over thirty communities in Pennsylvania with populations of 10,000 to 20,000 people have full-time park and recreation departments. Examples of typical communities that have full-time parks and recreation departments with a director, program coordinator, secretary, and other full-time and seasonal personnel include:

Plymouth Township
Montgomery County
Population: 16,000

Northampton Township
Bucks County Pennsylvania
Population: 40,000

Newtown Township
Bucks County, Pennsylvania
Population: 13,685

Each of these communities is similar to Lower Makefield in terms of demographics, high level of public interest in recreation, need for balance of services, active league involvement, and pursuit of indoor recreation facilities. The Parks and Recreation Boards and the Board of Supervisors should consider visiting other communities such as these to see the park systems firsthand. Relevant information about these park and recreation systems includes:

- Since 1992, Plymouth grew from one Director to a full service department with the Director, two program coordinators, full-time secretary, and expanded maintenance staff. The Township purchased an old school building and did a master plan to develop a \$9 million recreation center. The Township is in the process of conducting a fund-raising feasibility study.
- Northampton is an excellent comparison for Lower Makefield because both communities have similar demographics, Lower Makefield will ultimately have about the same population, both have very strong organized sports groups, and both Townships recognize the value of recreation.

In 1987, Northampton had virtually no parks and recreation department. Today, the Parks and Recreation Department, under the leadership of a professional director, the Department brings in well over \$ 400,000 annually in program revenues, contributing to cost recovery by about 85 percent. The Township offers close to a thousand different programs and time slots. The Township is in the

process of adding on to the recreation center, acquiring and developing parks, and targeting client groups for services such as teens. Enclosed brochures documenting the inspiring programs of the department over the past eight years in offering a comprehensive, balanced program of leisure services to the community.

- Newtown Township hired a professional parks and recreation department about four and a half years ago. In that time, the Director has instituted a full program of leisure services that generates about 80 percent of cost recovery. The Department offers nearly 200 programs and time slots annually. Enclosed programs show the range of activities available for the Fall as well as promotion in the Township newsletter.

It is important to note, that while each of these departments has found a way to provide programs that generate revenue, none of these departments completely recovers all of its costs. Covering administrative salaries is a challenge, especially without an indoor recreation program of sufficient scale.

LEISURE SERVICES

For many people, recreation programs are their sole contact with the local government. Citizens may form their attitudes and opinions about the local government based upon the quality of their experience in the programs and parks. Recreation programs are the positive of local public services. Parks and recreation has economic, social, and environmental benefits:

- Property values are higher near open space and trails;
- Recreation programs deter crime and substance abuse; it costs \$36,000 to incarcerate a juvenile offender annually but only about \$20 to provide public recreation;
- Investment in recreation services as a preventive health service; and
- Parks and natural resources area provide diversity and aesthetic value in developing communities and contribute to the health and well-being of the citizens.

Program Inventory

Many recreation opportunities are provided by community organizations in Lower Makefield Township. Their relationship with Lower Makefield is greatly beneficial to the community. The organizations literally provide thousands of hours in volunteer services to the people of Lower Makefield Township.

Sports Organizations

There are four sanctioned sports organizations in Lower Makefield Township for soccer,

baseball, softball, lacrosse, golf, football, cheerleading, tennis and basketball. In addition, the Township runs a volleyball league. They serve thousands of participants through their programs annually. While the focus of attention on organized sports is generally on the players, the reach of these organizations goes well beyond those on the teams. Adults are involved in leisure volunteerism through coaching, fundraising, facility maintenance, and league management. Games draw large numbers of spectators of all ages. This provides an opportunity for families to spend time together. It also fosters a sense of community in which people come together to share their time and friendship. Table 2 presents the inventory for organized sports.

| Table 2 Lower Makefield Township Organized Sports Inventory for 1995 | | | | | |
|---|----------------|--------------|--------------|---|----------|
| Organization | Activity | Clients | Participants | Facilities | Comments |
| Lower Makefield Athletic Association (LMAA) | Tennis | | | | |
| | •Children's | M/F; 7-14yrs | 89 | Schuyler Schuyler Community Park | |
| | •Women's | F; 18+ | 12 | | |
| •Co-ed Adult | M/F; 18+ | 12 | | | |
| | Golf | M/F | 29 | Yardley CC | |
| | Basketball | | | | |
| | •Boys | M; 7-8 | 44 | Community Park Community Park Community Park Community Park Community Park | |
| | •Boys/Girls | M/F; 9-10 | 30 | | |
| | •Boys | M; 11-12 | 13 | | |
| | •Girls | F; 11-14 | 17 | | |
| | •Boys | M; 13-16 | 28 | | |
| | Soccer | | | | |
| | •Pee Wee | M/F; 5-7 | 52 | Macclesfield Macclesfield Macclesfield | |
| | •Instructional | M/F; 7-10 | 32 | | |
| | •Travel | M; 8-12 | 64 | | |
| | Football | | | | |
| | •Tackle | M; 7-13 | 250 | Macclesfield and Pennsbury Macclesfield and Pennsbury Macclesfield and Pennsbury | |
| | •Flag | M; 5-6 | 50 | | |
| | •Cheerleading | F; 7-13 | 75 | | |
| Yardley Morrisville Soccer (YMS) | Soccer | | | Macclesfield, Edgewood Village, Heacock, Pennsbury Same + Falls Macclesfield Macclesfield; Falls | |
| | •Intramural | M/F; 5-15 | 1,250 | | |
| | •Travel | M/F; 8-18 | 600 | | |
| | •Women's | F; 18+ | 150 | | |
| | •Man's | M; 18+ | 75 | | |
| Lower Bucks Lacrosse League (LBLL) | Lacrosse | M; 10-18 | 150 | Macclesfield | |
| Pennsbury Athletic Association (PAA) | Softball | F; 6-18 | 550 | Community Park Pennsbury | |
| | Baseball | M; 6-18 | 1,175 | Macclesfield Stoddart Pennsbury | |
| Lower Makefield Township (LMT) | Volleyball | | | | |
| | •Youth | M/F; 11-13 | 13 | Macclesfield Macclesfield Macclesfield | |
| | •Teen | M/F; 13-18 | 56 | | |
| •Adult | M/F; 18+ | 28 | | | |

Findings from League Interviews

League contacts report steady growth trends reflecting both increased numbers of participants as well as general population growth in the developing community. Interviews provided the following findings:

