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This project was financed by grants from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Commonwealth Financing Authority and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation through the Community Conservation Partnerships Program funded by the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund.

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Acknowledgements

The Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society gratefully acknowledges the contributions, expertise, and dedication of the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute Advisory Team.

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Executive Summary

Project Background and Purpose

With more than 6,000 locations across the state, our local parks and recreation areas are perhaps our most valuable recreation resources. According to the Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan, more than 90 percent of Pennsylvanians who participated in outdoor recreation had used local parks in the year that the plan was underway. Local parks are as diverse as the populations they serve, but most face similar challenges—limited funding, aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance and limited capacity to carry out programs and services. Budget restraints and growing maintenance backlogs challenge providers’ ability to meet citizen demand. Pennsylvanians believe strongly in taking care of what we have so that our precious parks that are close to home can continue to be the setting for recreation for generations to come.

The Pennsylvania Recreation & Parks Society (PRPS) secured a grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development matched by the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources Bureau of Recreation to carry out a major recommendation of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan to explore the establishment of a Maintenance Institute. The Institute would be a statewide resource to help local community parks and recreation agencies with the latest tools, techniques and strategies for efficient park maintenance.

Findings

Four major findings from this project emerged:

1. **Investment at Risk**—Pennsylvania’s state level investment of over $500,000,000 over the past decade is, in many communities, at risk due to lack of maintenance. Local matching funds bring the total investment value to over $1,000,000,000.

2. **Maintenance Information and Resources**—There’s good information available on park maintenance and best practices within municipalities as well as in a variety of related public, non-profit and commercial organizations. However, the staff in these organiza-
tions as well as elected officials making decisions about maintenance, rarely have the time, and knowledge to know where to access state-of-the-art information on park maintenance and experts willing to share their knowledge and assistance.

3. No Organization in Place for Maintenance—There’s no one organization whose sole mission is park maintenance. While PRPS and PA DCNR could take on the role of park maintenance expertise, it is not realistic for these agencies to add maintenance to already overburdened agendas. In order to help local community parks and recreation agencies with the latest tools, techniques and strategies for efficient park maintenance a dedicated organization focused on the maintenance of community parks is needed.

4. Positive Response to Concept of a Maintenance Institute—When exploring the potential for the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute, the consulting team found positive reactions from parks and recreation practitioners, public works managers, elected and appointed officials, commercial vendors for parks and recreation equipment and materials, and related organizations. Common responses were that an organization dedicated to park maintenance should have been formed a long time ago, that vendors wanted to know how they could get involved; practitioners wanted to know how they could access it; and related organizations asked how they could support the effort.

Conclusions and Recommendations
Two major conclusions emerged from the project:

1. To maximize the existing grant programs, information, and expertise available, an organization must be in place that is dedicated to park maintenance.

2. The business plan created for this report concludes that a Park Maintenance Institute could be efficiently housed at PRPS and become self-sustaining within five years.

The recommendations are to:

1. Seek start-up funding from foundations to establish and grow the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute over the next three years.

2. Keep the momentum of the project going by carrying out the transition plan for the next nine months to ensure that the strategies put forth in this report are implemented smoothly and built into the organization to grow the Institute toward financial sustainability.

3. Focus on outreach and building relationships. The success of the Institute will be founded in networking, promotion, and service.

4. Implement the recommendations of the business plan over the next five years.
Keeping Our Parks “Safe, Clean and Ready to Use”

With more than 6,000 locations in Pennsylvania, our local parks and recreation areas are perhaps our most valuable recreation resources. More than 90 percent of Pennsylvanians who participate in outdoor recreation visit local parks according to the most recent statewide survey conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources. Local parks are as diverse as the populations they serve, but most face similar challenges—limited funding, aging infrastructure, lack of maintenance and insufficient capacity to carry out programs and services. Since 2008, PA DCNR and PA DCED have invested $670 million for more than 5,000 projects. More than a billion dollars in public investment in local community park and recreation facilities are at risk statewide due to lack of park maintenance.

The purpose of the Plan for Community Park Maintenance is to develop and launch a statewide program to assist local community parks and recreation agencies with the latest tools, techniques and strategies for efficient park maintenance. Maintenance is the chief problem in local community parks and recreation according to findings of recent major research projects completed by DCNR, PSU, and PRPS. Elected and appointed officials; park, recreation, and public works managers; and citizens report deteriorating conditions in local community parks in many rural, urban, and suburban areas. The Plan will help protect local and state investments in local community parks by helping communities develop efficient, short, and long-term solutions for park maintenance. In addition to protecting the parks themselves, welcoming parks encourage outdoor activity that can be a prescription for wellness, helping citizens combat chronic diseases and illnesses. Places to recreate and places to connect adults and children with nature save health care costs. Trails, rivers, and parks can create vibrant cities and towns and contribute to economic prosperity. Along with maintaining vibrant places to recreate, the care and protection of our natural resources is critical for future generations.

About the Project
The Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society applied for a grant to develop the Pennsylvania Plan for Community Park Maintenance from the Commonwealth Finance Authority for Act 13 funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development. In 2017, the Commonwealth Finance Authority through PA DCED awarded an 85 percent grant

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1 City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Department. (2011) Pennsylvania Leadership Summit, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA
to PRPS for which PA DCNR provided the 15 percent match. PRPS organized the Park Maintenance Advisory Committee composed of parks and recreation practitioners to oversee the project. PRPS awarded the contract to a team of parks and recreation practitioners; certified parks, recreation, and community planning professionals; a certified land planner; a land conservation organization; financial consultants; and marketing specialists. They included Toole Recreation Planning, Natural Lands, Urban Partners, SWELL, and Chris Lessig. In a year-long contract, the team conducted research, engaged key stakeholders in discussions and interviews, carried out a SWOT analysis of local park maintenance, formulated options for optimizing existing support programs and organizations, and focused on establishing the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute via a sound business plan. This report provides information on the assessment, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for enhancing the capacity for local park maintenance in Pennsylvania.

The project had two elements:

- **Element 1**: Creatively Addressing Park Maintenance Issues in Pennsylvania
- **Element 2**: Feasibility and Planning of a private, non-profit organization for building the capacity for local park maintenance.