- Fields are used to the maximum. League growth is the product of more people playing; players participating at older and younger age groups; new leagues forming; and new sports being added.
- The immediate need is for three additional softball fields to accommodate girls softball.
- School fields are becoming increasingly difficult to book because of the expanding school system that must accommodate organizations from throughout the school district not just one municipality. School fields are also being taken out of service because of school expansion. Many fields are in poor playing condition.
- There are not enough basketball courts in the Township.
- Restrooms and concession stands should be available at all ballfield complexes.
- The multiple use of the soccer fields appears to be a problem. The fields were originally designed for soccer. As leagues expanded and new ones formed, other sports and new leagues began to use the soccer fields creating intense use never anticipated in the original plan for the park.
- The size of the soccer fields needs to be explored further with the leagues using Macclesfield and before any plans are developed for the additional thirty acres in the back of the park. There is debate about the size of fields that are needed. Resolution of this debate should be based upon input from resident field users. Single use fields for soccer, football, lacrosse, t-ball, baseball, and softball should be developed.
- Non-Scheduled use of Macclesfield, by residents and non-residents, is a problem given the Township's policy of ten hours per week of field time and the investment by private citizens in field care. The fact that there is state funding in Macclesfield requires that it be open to all citizens, not only Lower Makefield residents. Should the Township want to limit field play, two measures should be taken:
 - a. Consultation with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (formerly the Department of Community Affairs) about how to schedule field use through field rotation, permitting, and dedicating specified fields to official games and recreational play. The goal would be to identify ways to both maintain the fields in a safe and desirable

playing condition and serve the general public, both residents and non-residents.

b. Development of a security program targeted for times when there is the most conflict of use. From interviews and observation, this time appears to be 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. and during non-scheduled play on weekends. There are a number of options for security including:

- Negotiating coverage with the police department;
 - Establishing a park ranger program with uniformed rangers; and
 - Contracting with a private security agency via a bidding process. This has been a successful alternative in other communities in terms of lower cost than municipal employment.
-
- Parking for special events such as tournaments is inadequate at Macclesfield. It is becoming increasingly harder to get parking on weekends.
 - While Township policies regarding field use were accepted by the organizations, there were some notable concerns:
 - New leagues forming, e.g., lacrosse, having difficulty meeting residency requirements. Perhaps leagues forming for new sports can be given a phase in time to meet the requirements just to get the sports going.
 - While gender equity seemed to be a problem for lacrosse, equitable access needs to be provided for all residents.
-
- PAA's long term dream would be to have a complex for baseball/softball with six fields, concession stand, restrooms, and control tower.
 - Field lighting is a potential solution to increase field use on existing facilities. Planning turf maintenance to cope with heavier uses must be addressed.
 - Leagues appear to be resolved to paying the field use fees. They want to make sure that the Township actually spends these revenues on field care. Dissemination of written information to the leagues about field care should be done by the Township annually as a good faith and public relations effort.
 - Gymnasium space is at a premium. School gyms are booked.
 - School fields are not in good playing condition.
 - Leagues are concerned about community growth and program expansion.

- LMAA would like the Township to take over its programs. The Township has already assumed responsibility for the volleyball program. LMAA would also like to transfer tennis, soccer, and basketball to the Township.

Pennsbury School District

Education and recreation are inter-related. Schools provide facilities and programs and sometimes even share staff. Pennsbury School District is a major provider of recreational programs. Because of this, the municipalities do not provide programs. With the growth of the communities and tax increases to keep pace with the population explosion; the School District is focussing on education and is divesting itself of recreation. The School District provides the following programs:

- Summer playground program;
- Summer sports camps;
- Winter recreation including youth leagues such as basketball, volleyball, and badminton;
- Aquatics;
- Middle school intramural program including: aquatics, fitness, tennis, basketball, volleyball, field hockey, cross country and track, bowling, golf and cheerleading; and
- Adult evening school.

Over the years the School District eliminated such programs as transportation for children enrolled in recreation programs, trips, picnics. In 1994, the District eliminated the winter basketball program in which about 400 students participated. This decision leaves a void in community recreation services Township.

PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

There are several private non-profit and commercial recreation enterprises in the area. Facilities in nearby communities offer health and fitness clubs, movie theaters, bowling alleys, ice skating rinks, and other recreation enterprises.

Private Non-Profit

The Tri-Hampton YMCA provides year round indoor recreation opportunities for its members many of whom reside in Lower Makefield. The Township and other YMCA cooperate on a summer recreation program in which the YMCA offers summer day camp at Macclesfield Park.

Private, For Profit

The Yardley Country Club is a golf course requiring membership. The waiting list is about five years long. Initiation fee was \$9,800 in 1995 with a \$2,500 annual fee plus clubhouse quarterly refreshment fees.

Commercial

Since there are no commercial recreation enterprises in the Township, the residents travel to other communities for movies, bowling, ice skating, sports complexes, fitness centers, and others.

LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

The Township began to offer programs and services to the citizens in Lower Makefield Township in 1990 on a part time basis. The Township has been doing an outstanding job in league coordination, maintenance coordination, and offering as many programs as possible within a part time operation. Beginning in 1995, the Township took a major stride forward in offering recreation programs to provide diverse activities. The Township offers:

Lower Makefield Seniors Program

This is a weekly program for people 55 years of age and older. Activities include games days; speakers; day trips, and line dancing. Participation: 180 and increasing.

Summer Playground Program

The Tri-Hampton YMCA offers a summer day camp at Macclesfield Park. Participation: 25 per week for 8 weeks.

Discount Tickets

As a service to residents, the Parks and Recreation Department offers discount tickets year round for ski lift tickets, amusement parks, water parks, the Zoo and other vacation destination places. Tickets sold: 447 in summer and 407 in winter of 1994-95. Ticket sales for 1995 are greatly surpassing those of 1994.

Outdoor Volleyball

Initiated in the summer of 1995, this program drew 14 teams of both teens and adults. A summer camp was held. A fall tournament is being scheduled based upon the high interest. Participation: 100.

Aquatics

The Township offers aquatics in the Township's Community Park complex. The pool is so popular that there was a waiting list of 600 families in 1994. In response, the Township added in, 1995, another 25 yard by 25 meter pool, enabling all the families to join who were on the list. The pool offers recreational swimming, instructions, and special events. Membership: 4,000+

League Coordination

A great deal of the Coordinator's time is spent on coordinating the leagues and field scheduling, providing information, resolving issues, and recommending policy. Participants: four leagues with 3,728 registrants along with countless volunteers and parents.

Performing Arts

The Lower Makefield Society of the Performing Arts conducts programs in the Township Building. Programs include concerts and art exhibits. The Township provides an annual donation of \$ 2,000.

Program Promotion

The primary vehicle for promoting recreation programs is the Lower Makefield Township newsletter. Every household in the Township receives the newsletter. It includes general information about the Township and recreation activities and initiatives. This is an important public service that should continue in the future. The Department has done creative promotions such as beach volleyball t-shirts. Further program promotion should be explored in the development of a marketing program for parks and recreation.

Roving Nature Center

Five Mile Woods contracts with the Roving Nature Center to provide nature camps in the summer. There are four one week sessions each with a morning and afternoon section. The fee is \$ 40. Participation: 120.

PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Programs are targeted primarily towards youth, senior adults, summer recreation, and athletics. As parks and recreation systems develop, this is a common pattern of development. There is a need to provide a balance approach to providing recreation opportunities. A balanced approach includes all age groups, levels of ability and interest. In addition to sports, recreation programs should include special events, arts, social recreation, fitness and wellness, nature and the environment, self-improvement, and self-directed activities.

In 1995, Lower Makefield Township budgeted for programs to generate revenues to offset the cost of providing programs that directly benefit the participants, not the general public. The goal should be to support direct and indirect program costs through fees and charges. The Township should make a commitment to fund parks and recreation at a basic level and allow revenues to be re-invested in parks and recreation.

Program Opportunities

Lower Makefield should begin to offer a full-service community recreation department. For programs, the following areas could be considered:

Indoor Recreation

There is a clear need for indoor year round recreation programs. According to interviews with the Pennsbury School District, the District will maintain an open policy on use of school facilities for community recreation. Although this is a great arrangement, there are limitations in hours of use, maintenance costs, and the lack of availability of facilities for day time use for groups such as the Lower Makefield Seniors. The matter of the Township developing an indoor recreation center was raised in this assessment by diverse groups. Consideration should be given to a feasibility study to determine if this concept should be pursued. Integration of a center for teens and senior adults should be considered.

Families

Lower Makefield Township is a family oriented community. Demographics show that there is a higher number of family households with more people per household than is found in the County or the Commonwealth. Launching a series of family oriented programs would be a great asset to the community. A committee of interested parents and youth could be assembled to begin to plan such a program. The goal should be to have three family segments annually: summer, fall and winter. There could be a mix of special events, activities, and programs. They should be well-publicized to promote participation. A sample summer family series from Westminster, Colorado includes the following:

- Family picnic with games;
- Mime show with an ice cream social;
- Family talent show;
- Trip to see a Colorado Rockies game; and
- Star gazing.

Teens

A teen recreation council should be formed in order to facilitate the planning of recreation services for youth and teens. The teens should be given the challenge of

developing a plan for the kinds of recreational opportunities they would like to be involved with. Areas for consideration should include drop-in recreation, programs in conjunction with school activities such as post-game events, opportunities for volunteerism to build job skills, and targeted promotion of programs geared to teens using effective, age-related language. For example, sixth graders go to "dances" but tenth graders go to "Jams". For drop-in recreation, teens need a dedicated area where they can gather. For example, in Darien, Connecticut, the Town established the DEPOT in an old train station for teens. The DEPOT is a teen center which Darien's high school youth can gather and socialize. Through its own student governance and recreational interface with other youth organizations and the high school, the DEPOT offers opportunities for leadership and positive youth development. Private fund raising was done for the capital improvements. The center is operated through a combination of grants, fees, and Town funds.

Youth Enrichment through Recreation

While the fine sports programs available in the community serve thousands of children and youth, there is also a need for non-competitive recreation programs dealing with the arts, technology, socialization, nature, and so on. Conducting a survey through the PTO's and/or through focus groups in the classrooms would yield information about the level of interest in such programs, types of programs that could be offered, and fees the citizens would be willing to pay. It would also be possible to assess potential problems that could hinder the success of recreation programs such as transportation, hours of operation or other issues to be identified. The goal of such programs should be to strive for cost-recovery.

Umbrella Organization for Sports Associations

The idea of establishing an umbrella sports group to work with the Parks and Recreation Board should be pursued. The concept would not be to create one sports organization but instead to have all of the sports groups send representatives to participate in a working group to address Township-wide sports issues. At present the Township offers three vehicles for communication with the sports groups:

1. A Parks and Recreation Board member is designated as the liaison to attend sports association meetings and report back to the Parks and Recreation Board.
2. The Department of Parks and Recreation has two field scheduling meetings annually in which the associations participate.
3. The Recreation Coordinator maintains an open-door policy for discussion about any recreation issue.

Since the Township will be embarking on a program of park expansion, getting comments about how the parks work will enable the Township to enhance the

wonderful facilities in the future based on public input. Once the park has been used for a time, park users can offer valuable insight into park improvements.

Special Events

To foster a sense of community and connectedness in Lower Makefield, the Township should consider a special events program. This should be the function of a committee of citizens and decision-makers working in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Effective recreation programming does not just happen: it requires expertise, training, and creativity. Recreation programs must meet client needs for socialization, achievement, creativity, adventure, and physical and emotional well-being. Recreational programming is a process which includes the following components:

- Leisure interests assessment;
- Definition of program objectives;
- Program format establishment;
- Organization and implementation of the programs; and
- Program evaluation

Dedicated Staffing

If the Township wishes to expand recreation programming, a recreation programmer should be dedicated to this function alone. The Recreation Coordinator, who is part time, is currently responsible for the following functions in addition to programming:

- Maintenance coordination;
- Budgeting;
- Public relations;
- Newsletter coordination;
- Administrative functions;
- Park planning;
- Related duties;
- Budgeting and financial management for parks and recreation;

While the Coordinator has a part time secretary for administrative assistance, the great responsibility and number of functions of a burgeoning department require expanding staffing. The Coordinator should be solely responsible for recreation programming and no other functions. The Recreation Coordinator should consider the following approach to leisure services in Lower Makefield Township:

1. The Township needs to identify which programs the Department of Parks & Recreation will be assuming from other providers such as the school district and LMAA. Consideration of the Township running its own summer recreation programs should be made if the staffing within the Department is expanded.
2. A program management plan should be developed annually prior to budget discussions. An evaluation program should be designed to assess program interests among the participants. Programming in line with these interests should be developed. Programs should be planned two seasons ahead. Major community projects such as special events should be operated via a committee of interested citizens and decision-makers. It is imperative that the Coordinator remain in a management role and not act in a recreation leadership capacity. This means that the Coordinator should serve as the manager of recreation programming overall and never run programs directly. Recreation leaders should be hired to run the programs; program fees should be set to cover the cost of recreation leader wages.
3. The Recreation Board should have a liaison from the Pennsbury School District for more effective communication about community leisure service needs. It would facilitate recreation programming. The departments that are the most successful with recreation programs have a positive working relationship with the school district.
4. Keeping pace with leisure service and programming trends is a crucial factor in successful programming. The Township needs to support the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department through on-going training and technical support such as attending programming conferences, subscribing to technical professional publications developing a brochure exchange with other departments, networking and conducting field trips to other leisure service agencies.