The following sections report on each element.
Creatively Addressing Park Maintenance Issues in Pennsylvania

Element 1 included a SWOT analysis of local park maintenance, benchmarking, workload cost tracking, case studies, maintenance plans, training information management, and existing resources to optimize.

SWOT ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PARK MAINTENANCE
Park maintenance management systems, as its title suggests, is a wide and extremely diverse subject. This is appropriate as the diversity of parks in Pennsylvania takes on many different forms and purposes. The more we learn about these diverse parks and their many forms and purposes, it becomes clear that the manner in which we prioritize, organize, and manage the maintenance for these parks needs to complement their function, whom they are intended to serve and the entity that owns and operates them. What works well for one agency may not work well for another agency. Previous blueprints for park maintenance have failed for this very reason. A one size fits all approach has proven ineffective. So what approach should we take? To answer that, we should first identify what type of issues need to be managed.

Strengths
Willingness Among Park Maintenance Practitioners to Share Information and Help
Park managers and superintendents are ready and willing to share their knowledge and experience. These professionals bring a rich skill set to the table, ranging from fields as diverse as building trades (such as plumbing, electrical, roofing, HVAC & carpentry), to outdoor trades (such as masonry, landscaping, recycling, conservation land & preserve management, athletic field and turf grass management, road & bridge, and river & aquatic management). They also have management skills to offer including budgeting, fund-raising, strategic and capital planning, and programming skills.

Networking
Learning from other’s experience, successes, and failures has proven invaluable and cannot be overstated. Experienced managers have their network of “go to” professionals readily at hand. Newer or more isolated managers understand the importance or have the desire to establish those resources. For those that may not have a designated park maintenance management ally or any sort of network, it becomes imperative to know where to find help for park maintenance. This is especially true in the hundreds of Pennsylvania municipalities with populations of several thousand residents who expect recreation amenities and programs. The ability to use an established network via phone or internet such as professional organizations, vendors, and practitioners is key.
On-site Consultations
One of the important findings of the planning process was the significance and importance of maintenance consultations right in the municipalities. Interactions with key stakeholders that include the management team, municipal management, and elected and appointed officials help to effect change and build support for park maintenance. Such outreach found that municipal officials welcome information and assistance for maintenance of parks. These consultations are often interventions that help build support for park maintenance and the development of best management practices in the respective municipality.

Availability of Information
Information on best practices is out there but not readily available. Best practices on a host of topics from active recreation facilities to natural resource management and trails are in place statewide available for capturing and sharing.

Desire for Training
The number one topic that park and maintenance practitioners expressed a need for was training. Various perspectives on training methods include a mix of preferences: on-site, online, travel within a day’s time, networking, and having a “go to resource” to seek when an issue arises.

Organizations Available for Networking
Pennsylvania has important organizations related to local park conditions and maintenance in some way. These include the following that can be providers and/or consumers of information:
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR)
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PA DCED)
- Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society (PRPS)
- Penn State Cooperative Extension Service
- Pennsylvania Conservation Districts
- Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks
- Pennsylvania Game Commission
- Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission
- Pennsylvania State Association of Townships
- Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs
- Pennsylvania Municipal League
- Pennsylvania State Mayors Association
- Keystone Athletic Field Maintenance Organization (KAFMO)
- Center for Rural Pennsylvania
- Pennsylvania Land Trust Association (PALTA)
- Pennsylvania Downtown Association
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportations’ Local Technical Assistance Program (Penn-DOT LTAP)
- Association for Professional Municipal Management (APMM)
- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
- Vendors related to park and recreation facility maintenance
- Conservancies and Land Trusts

Grants
PA DCNR, PA DCED, and PRPS have grants available to assist municipalities with park maintenance planning. Under PA DCNR’s Community Conservation Partnerships Program, municipalities can obtain the following types of grants:

Community Conservation and Recreation Planning
Planning projects “lay the groundwork” for future land acquisition, development, and/or management of parks, recreational facilities, critical habitat, open space, natural areas, greenways, and river/watershed corridors. Each type of planning grant includes a maintenance planning. Examples include:
• Master Site Development Plan
• Swimming Pool Complex Feasibility Study
• Indoor Recreation Facility Feasibility Study
• Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space and Greenway Plan
• Rivers Conservation Plan
• Land Conservation and Stewardship Plan
• Combination Projects

**Park Rehabilitation and Development Funding**
These projects involve the rehabilitation and development of public parks, recreation facilities, greenways, and river conservation projects. Each type includes a maintenance component. Examples include:
• Park Rehabilitation and Development
• Small Community Development

**Motorized and Non-Motorized Trail Funding**
Trail projects include funding for motorized and non-motorized recreation activities. This includes the purchase of equipment for trail construction or maintenance. Examples of project that can be funded include:
• Acquisition
• Planning
• Development, rehabilitation, or maintenance
• Purchase of equipment
• Education programs

**State and Regional Partnership Funding**
Partnership projects are collaborative statewide or regional initiatives that help build local, county, regional, and statewide capacity to better develop and manage recreation and park facilities and to promote the conservation of natural and heritage resources through plan implementation, education, and training. The Pennsylvania Plan for Community Park Maintenance is an example of a project partially funded under this category. Funding can be provided for:
• Convening, education, or training
• Special purpose and planning studies
• Implementation projects
• Mini-grants to develop small grant programs

**Peer and Circuit Rider Funding**
These grant programs fund projects that help municipalities, counties, multi-municipal partnerships, and councils of government to increase local capacity for recreation, parks, and conservation. The Peer program funds collaborative projects that focus on a specific need identified by the grantee and its partners.

The Circuit Rider program aids in the hiring of a full-time park, recreation, or conservation professional whose services are shared by the members of a formal partnership, commission, or authority.

**Rivers Conservation Grants and Riparian Forest Buffer Funding**

**Rivers Conservation**
Rivers Conservation projects focus on protecting and enhancing the conservation or recreation value of Pennsylvania’s waterways. Examples of rivers conservation projects that can be funded that address maintenance include:
• Rivers conservation plan
• River access point development
• Water trail management

**DCNR Riparian Forest Buffers**
The DCNR Riparian Forest Buffer Program provides financial assistance to identify locations
in need of riparian forest buffers, and to design, establish, monitor, and provide short-term maintenance for those buffers.