CONCLUSIONS

Recreation programming in Lower Makefield Township's Department of Parks and Recreation is in its infancy. In addition to municipal services, dedicated volunteers provide organized sports for the children and youth of the community. Their continued support by the Township is important.

The program planning and management operations need to be organized as a system. Partnerships with community and client groups need to be established to begin planning with the community instead of for it. The partnership will enable the reach of the Department to expand exponentially.

The four most important areas to address in terms of programming appear to be services for families, teens, and special events/programs and cultivation of the Lower Makefield Seniors program. Special partnerships with committees for involving seniors, teens and

PTO's for families should be established as the first step in generating a program plan for each target group.

A special events calendar should be established. The Township should set up committees to work on special events which should not be planned by the Coordinator solo. The scale of special events requires a team approach.

Developing a marketing program is of vital importance to the Department of Parks and Recreation. Visibility in the community is vital. Creating strategies to establish a presence in the community will contribute to the successful delivery of leisure services.

Programs and services offer the most significant opportunity to reach the citizens in a positive fashion, including people with disabilities. People are looking for experiences and things to do in their leisure time. The Department of Parks and Recreation is well on its way to establishing a full complement of leisure service programs. It will take a pattern of steady incremental growth to produce the full calendar of events the community appears to want. Pursuing specific programs with a high likelihood of success is more important than trying to do too much at once.

COURSE OF ACTION

The blueprint for success in recreation programs in Lower Makefield Township is:

1. Target seniors, teens, families, and special events as the important emerging client groups. Consider adding recreation activities in the arts, social recreation, self-improvement, volunteerism, fitness and wellness, nature and the environment, technology, and other areas of interest in Lower Makefield. Investigate the possibility of the Township offering its own summer recreation program.
2. Establish working committees to develop a program plan for each target group.
3. Dedicate the Recreation Coordinator to work only on programs.
4. Develop a marketing program to get the word out on programs and services. This should include developing strategies for enhancing the visibility of the Department of Parks and Recreation in the community.
5. Develop a fees and charges policy for cost recovery.
6. Work with the Pennsbury School District in the decision-making process regarding the Township's role in future recreation programming given the District's changing policies on recreation services.

7. As program offerings grow, consider three direct mailings to the residences for programs and services to inform people and promote parks and recreation in Lower Makefield.

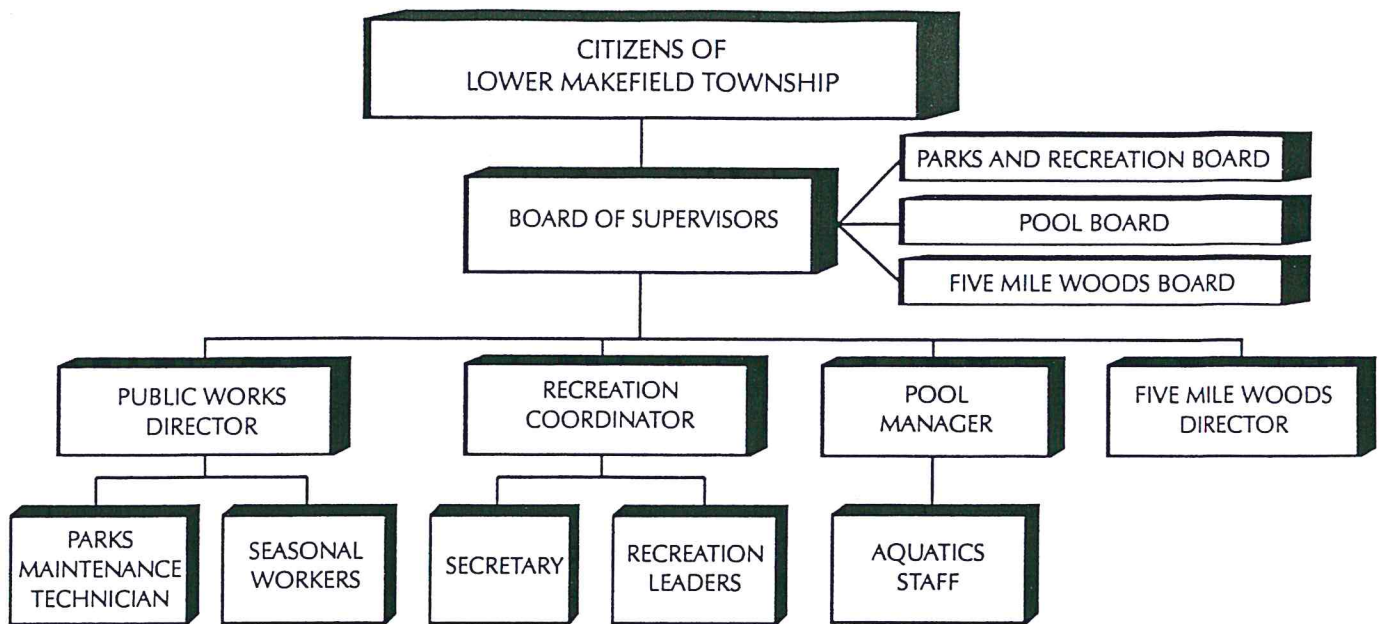
3. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Lower Makefield Township offers a tremendous range of recreation opportunities which are managed for the most part by a part-time staff and a cadre of dedicated volunteers. The Department of Parks and Recreation is responsible for the following:

1. The health and safety of the citizens who use the parks. While safety is the prime concern, the issue of liability in a litigious society requires diligent management to fend off spurious litigation.
2. The management of real estate valued in the millions of dollars.
3. Recreation facility management and coordination of maintenance.
4. Financial management of township revenues and expenditures for parks and recreation.
5. Personnel management.
6. Delivery of public services.
7. Liaison with other community organizations and the citizenry.
8. Grantsmanship.
9. Responsibility for implementing ever-changing rules and regulations such as regulations and licensing for pesticide management, pool management, playground safety, civil rights, and other laws.

CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Department of Parks and Recreation operates under the structure shown in Figure 1: Lower Makefield Township Organizational Chart is on the following page.