**PA DCNR Regional Advisors**
The PA DCNR Regional Advisors provide an invaluable service in their contacts with municipal elected and appointed officials serving parks and recreation purposes. Their “boots on the ground” approach is a critical service that municipalities appreciate, respond to, and act upon.

**Outreach Opportunities**
Several forums exist that can deliver information, networking opportunities, and support for park and recreation facility maintenance:
- Annual Conferences of:
  - PRPS
  - KAFMO
  - PSATS
  - PSAB
  - PML
  - APMM
  - PRPS Training Program including the Park Resources Branch training and networking programs at Cabela’s

**Growing Recognition That Government Can’t Do It Alone**
There is growing recognition that government alone cannot take care of parks, make them safe and clean, and protect significant capital investment in them. As municipal administrations change, priorities for funding and staffing change often resulting in a “roller coaster” of a ride for park maintenance. Foundations are beginning to address ways of supporting the care of parks by working directly with non-profit organizations dedicated to parks such as Park Friends Groups and Conservancies. Several conservancies in Pennsylvania are thriving (with a lot of hard work) under these circumstances such as the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and Philadelphia’s Fairmount Park Conservancy.

**WEAKNESSES**
Recurring issues or weaknesses identified in park maintenance are funding, staffing, making the case for park maintenance, benchmarking, and training needs with associated challenges. In addition, the Planning Team determined that the educational needs and training for local park maintenance staff are compelling.

- **Funding and Staffing**—The lack of funding for staff, equipment and materials is a major concern. However, the Planning Team found that money is not always the issue. The lack of training; historic patterns of park maintenance with staff growing up within the same system that is fraught with inefficiencies; the lack of formal written planned maintenance management systems in place and being used; lack of information on the park inventory and exact nature of park maintenance requirements; park maintenance crews being viewed as the “go to” source of labor for other municipal functions; and no commensurate increases in maintenance staff or budget as new facilities and parkland are added or rehabilitated. Related municipal issues such as pensions and health insurance inject reality into reasons for insufficient budgets for parks and recreation.

- **Making the Case for Maintenance**—The Planning Team also found that park and recreation managers often cannot make the case for park maintenance support. They do not have the information needed to make the case nor the time to collect data given the increasing demands on their time with stable or decreasing funding. They are often in the situation of not being able to say “no” to de-
mands on their time without data, they are challenged to explain the rationale for what can and cannot be accomplished with the given resources. In contrast, police and fire departments have more readily available data to support budget and staffing requests.

- **Lack of Basic Information about the Parks and Recreation System**— To effectively maintain parks, it is imperative to know what you have and the level of maintenance necessary to sustain these assets. The larger the agency the more critical this becomes. Identifying and quantifying assets is an important first step in organizing any park maintenance management system. It should be recognized that this is an ongoing process. Old and/or inaccurate information can be as detrimental as no information at all. Smaller agencies with fewer assets often operate on the assumption that they or their manager “know” all of their assets. While this may be true, unless all involved with the maintenance and management of those assets also know, it is difficult if not impossible to effectively manage all the resources. Ultimately collecting and organizing this information has been identified as a common weakness for agencies large and small.

- **Lack of Standards and Procedures**— Standards and uniform procedures are essential to ensure that work is performed consistently throughout the park system and over time as new employees are hired and existing employees leave the job.

- **Training**— While there is consensus on the need for training, issues related to training include: travel time, union contracts, travel expenses, and missing work for training. Preferred training formats vary including online videos, webinars, on-site close to home, and conferences.

- **Education and Management**— Research and experience parks and recreation curricula found that little time is spent on park maintenance in a parks and recreation degree program. Municipal parks and recreation departments are typically headed by a professional certified in parks and recreation or an allied field, yet these professionals have had little education in park maintenance and perhaps limited experience in this area. Related university programs such as turf management apply to park maintenance and could be tapped as a resource. While for many public parks and recreation systems, sports fields are a significant and expensive responsibility, there are only 250 Certified Sports Turf Managers in the United States. In contrast, golf course demands for excellence in turf management have generated many thousands of golf course turf managers certified through various university and college programs.

- **Staffing**— In terms of assets, human resources are easily the most valuable and often the first to be overlooked, usually secondary to the quantity of parkland and programs. Finding the right person with the needed skills and the right work ethic can be a daunting expectation, especially when both the number of positions and amount of compensation are limited. However, there are a few options that agencies can use to foster the right human resources and hopefully sustain, recognize and retain their valuable services. Attracting the right person starts off with a
well-defined job description. If the job description is not well and accurately described, a new employee will become quickly disenfranchised with what they thought the job was about. If the job description and posting is accurate, it will better target the right prospective candidate for the position. It may seem obvious, but a second look at these postings may be well worth it before the next time to hire or replace a position.

- **Equipment** — The right equipment in a sufficient number can cause issues along with the ability to maintain the equipment. If an agency does not have the physical resources necessary to maintain the facilities it currently has, a decision on the level of service should follow. A system of maintaining equipment has also been identified as a subset of physical resource management issues. The right equipment for the job has also been identified as an issue. If an agency is mowing two full size soccer fields with a small inadequate mower, this needs to be identified to decision makers in terms of efficient productivity.

- **Deferred Maintenance** — Not having enough time for maintenance is a common cry for agencies trying to keep up. Lack of an effective park maintenance management program results in reactionary and crisis management as breakdown repair becomes the normal business activity. A reactionary approach results in high penalty costs that take ever-increasing amounts of the municipal parks and recreation operating budget. It costs three to nine times as much to perform a task on an emergency basis rather than as a routine scheduled task. Consequently, more maintenance is deferred, which in turn leads to accelerated deterioration and ultimately to requiring the capital replacement of the facilities.

- **Park Maintenance as a Priority and Public Works Function** — How park maintenance is prioritized and organized is often an equally critical factor in as much as the human and physical resources are. Park maintenance being transferred from the Parks and Recreation Department into Public Works is a growing trend. For smaller municipalities without a parks and recreation department, Public Works has always been the department responsible for park maintenance. While this is a logical solution due to scale, park maintenance is not always a priority; skill sets for park maintenance are limited; workload cost tracking does not exist; and important functions are not performed such as natural resource management, so the work focuses primarily on trash collection and mowing.

- **Absence of Vision, Mission, and Standards for Park Maintenance** — The absence of a mission, vision, or values to guide staff renders them at a loss for what their focus should be. A park maintenance vision and adoption of quality standards are as important as general municipal visions and plans. Not all parks and recreation facilities should be maintained at the highest level over the entirety of public park properties. Importance, visibility, use, and purpose should all play a role in deciding the level of maintenance which translates into budget and staffing decisions.

- **Maintenance Management or Staff Not Involved in Park Planning** — Parks designed or revitalized without the involvement of the park maintenance staff is a major cause for concern yet the prevalent practice. Any park planning project should involve the maintenance manager or designated staff in the planning process. Too often the maintenance of a new or renovated park is an afterthought when it might be the single most important item to sustain the longevity of the asset and
• Conversely, Maintenance Managers Determining Park Improvements — Park improvements with a value of more than $10,000 should undergo a professional planning process with public involvement. Park improvements made without professional design and planning expertise and community involvement can be fraught with problems.

• Lack of an Organized Source of Information about Park Maintenance — There is no single entity in place to provide comprehensive assistance regarding park maintenance.

OPPORTUNITIES
The three main findings of the planning process were:
1. There is great need to help municipalities develop, enhance, and sustain the capacity to maintain parks and recreation facilities in a safe, clean, ready to use condition and visually appealing.
2. There are many disparate resources available that can be harnessed into an organized system to help build the capacity of municipalities to maintain parks and recreation facilities. Much useful information, practices, and expert help goes untapped simply because it is not readily available, and people have no way of either finding out about it or accessing it. When addressing how to maximize the many existing resources, it became evident that no organized system is in place to plan, manage, direct, promote, control and evaluate park maintenance.
3. There appears to be support for establishing an organization that will focus on helping local communities develop their ability to maintain their parks through best practices and establishing sound management systems.

The reaction to hearing about a potential Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute was typically “that’s a great idea” or “I wonder why one was not created a long time ago.”

THREATS
The primary duty of government is to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens. Threats due to insufficient and deferred maintenance include the following:
• Billions of dollars in investment in parks and recreation facilities are at risk
• Health and safety of our citizens is in jeopardy due to crime, loss of access to facilities for fitness and wellness, and unsafe conditions that lead to injury
• Lowered economic value of neighborhoods and municipalities
• Inability of municipalities to attract and retain businesses and residents in the knowledge-based economy
• Lowered quality of life
• Threatening issues to parks and recreation maintenance:
  • Insufficient funding
  • Limited staff
  • Lack of training and expertise in skill sets needed for park maintenance, especially if park maintenance is provided by the public works or streets departments
  • Parks and recreation facilities developed or improved without commensurate addition of maintenance budget and staff
  • Shortage of time and expertise in forming public private partnerships in park maintenance
Public expectations that government has to provide all park maintenance and has the resources to do it

Daily work demands that preclude planning for maintenance

Limited public understanding about the realities of park maintenance

Low priority of parks and recreation in municipal government compared with police, fire and emergency services

 Majority of Pennsylvania’s 2,560 municipalities are small and rural with restricted capacity overall for government services

Benchmarking

Across the board, elected and appointed officials at all levels of government, parks and recreation practitioners and maintenance managers would like to have comparative costs on park maintenance. This includes costs by the acre, facility type, task, geographic location, and number of workers per acre and per population. The challenges with benchmarking include the following:

- There is no system in place to capture this information in Pennsylvania.

- The Pennsylvania State Outdoor Recreation Plan provides solid recommendations for benchmarks including the statewide average of three percent of a municipal budget dedicated to parks and recreation with a recommendation that the ratio of parks and recreation to the overall budget be five percent. However, that is for the entire parks and recreation budget except for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

- The Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society conducted a budget and salary survey for the first time in many years. However, it was difficult to get responses and the questions were not set to obtain maintenance benchmarking information.

- The Trust for Public Land does excellent work in benchmarking related to park maintenance but only in America’s largest cities. Pennsylvania parks and recreation systems generally do not relate to TPL's benchmarks except for Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Nationwide, Pittsburgh has risen in the rankings from 89th to 23th while Philadelphia ranks 30th in meeting park needs.

- NRPA Park Metrics is the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies. Launched in 2009, these agency performance resources assist park and recreation professionals in the effective management and planning of their operating resources and capital facilities. This suite of tools allows park and recreation agencies to build customized reports that allow for comparisons with peer agencies. Park and recreation professionals can use this benchmark data to gain more funding support, improve operations, and better serve their communities. The challenge is that NRPA’s system has not yet engaged many Pennsylvania communities. Parks and recreation managers’ report being too busy to participate in this data collection system.

- The benchmarks of most interest include the following:

  - Per acre cost of maintenance
  - Cost by task: grass mowing, litter pick up, trash removal
  - Cost by facility: ballfields by type, game courts by type, playgrounds by size, pavilions, paved surfaces, natural areas, picnic areas, skating rinks, swimming pools. Buildings are a unique facility requiring special attention.
  - Number of workers per acre, per population
• Maintenance as a ratio of municipal budget and parks and recreation budget

**Workload and Cost Tracking**
Overall, workload cost tracking is a task that many departments ascribe to but that only a minority accomplishes. Smaller departments, municipalities in which park maintenance is handled by Public Works, and surprisingly large municipalities not only lack cost tracking but include park maintenance costs in with Public Works or the Streets Department so it is impossible to determine what the park maintenance budget is at all, much less by task of facility. Workload and cost tracking represent the most lacking and the single most critical element to justify maintenance staff and equipment expenditures.

**Case Studies—in Appendix A**
- Linwood Park: Volunteers Make Neighborhood Park a Reality. Lower Merion Township Montgomery County.
- Making the Case for Park Maintenance Staff, South Middleton Township, Cumberland County, PA
- Transferring Park Maintenance into Public Works, South Middleton Township, Cumberland County, PA
- Sports Field Maintenance Partnerships, Middletown Township, Bucks County
- Webinar on Establishing Park Maintenance Plans
- Video on Managing Invasive Species, Mile-A-Minute

**Workload Cost Tracking—in Appendix C:**
- The City of Pittsburgh has been using Asset Management.
- Manheim Township, Lancaster County, uses TRIMS.
- Millersburg Borough, Dauphin County, does park and recreation budget tracking by hand using time sheets and the budget report.