All positions are part time for parks and recreation

Figure 1: Lower Makefield Township Organizational Chart

Recreation Coordinator

The Recreation Coordinator works an average of twenty-five hours per week depending upon the programming underway. She is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing programs
- Coordination with leagues and volunteers
- Financial management for parks and recreation
- Recruiting, supervising, and managing recreation personnel
- Supervision of Park Maintenance Technician
- Coordination with Public Works
- Purchasing
- Grantsmanship
- Park Planning
- Liaison with community boards and organizations
- Representing the township in township related activities
- Creation and distribution of semi-annual township newsletter

The demands on this position greatly exceed the customary responsibilities of a recreation coordinator. The role of the recreation coordinator should be directed towards the management of leisure services. In Lower Makefield, the Coordinator is responsible for many more major additional functions as shown in the list above. The amount of time warranted for these functions combined demands more than a person in a part-time position can provide. At present, the Recreation Coordinator is providing a notable amount of service effectively given the limited hours available. Under her

supervision, the Township has expanded the number, variety, and quality of recreation programs significantly over the past five years.

Secretary

The Secretary works an average of fifteen hours weekly. Onsite field observations indicate that the demands on the recreation office by the general citizenry require more administrative support than is presently available. The telephone rings constantly and office visitors are numerous for programs and services. While this may be a function of the busy season of the year, as the Department adds more programs the number of citizens involved increases, and the park system expands of year round recreation with additional facilities, this office is destined to become even busier. Administrative support is essential in serving the public in a quality manner while freeing up the time of other personnel to work on other functions. Sufficient clerical support is needed for efficient operations.

Park Maintenance

The Director of Public Works and the Recreation Coordinator have an excellent working relationship regarding park maintenance. The Recreation Coordinator provides assignments to the Recreation Technician on a daily basis. The Technician also checks in with the Public Works Director each morning. The Director of Public Works provides identified maintenance tasks such as grass mowing everywhere but Macclesfield while the budget is funded by Parks and Recreation. In addition the Township hires seasonal staff through a temporary agency. The Recreation Technician moves to Public Works from December through March for snow removal. Public Works staff assists with special needs such as moving bleachers when called upon.

Since the Township will be expanding the park system, there will be a need to increase the maintenance staff. Additional facilities warrant the staff, equipment and materials to maintain the facilities at a level expected by the people of Lower Makefield Township.

Pool Administrator

The Pool Administrator is responsible for functions related to the Lower Makefield Township Pool. This involves coordination with the Swimming Pool Advisory Board, support for the Pool Manager, and membership sign-ups. Most of the actual time is spent on membership. This function could be streamlined with computerization. This is a part-time position.

Pool Manager

The Pool Manager is a part-time year round position. The Pool Manager is responsible for the management of all pool operations. He attends all Pool Board meetings.

Five Mile Woods Naturalist

The Naturalist at Five Mile Woods provides an on-site part-time presence at Five Mile Woods. He is responsible for environmental education, visitor services, and coordination with the Five Mile Woods Board. He serves in a care-taker capacity by living in the residence on the property. He has served as the naturalist for over ten years.

ADMINISTRATION FOR THE FUTURE

Lower Makefield Township is in a time of tremendous growth. The current population alone merits a full-time full-service parks and recreation department. The population growth of 55 percent over the next two decades makes an even stronger case for a full time department. The Township has two options for consideration at this point which are discussed below: a recreation consortium that has been presented by the Pennsbury School District or a full time parks and recreation department for Lower Makefield Township.

Option A: Recreation Consortium

Since the Pennsbury School District has made a decision to divest itself of recreation services to facilitate focusing on its educational mission, the impact on the communities involved will be significant. The School District provided year round recreation opportunities, primarily geared towards youth services.

The District has proposed instituting a Regional Recreation Program. Under this arrangement, Lower Makefield, Falls, Yardley, and Tulleytown would administer and fund the consortium while the School District would make its facilities available for the programs. The goal is to minimize duplication of services and maximize the potential for quality recreation programs. Regional recreation has been very successful in other parts of the Commonwealth, mainly in the central and western regions.

The District has been very supportive in holding public outreach meetings for discussion and education. Because of the complexity of the situation and the major change being proposed, there is understandable concern by all parties involved. The deadline for the implementation has been set by the School District as July 1, 1997. This is a year later than anticipated.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a full and careful discussion be made prior to the final decision as this will affect recreation for years to come. One option the Township may want to consider is undertaking a pilot project to determine how cooperation can work for Lower Makefield. Since the School District's deadline is two years away, Lower Makefield Township should consider its role in this proposal and set a date for making a final determination regarding municipal participation in the regional program.

Option B: Full-Time Parks and Recreation Department

Pursuing a full time parks and recreation department would mean vesting all of the parks and recreation services within one functional unit and expanding the staff. As the organizational chart in Figure 1 shows, parks and recreation functions are scattered among many positions, all of which are part-time. The Township has major programs and facilities that are not at present managed as a unit with the common goal of providing excellent leisure services for the community. The following factors form the basis for showing the need for a full-time full-service parks and recreation department:

- Current participation levels in township leisure services
- Participation trends show continued increasing participation
- Pennsbury's decision to divest itself of recreation programs
- New leagues being formed
- Park system will be expanded with addition of major facilities
- Job functions among existing personnel exceed the responsibilities of the positions
- A population of 15,000 serves as a benchmark in determining the need for a full-time department

Recommendation

The Township should consider:

1. Establishing the position of Director of Parks and Recreation

This would be a full-time year round position dedicated to the comprehensive management of leisure services including administration, financing, budget, programs and services, maintenance, park planning, facility management, public outreach and partnerships, grantsmanship, and marketing. It is of critical importance that the Director be effective in dealing with people.

2. Retain the position of Recreation Coordinator

Programs require a dedicated focus. For successful community leisure services, the Coordinator needs to be able to assess leisure interests, define the objectives of the programs, offer a variety of formats, promote opportunities, organize and implement the programs, and conduct program evaluations. Recreation programming requires expertise, training, and creativity. The position would be full-time year round.

3. Expand the Maintenance Staff

The Department should add two more maintenance technicians. Phasing in these positions should depend upon the addition of parks and recreation facilities. These positions would still be available to Public Works for snow removal.

Maintenance supervision should be the responsibility of the Director of Parks and Recreation. Continue coordination with Public Works. Make existing Park Maintenance Technician a supervisor.