**Training and Information Management**
While the lack of staff and budget was repeated as the chief challenge in local park maintenance, the next most important need identified was training and access to information in a timely, easily accessible manner.

**Information Needs**
The Planning Team used a formula of 60 percent maintenance management information and 40 percent technical maintenance information in assessing information needs. This is patterned after the curriculum at the NRPA Maintenance Management School at Oglebay Resort in West Virginia and at the Southwestern Maintenance Management School in California. The following information needs are the priorities organized in to these two categories:

**Maintenance Plans—in Appendix B**
- Parks Maintenance Plan, Cranberry Township, Butler County – A full maintenance plan for a parks and recreation system.
- Multi-Municipal Maintenance Plan, Mifflin County, Oliver Township, Bratton Township and McVeytown Borough - A maintenance management plan for a park and boat launch serving the region.
- Tank Farm Maintenance Management Plan, Potter Township Beaver County
Management
The following information needs were generated from Advisory Committee members for this project, interviews, research, and practical experience of the team via work on park and recreation planning projects.

- Lack of basic information in parks and recreation organizations about their inventory, time requirements for tasks and allocation of resources. "You have to know what you have before you can figure out how you are going to maintain it" and "what gets measured gets managed".
- Inability to make the case for park maintenance resulting in park maintenance entities continuing to perform maintenance tasks for additional requirements without commensurate staff or budget additions or being able to parse out tasks to reduce or regroup based upon escalating demands. How to communicate information to public officials and the public is a chief issue.
- No time to write or develop maintenance plans or even to gather the information needed for inventory, time, tasks, schedule, reporting, and so on. Work is performed based upon historical practices, pressure from municipal forces, and "emergencies".
- Need to identify the backlog of deferred park maintenance and its cost. National and state parks have been working on such calculations and successfully using this information to foster partnerships and support.
- Working with volunteers — This emerged as a major discussion point and issue of importance.
- Training — of major concern and importance. Limitations in travel, time, union pay for extra hours yet of major importance.
- No policies in place to prevent recurrence of issues that affect maintenance. So, the same old problems keep cropping up with the same reactionary practices.
- Working with unions, retired professionals and private non-profit partners—all require time, education and understanding.
- There’s no benchmarking information.
- Lack of knowledge and limited public input.
- People in charge of maintenance or parks and recreation operations frequently have no professional background in parks, recreation, or maintenance.
- Contracting and privatization trends.
- Elevating parks as a priority on the same level as safety and emergency services.
- Park Maintenance is reactive not proactive.
- The people who carry out maintenance are not involved in the planning and design of facilities.
- Staff organization is not optimal.
- Staff education in maintenance is limited.
- Vandalism.
- Risk management and liability issues. Safety is insurance driven.
- Can’t get money for equipment and inability to purchase modern desired equipment.
- Having materials on hand and storage needs.
- Older workforce is resistant to technology and fearful of it yet current and future workers are technology natives and social media is key.
- Old school attitudes: “not my job.”
- Employees: Scheduling, training, workload allocation, unity (Public Works vs. Parks), Restrictions, Middle Management, succession planning.
- Secondarily important issues raised: Public awareness. Maintenance is not a priority. Activities are now year-round, programs are for all age groups, and cultural diversification so there’s more demand and all this needs to be managed. Need for maintenance to be ad-
dressed in Parks and Recreation Plans. Staffing and budget with maintenance not a priority. We have a throwaway society—just build new stuff without taking care of what we have.

Technical Information Needs
- Access to current methodologies.
- Research about current products, materials, equipment and supplies.
- Technical practices such as turf grass management.
- Vandalism.
- Public Works and Parks—standards are needed as are benchmarks.
- Multiple job titles and no time to write maintenance management materials, practices, procedures, policies, tracking etc.

Innovation and the Future
In addition to the topics identified by those interviewed, the Advisory Committee noted the inevitable technology changes likely to impact park maintenance. For example, they questioned how long before self-driving lawn mowers, or programmed lawn mowers would be available. It is important to be cognizant of how fast technology changes as iPhones are only 11 years old now and their impact changed society.

Training
Training rose to the top of maintenance management needs. Training format preferences vary including:
- Online
- Videos that can be accessed on inclement weather days
- Webinars
- On-site close to home within a day’s work time
- Conferences
- Certification

Factors that must be considered in planning training:
- A mix of formats should be available.
- Travel time is an issue and Pennsylvania is a big state. Consider adopting service areas in which training is conducted to minimize travel.
- Not all municipalities and managers view travel for training a problem.
- Related organizations, such as PSATS, report similar findings regarding training.
- Certification in community park maintenance is with considering.

Creatively Using Our Available Resources for Park Maintenance
The major finding of exploring the resources that could support park maintenance was that there are plenty of resources but nothing in place to manage them all to make them readily available to parks and recreation managers, directors, superintendents, and maintenance workers. People working in parks and recreation, especially maintenance, need readily available, conveniently accessible information or contacts without much time devoted to searching. Another finding of importance is establishing some type of presence in communities most in need of assistance in maintaining their parks. Experiences of the planning team yielded information from smaller communities operating with a volunteer board and maintenance by Public Works or a Streets Department benefitted by field consultations. In some cases, one visit and phone calls were enough to change maintenance.
perceptions of elected officials and practices by workers. The following ideas offer ways of potentially maximizing the resources that are available. The cautionary note is that every suggestion requires someone to take on the responsibility of carrying it out. And that is the challenge: we have heard that PRPS and DCNR staff and management are already operating at capacity.

- Mechanisms are in place that could help with benchmarking as follows:
  - Use the PROS Planning grants to include a benchmarking component.
  - Use the RecTAP and Peer Grants with willing municipalities to develop benchmarking by inventoring facilities, field testing tasks and tracking workload and costs for test sites.
  - Adjust the budget and salary survey for benchmarking questions.
  - If research is part of the State Outdoor Recreation Plan process, consider adding a component to work on some achievable aspect of benchmarking.
  - Just as NRPA has done, Pennsylvania needs an organization that would take on benchmarking as a responsibility.