In addition to expanding the maintenance staff, equipment should be purchased for park maintenance. This is especially needed when the Township acquires park land north of Yardley Newtown Road and I-95. This equipment would include:

| Item | Estimated Cost |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Large Tractor (with mower attached) | \$ 46,000 |
| 60" Mower | \$ 10,000 |
| Hand Blower | \$ 250 |
| 2 Weed whackers | \$ 500 |
| Bobcat | \$ 10,000 |
| Hand tools | \$ 500 |

4. Make the Secretarial Position Full-time

A full-time secretary would be essential to work with the Director and full-time program coordinator.

5. Re-configure Clerical Functions

Clerical functions to serve program registrations are somewhat cyclical. The Township should consider part-time staff seasonally; merging clerical functions for the programs, pool members and aquatics programs; and computerizing membership and program registration. The Township should also consider establishing credit card registration via telephone which would cut down on clerical demands while simultaneously offering the public a convenient way to sign-up.

6. Place Five Mile Woods and the Swimming Pool under the Director of Parks & Recreation.

- a. Five Mile Woods has tremendous potential as a resource for environmental education and nature programming.
- b. The Lower Makefield Pool should operate within the framework of the Township's parks and recreation system. Streamlining township boards and staff would provide greater efficiency and holistic management and planning for recreation.

7. Assessing Recreation Related Citizens Boards

With the establishment of a full-service recreation department, the Township can focus on meeting the leisure needs of the entire community in a unified fashion. At present, the township has three major recreation components operating as individual units: parks and recreation programs; the pool; and Five Mile Woods. Since they will become folded into one functional unit, the Township needs to re-assess the mission, role, and function of each board to determine the most effective way to involve citizens in the common goal of public recreation. Should the boards be folded into one board for parks and recreation, the Parks and Recreation Board could be organized by committee to accommodate special interests such as the pool, Five Mile Woods, organized sports, etc.

Under the option, the Township's organizational structure would appear as shown in Figure 2: Organizational Structure with Full-Time Parks & Recreation Department.

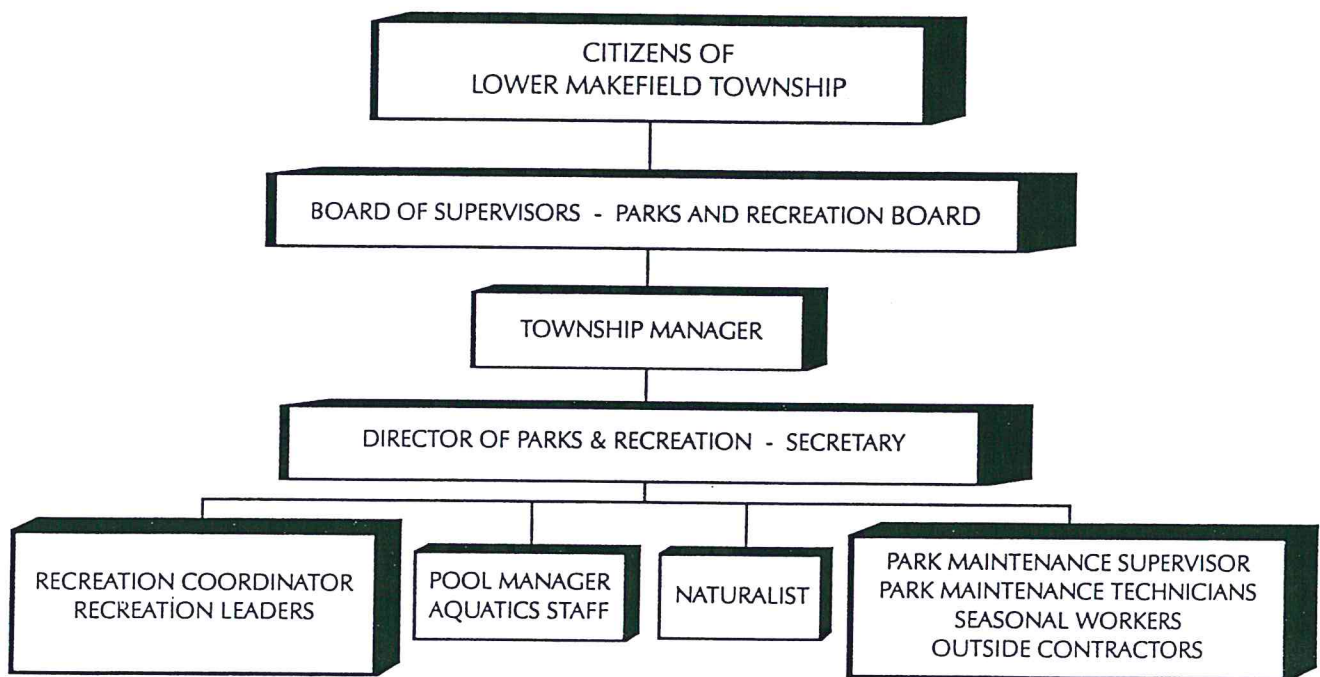


Figure 2: Organization Chart with Full-Time Parks and Recreation Department

FINANCE

Lower Makefield Township's commitment to parks and recreation is shown in its capital improvement program, the acquisition and development of Macclesfield Park, the Five Mile Wood acquisition, the expansion of the swimming pool, increased recreation programming, and the development of this plan to strengthen parks & recreation in the

future. The Township's goal is to provide parks and recreation services to meet the present and future needs of the community.

Should the Township pursue the expansion of the park system including additional facilities and services with the staff to support them, commensurate financial support should be invested. The Township should continue its existing policies in which the users who benefit directly pay for the service such as programs or facility use. The financing system would consist of a mix of: compulsory resources such as taxes and fees-in-lieu of dedication of land; fees and charges; grants and gifts; and contractual receipts such as concessions or leases.

To put financing in perspective, the national average for per capita municipal spending for parks and recreation is \$45 (1993 dollars). In Pennsylvania, the average per capita municipal spending for operating investment was \$10.54. For all parks and recreation spending in the Township in 1995, the per capita investment was \$16.04. The swimming pool is operated as an enterprise account with all costs recovered through membership and program fees. In addition to tax support, parks and recreation departments are striving to round out their budgets with about 30 percent generated in fees through programs.

The Township would need to increase the operating budget by \$285,000. This operating budget is projected to increase as follows given the best information available about costs and anticipated new development:

| Item | Estimated Cost |
|-------------|-----------------------|
|-------------|-----------------------|

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Salaries | \$120,000 |
|-----------------|------------------|

- Includes a full-time Director, the salary differential for full-time positions for the Recreation Coordinator and the Secretary; two additional maintenance technicians; and salary differential for making the existing maintenance technician a supervisory position.