- Grant Programs —
  - Increase the number of points on a grant application for a maintenance plan.
  - Explore the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plans and park master plans to determine how information can be provided in the work products that would lead to producing information for benchmarking and estimating deferred maintenance costs.
  - Use the Peer Program followed by the Circuit Rider program to establish multi-municipal natural resource management planning. This would help municipalities to expand their maintenance purview bey-
  - ond trash and mowing into the management of our precious natural resources.
  - We found that training, information, and a “baby-step” plan can kick start this important function.

- Use the Peer Program and RecTAP grants more for park maintenance planning projects, especially for alternative types of projects in which non-traditional methods and in-force workers accomplish maintenance. Have recipients of such grants write articles for posting on the PRPC and DCNR websites and in the PRPS magazine.

- Awards Program
  - Add an award for park maintenance. The Brookings Institution is advocating the recognition of Mayors who are doing a great job of investing in infrastructure maintenance. Task the committee with figuring out the mechanics of the award nominations and reviews.

- Park Resources Board
  - Continue to work with the Park Resources Board to strengthen it. As a volunteer board, the members have limitations and determining how to maximize the board could be an element of the PRPS Strategic Plan under development.

- PRPS Training
  - Explore more maintenance training sessions to be located in areas of the state which are within a days’ time for travel and training as part of PRPS’s training program efforts.

- PRPS Conference
  - Develop a maintenance track for each conference. Focus on maintenance manage-
ment not technical training. The Park Resources Board should continue to focus on technical training in its workshops.

- Governmental Affairs Board
  - Task the Governmental Affairs Board with establishing a work element to advocate for park maintenance.
- Good for You Good for All Campaign
  - Establish an annual work item to highlight park maintenance.
- PRPS Magazine
  - Devote one issue annually to park maintenance.

Summary
This planning project confirmed the pressing need to help municipalities increase their capacity to maintain parks and recreation facilities. Municipalities lack ready access to the many disparate resources, organizations and individuals available to help accomplish all aspects of maintenance from workload and cost tracking, to volunteer management, to trash collection. While optimizing existing grant programs, programs, conferences and other sources would appear to be a viable strategy for funding maintenance, organizations such as PA DCNR and PRPS have wrestled with a focus on maintenance for many years. Organizational responsibilities combined with limited staff and budgets have shown that neither organization has the capacity to focus on park maintenance in a planned and organized manner. The optimum way to maximize existing resources appears to be achievable only if an organization is put into place whose sole focus and mission is building the capacity for local park maintenance as a dedicated function.

Funding parks without allocating resources for maintenance would be comparable to purchasing a car and never changing the oil or taking it in for service. Municipalities maintain police vehicles and they maintain computer systems. The parks and recreation professionals interviewed would welcome a non-profit organization as a “go to” for developing more efficient maintenance plans; for helping to benchmark activities and costs; and for sharing knowledge and training staff responsible for caring for parks.
Element 2

Feasibility, Plan and Launch of the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute

Element 2 of this project explores the feasibility of the establishment of a private non-profit organization devoted to building capacity and support for local park maintenance. In this project capacity means the capability and aptitude of municipalities of all sizes to undertake a planned system of scheduled park maintenance with adequate staff and budget that results in safe, clean and ready-to-use facilities.

This includes the following:

- Assessment of the market of potential participants using such an institute,
- Identification of related organizations in order to avoid duplication of services,
- Determination of the purpose of the institute with its vision, mission, values, organizational structure, location and presence whether physical, online, or a combination,
- Funding and mobilization of resources
- Institute functions, services and products,
- Concepts for determining if the Institute is working and succeeding in serving local park maintenance productively.

MARKET ASSESSMENT

Target Market and Characteristics

Pennsylvania has 67 counties and 2,560 municipalities including 58 cities, 959 boroughs, 1,546 townships and one town. About 78 percent (1,986) of Pennsylvania’s municipalities have a population of less than 5,000.

As shown in the figure below, 1,677 municipalities have parks. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, 1,604 municipalities have received grants. They are obligated to maintain the parks and recreation facilities in accordance with the terms of their grant agreements. Since 1995, DCNR has funded 4,100 acquisition and development projects totaling more than $615,000,000. These projects are largely matched with local funds dollar for dollar for dollar resulting in a total project investment of about $1,230,000,000.

According to the Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society, 347 municipalities are members. These include a mix of municipalities with departments or with volunteer boards that advise elected officials about parks and recreation.

While the jurisdictions would be the primary
target market, school districts could be a secondary target as parks and recreation systems and school districts are closely related in the provision of athletic and recreational facilities and programs. There are 500 school districts in Pennsylvania with 3,287 schools.

During the planning process, we have also been in contact with the Bureau of State Parks. The Bureau is interested in the Institute, but we are at the very basic exploratory mode right now. In our planning process, we interviewed another institute that has a partnership with the National Park Service for park maintenance training; consideration of a similar partnership could be explored. The Bureau of State Parks is also an excellent source of knowledge, expertise, and maintenance practices that could benefit municipal parks and recreation departments via sharing.

The target market will initially be the PRPS membership. Discussions with PSATS, PSAB and PML determined that a partnership with these organizations will enable us to reach out to more municipalities to participate in the Institute. The American Public Works Association has three chapters in Pennsylvania: Southeastern, Central, and Western. Since the public works departments are responsible for a significant portion of local park maintenance responsibilities in our state, these chapters are important partners and source of participation in the Institute. A significant part of their missions and strategic plans is education and networking.

Information Needs
The information needs are presented in Element 1. As indicated in Element 1, we found that much good information is out there, but it is not readily available. Many of those who need it most do not know where to go to get it. Information about park maintenance best practices, tools, and techniques is not documented, collected, organized, disseminated or promoted. Even within municipal parks and recreation systems, information is not readily available. Important information about local park and recreation maintenance practices is in the brain trust of those in charge. Training emerged as the top park and recreation maintenance need.

Beyond Information Needs: Advocacy
Recently, attention is being placed on public facility maintenance including parks in the media. Appendix B includes two such articles. Philadelphia’s current $500 million-dollar investment in the revitalization of its parks and recreation facilities is generating attention regarding how these improvements will be maintained. Parks and recreation practitioners have repeatedly expressed the concern that it is far easier to get money for building and improving parks than to maintain them after the ribbon cuttings. Municipalities experience great pressure to secure grant to build, improve or revitalize parks and recreation facilities. But after the excitement of the development they are hard pressed to maintain these facilities. As is often the case, the park maintenance people already doing a yeoman’s job with limited resources are tasked with doing more with even fewer staff and less budget. They are often victims of their own hard work, dedication and commitment to making their parks safe, clean and beautiful. As such, there is a major need to help make the case for park maintenance at all levels of government. Advocacy for park maintenance is a major need in Pennsylvania. Helping to formulate information, tools and strategies for making such a case should be a major job for the Institute.

Competitive Analysis
Overview of Competition
The obvious and most mentioned “competitor” for
an Institute has been the NRPA Maintenance Management School at the Oglebay Resort in Wheeling, WV. Operating for over fifty years with a waiting list, the school hosts 250 students annually with half in Year 1 and half in Year 2. The school runs for a week annually. After successfully completing the two-year curriculum and passing the test, students are certified in park maintenance by North Carolina State University. However, the school is not a major competitor and would be a partner as the Institute could promote the help potential students in Pennsylvania get scholarships. The school is intensive with classroom work from 8:00 – 5:00, evening labs and a cap stone project that is literally 23 hours straight. Park practitioners teach the classes and get outstanding reviews consistently. However, this school is not for everybody due to its lengthy instructional nature. It can accommodate relatively few Pennsylvanians given its national nature. Moreover, Pennsylvania is on the school’s target list as few Pennsylvanians attend. Travel and time restrictions are most frequently mentioned as reasons that people from Pennsylvania do not attend.

National Recreation and Park Association could be viewed as a competitor. Their Community Connections program is an online information exchange. People post questions that others log on to answer. Few questions are in the park maintenance realm, but Community Connections could be a model for the Institute.

Organizations in Pennsylvania such as PSATS, PSAB, PML, PALTA, 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, the Rail Trail Conservancy, American Public Works Association’s three Pennsylvania Chapters, Conservancies such as Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy and Fairmount Parks Conservancy would not be competitor and would be allies and partners in an organization devoted to building the capacity for local park maintenance.

Findings on Competition & Need for an Institute
The general reaction that the planning team received throughout the process was that no one else is doing this and that it is hard to understand why such an organization has not been formed before this. In an interview, the Director of Research for TORO indicated that the problems regarding park maintenance in Pennsylvania are in fact a nationwide problem that no one is doing anything about in an organized way. He gave kudos to Pennsylvania for looking into an institute for park maintenance and went on to say that if Pennsylvania is successful in doing this, it would be a nationwide model.

In summary, there appears to be no competition but instead a host of willing partners ready to engage with an Institute for Park Maintenance. The time appears to be right. The business plan presented next provides the framework for establishing and growing the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute.

INSTITUTE PURPOSE, VALUES, AND SERVICES

Institute Purpose
The purpose of the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute will be to advance the maintenance of local parks and recreation facilities. Its mission will be training, education, research and advocacy for public parks and recreation organizations through the provision of practical and implementable services.
Values
• Visionary Leadership
• Solution focused
• Results-driven work for long-term statewide impact and value
• Protection of state and local investment in public parks and recreation
• Relationships and partnerships as key to accomplishing our work
• Collaboration Across Areas of Expertise
• Excellence, Innovation, and Agility
• Integrity, Accountability and Openness
• Employees and volunteers valued for their knowledge, commitment and diversity

Services
The Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute will provide a range of services including outreach, education, training and information sharing. The four main areas of services be:
• Building Capacity for Park Maintenance through Training
  Building capacity for maintenance would include two methods: interested people seeking out the Institute and the Institute going out in the field. For those who seek the Institute, there would be webinars, videos and online information that could be used to assist individuals with their park maintenance needs as well as a source of electronic media for use in training in parks and recreation maintenance shops/offices. Research showed how important the presence of experts in parks and recreation maintenance/management is to municipalities, especially small ones with limited resources. To that end, the Institute would work with PA DCNR in its Peer grant program and PRPS in its RecTAP program to marshal experts in the maintenance field to provide defined consultations locally. Since travel and time are blocks to training, we would propose configuring six maintenance target areas in Pennsylvania along the northern, southern, eastern, central and western parts of Pennsylvania. A goal in mind is to have baseline park maintenance plans in place in all communities that are recognized and used—beyond lip service or pro forma grant requirements.
  Certification in park maintenance is a major longer-range goal of the Institute. It is a complicated component that requires collaboration with an accrediting organization such as a university or college. With Pennsylvania’s network of Community Colleges, a partnership with the Community College Association could position the Institute as a job training engine. Having local park maintenance workers certified in park maintenance adds important professionalism to communities with parks, creates pride in the work force and the municipality and will build the municipalities’ capacity to maintain parks by working smarter not harder. We know from first-hand experience with the NRPA Maintenance Management School that these are direct benefits of certification.
  We also envision the Institute working with the Bureau of State Parks in developing and implementing a training program that could benefit State Parks and having state parks staff involved with local park maintenance management training as well. There would be much to work out here, but identifying it at least gives us a start.
• Networking
  Building upon the finding that many people are ready willing and able to share information, the Institute will be committed to developing a networking protocol. The vision is for the Institute to become the “go to” destination when park maintenance is interested parties are seeking a solution, sharing an op-
portunity, or identifying an issue of concern. The Institute will conduct two information exchanges annually to start in response to the requests from the field for opportunities to get together to discuss topics of common interest and support networking. The idea of these follows Margaret Mead’s concept of creating social change through raising the quality of discussion in the workplace and then networking those ideas.

• **Information Sharing**
  Building a system of collecting, retrieving, and disseminating information is a key function of the Institute. The goal primarily is not to write and produce publications but instead to facilitate the collection of readily available resources then organize and promote them on such a way that they are easily accessible to those in need. However, a goal of the Institute would be to establish benchmarking for park maintenance statewide. Stakeholders at all levels of government need such information.