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Benefits | \$40,000 |
|-----------------|-----------------|

- Assuming that benefits equate to about 25 percent of the salaries

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Maintenance | \$165,400 |
|--------------------|------------------|

- Based upon the current costs of maintaining Township parks and the projected acquisition and development of new parks.

4. RELATED PARK AND RECREATION ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

FIVE-MILE WOODS

Five-Mile Woods is a regionally significant natural resource in Lower Makefield Township. The 285 acres of contiguous woodlands provides passive recreation and educational opportunities that cannot be found elsewhere in the community. The park is currently a community jewel that is under utilized by township residents. A master plan should be completed to determine the future recreation use of the site and expand upon the existing nature preserve facilities. The master plan should be completed with input from a broad cross-section of the community which would include; Township recreation personnel, school district representative, hiking clubs, scout groups, conservation groups, and Five-Mile Woods volunteers. The emphasis of the master plan should be the utilization of the site by the community for passive recreation while balancing preservation and conservation of significant natural resources and open space with public access.

BEXLEY ORCHARDS

Bexley Orchards is a 1.5 acre± open space. The site is small but appropriate for neighborhood park development. The need for park development on the site is evidenced by the numerous swing sets that surround the site on private properties. The Township should consider the development of the site as a neighborhood park that would have a circular trail for in-line skating and bike riding, a tot lot and a youth playground, a basketball court and a small picnic pavilion for shade.

FALLS OF THE DELAWARE

The Township should continue to work with the County in the completion of the Falls on the Delaware project. Lower Makefield owns 38 acres of environmentally sensitive land between the canal and the river near Nancy Road. Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation has been purchasing parcels of land near Nancy Run to preserve this area. In a joint agreement, the Township and the County did cost sharing on the property assessments in order for the County to acquire the additional parcels. Upon completion of the acquisitions by the County, the Township would turn over the 38 acres of land to the County. This study recommends that the Township move ahead with turning the land over to the County. While the 38 acres is environmentally significant, it is not suitable for active recreation. Protection by the County would make the most sense in terms of maintenance costs and long term protection.

BIKEWAYS

Lower Makefield Township has the opportunity to be a walkable, bikeable community. The Township has done an outstanding job of creating and planning for the bikeways to connect residential areas with community facilities and parks. The work completed to date should be expanded upon with a study that considers areas of potential future residential growth, actions/plans of adjacent municipalities, and linkages to municipal parks, schools, and commercial areas.

GOLF COURSE

One recreation facility that has not been provided for in the existing mix of recreation opportunities in Lower Makefield Township is a public golf course. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends that a 9-hole standard golf course be provided for every 25,000 residents and when the population increases to 50,000 a 18-hole standard golf course is recommended. Additionally, the socio-economic demographics of Lower Makefield Township are compatible with golf course development. There are several undeveloped tracts of land in the municipality that have the critical amount of acreage that is required for golf course development. The minimum acreage required for golf course development is between 110 and 150 acres depending on the topography of the land. Ideally a golf course site would have varying topography and existing water features, and would be easily accessible from other areas of the municipality. Because of the anticipated continued residential development of Lower Makefield Township and declining undeveloped land base the Township should explore the purchase of land for golf course development while large tracts of undeveloped land still remain in the township. Development of a golf course will provide a needed recreational opportunity while preserving open space and historic visual context of the community.

IN-LINE SKATING/IN-LINE HOCKEY

In-line skating and hockey are two recreation activities that are here to stay. They are enjoyed by people of varying ages and abilities and must be provided for with facilities that are safe and accessible. Trails and bikeways in the township should be provided at a width that allows multiple uses including in-line skating. Community parks should be developed with in-line hockey courts or multi-purpose courts so that skaters are not forced to play on parking lots or other inappropriate surfaces.

MANDATORY DEDICATION OF LAND

Ordinance Number 261 provides the requirements for the mandatory dedication of land or payment of fees-in-lieu of dedication. The Township should consider one of two options:

- Option 1. Adding a provision under Section 11.136 "Criteria for Determining the Location and Suitability of Recreation Areas" that specifies the minimal acceptable amount of acreage to accept.
- Option 2. Setting a policy for defining 3(b) "Meets Park and Recreation Objectives" through criteria that incorporates the minimal acceptable acreage.

The recommended minimum acreage for an active recreation site should be five acres. This recommendation is based upon observation of how parks are used in the Township. Fields analysis showed that small facilities with isolated or single purpose functions received the least use. The Township's solicitor should provide guidance on this.

RECREATION CENTER

The Township should consider further exploration of developing a community recreation center. Interviews, community growth, demographics, and success stories elsewhere indicate that a recreation center would be an asset in this community that would be well-received by the citizens.

PARK NAMES AND SIGNAGE

Macclesfield Park and Five Mile Woods have wonderful, locally significant memorable names. The other township parks should also be named. A policy for naming facilities should be adopted that incorporates guidelines for park names that are in harmony with Township goals. Special consideration should be given to criteria for naming facilities after people.

Parks are a symbol of community pride, especially in Lower Makefield. A signage system for the parks should be developed that is unified, attractive, informative, and symbolic of Lower Makefield.

ART IN THE PARKS

Public art should be incorporated into the parks. Since Bucks County is nationally known for its fine art, the Township should capitalize on this cultural treasure. The art could be a mix of pieces integrated into existing settings as well as dedicated space such as an initiative up and running. Public art would be another way to provide a sense of place in Lower Makefield, a unique statement that sets the Township apart from other communities.

GIFT POLICY

The Township should consider establishing a gifts policy that specifies the terms and conditions under which gifts will be accepted by Lower Makefield for parks and recreation. Gifts can include cash, land, services, equipment, materials, and use of property. Since donors often expect some benefit or recognition in return, Lower Makefield needs to look carefully at the conditions under which gifts will be accepted. The policy should incorporate:

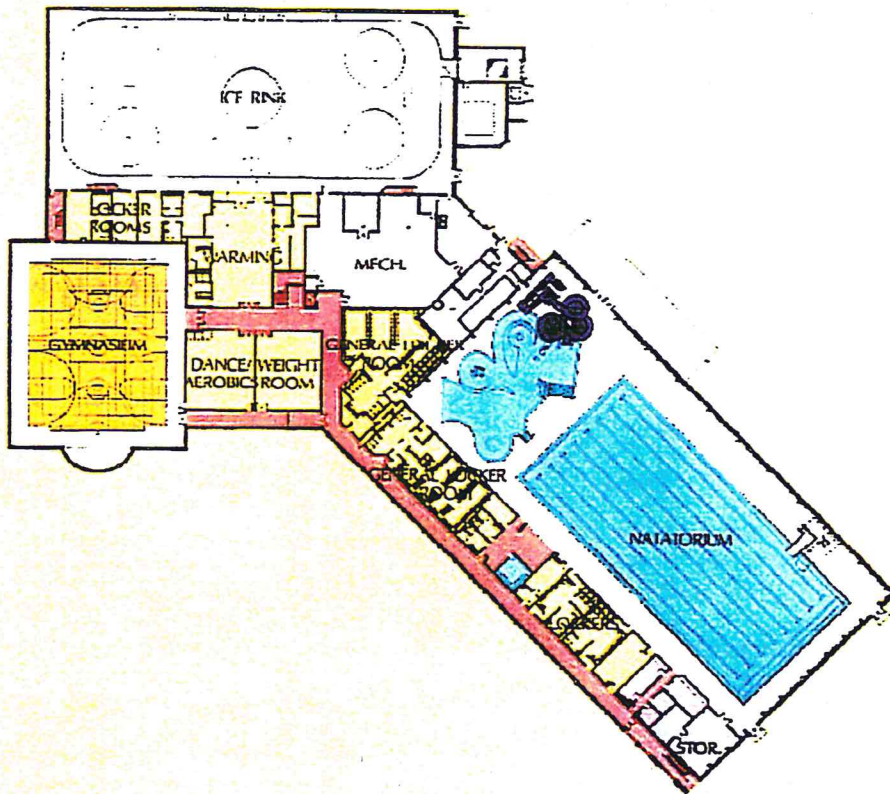
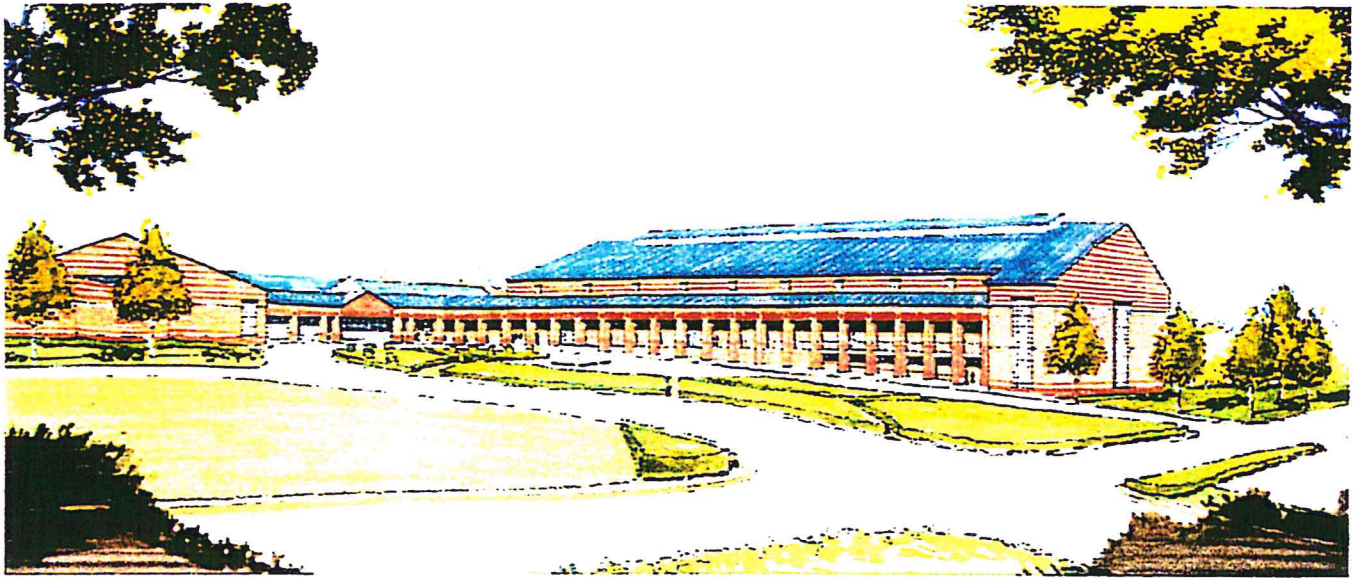
- Amounts at levels requiring approval at different levels within the Township e.g. gifts, bequest, services, or donations up to \$1,000 can be accepted by the parks and Recreation Board; gifts over \$1,000 must have the approval of the Board of Supervisors.
- Specification of the individuals who are allowed to approach prospective donors and who may accept the gift.
- Methods of recognition e.g. plaques, ceremonies, letters of appreciation. Consideration about naming facilities and signage with donors names should be considered. Some municipalities encourage placing donors' names on facilities while other municipalities do not allow this.
- Identification of gifts that will not be accepted. Legitimate reasons for not accepting gifts include assumption of unwanted liability and increased maintenance costs.
- Terms of acceptance of gifts regarding the use of the facility, service etc. by the donor.

CONCESSION POLICY

Concessions can generate income for municipalities, non-profit, and for-profit organizations. Since Lower Makefield will be expanding its park system in the future, there will probably be additional concession facilities built. The Township should consider establishing a concession policy before more concessions are added. The process for awarding concessions should instill confidence that the procedures are fair to everyone and that the result will be in the best interest of the public. Guidelines should consider:

- Defining who is able to operate the concession: the Township; community non-profit organizations; for-profit events.
- Define the terms through which contracts will be awarded to concession operators.
- Specify the lease conditions:
 - Free or low rent;
 - Percentage of the gross revenues, e.g. five percent will go to the

- Township for re-investment in the park;
- Cost sharing on construction of the facility in return for specified services; and
- Cost sharing on building and grounds maintenance.
- Identify the conditions required for proper management of the concession including management, financial accounting, maintenance, adherence to public health codes.
- Set length of contract, which may be done on a contract by contract basis.



CITY OF ST. PETERS

LOWER LEVEL

REC-PLEX





- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Galleria | 13. Crafts |
| 2. Kitchen | 14. Daycare |
| 3. Community room | 15. Lower lobby |
| 4. Deck | 16. Staff |
| 5. Lounge | 17. Storage/expansion |
| 6. Pool below | 18. Lockers |
| 7. Gymnasium below | 19. Steam/sauna |
| 8. Racquetball below | 20. Pool |
| 9. Vending | 21. Spa |
| 10. Office | 22. Gymnasium |
| 11. Reception | 23. Racquetball |
| 12. Classroom | 24. Weight room |