• **Advocacy**
  The Institute would help to make the case for park maintenance with defined target audiences such as local and state elected and appointed officials. Creating Change
  Creating change has to start at the local level using the strategy that the Institute will carry out. However, we have identified major issues in Pennsylvania that are truly statewide concerns. The main one is trash which along with grass mowing consume most of the park maintenance dollar. When the Institute is ready, we foresee it undertaking a major statewide campaign to reduce trash and litter. The model identified is the “Don’t Mess with Texas”, a nationally renowned 30-year old program that has had major positive benefits for Texas. Such a campaign would benefit our Commonwealth overall but would also give a great presence to the Institute.

• **Promotion**
  Interviews with other organizations found that promotion is key to all of the services that the Institute would provide.

### BUSINESS PLAN

#### Introduction
The Business Plan for the Pennsylvania Parks Maintenance Institute is one of the most important components of the Feasibility Study. The Business Plan identifies all operational and financial requirements of the Institute to determine the sustainability of the organization. Major features of the Business Plan include long-term funding needs and resources—including capacity-building, staffing, training, and advocacy; the economics of start-up and sustainability—including a 5-year income and expense pro forma that outlines specific sources of revenue and expenses; the timing of initial start-up tasks and responsibilities—particularly in the first two years; and specific grant requirements that will be necessary to support the Institute’s operations.

#### Overall Long-Term Funding Needs and Resources
The Pennsylvania Parks Maintenance Institute will require a variety of long-term funding needs and resources to operate efficiently and sustai-
ably. We have outlined these over a five-year period following a nine-month transition period (see Table 1).

**Transition**
During a nine-month Transition period, key organizational capacity-building will occur, including developing organizational and financial structure, undertaking initial fundraising, and implementing the first Park Maintenance Information Exchange. The Institute will first require an organizational structure, including its Board of Directors and model for its management (i.e. organizational by-laws).

Since the Institute will be housed for incubation in PRPS until it can be launched as a sustainable independent organization, it will not have a Board of Directors since PRPS has the Board of Directors to serve the 501-c-3 society. Therefore, the Institute will have an advisory body with a mix of interested well-informed and influential members in the world of park maintenance, fundraising, and partnership building especially public private partnerships. The goal is to establish a knowledgeable and practical board with a bias toward action and a commitment to growing the Institute.

**Year 1**
With a Board and management structure in place, the Institute will need staff to carry out its day-to-day activities. The hiring of initial staffing—a director or program manager—should occur early in Year 1. Furthermore, revenue generation must continue with active fundraising as should membership recruitment, the fees of which will be a significant source of that revenue. Work should also occur in Year 1 on the planning and development for additional tasks that will prepare the Institute for their eventual initiation in subsequent years. These tasks include planning for a baseline certification training program and an on-line technical assistance library and planning for and conducting two Park Maintenance Information Exchange events. Potential topics for the exchanges could include a park and recreation maintenance plan, natural resources preservation and management, active areas issues, trash collection, organization and management of maintenance resources, and technology and maintenance efficiency. In addition, initial planning for advocacy should begin in Year 1, particularly relationships with state and local officials. Planning for the expert peer consultation/site assessment services should also begin.

**Year 2**
With various tasks underway by the end of Year 1, promotion of the Institute will be a major initiative for Year 2. Membership recruitment should continue in full-force as well. In addition, the certification training program will be launched in Year 2, and the Park Maintenance Information Exchange programming should be fully established during this time. Also, by the end of Year 2, relationships with key state and local officials should be fully formed. Planning and development should begin in Year 2 for a branding and communications campaign and a system of expert peer consultation. The expert peer consultation services will be launched in Year 2 as well to promote relationship-building and provide members access to advice and guidance from the Institute on organizational matters such as budgeting and volunteerism. Planning and research for the on-line library should continue as well.

**Year 3**
During Year 3, the Institute will witness the
### Table 1. Long-Term Funding Needs/Resources for the Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Organizational Capacity Building</td>
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<td>Organizational Structure, Board &amp; Management Model</td>
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<td>Full Staffing</td>
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<td>Financial Controls &amp; Management</td>
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<td>Fundraising</td>
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<td>Promotion</td>
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<td>“Branding”/Communications</td>
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<td>Membership Recruitment</td>
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<td>Maintenance Training, Certification &amp; Technical Assistance</td>
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<td>Baseline Certification Training</td>
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<td>On-Line Technical Assistance Library/Website</td>
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<td>Expert Peer Consultation/Site Assessments</td>
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<td>Internship Program</td>
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<td>Annual “Best Practices” Conference/Technology Fair</td>
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<td>Park Maintenance Information Exchanges</td>
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<td>Park and Recreation Maintenance Plan</td>
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<td>Example: Cranberry Township</td>
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<td>Natural Resources Preservation &amp; Management</td>
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<td>Example: Invasive Plants Management</td>
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<td>Active Areas Issues</td>
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<td>Example: Playing Fields Maintenance</td>
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<td>Trash Collection</td>
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<td>Example: Trash Collection “Best” Practices</td>
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<td>Organization &amp; Management of Maintenance Resources</td>
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<td>Example: Recruitment &amp; Management of Volunteers</td>
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<td>Technology &amp; Maintenance Efficiency</td>
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<td>Identifying &amp; Promoting Current &quot;Best&quot; Technology</td>
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<td>Planning for Evolving Technology</td>
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<td>Trash Prevention/Behavior Modification</td>
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<td>Identify Primary Sources/Originators of Trash in PA Local Parks</td>
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<td>Develop Approach to Modifying Behavior</td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
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<td>Develop Case for Investment in Maintenance</td>
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<td>Establish Advocacy Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain Relationships With State &amp; Local Officials</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

**Code:** X Planning & Development  X Major task initiation  X On-going follow-up
rollout of several significant initiatives after their planning and development occurred in the first two years. The branding and communications campaign should be up and running at this time while membership recruitment continues. In addition, the on-line technical assistance library will be fully operational, providing a full array of easily-accessible topic-based videos and materials to Institute members. In addition, planning will begin in Year 3 for an annual conference and for establishing a case for investing in maintenance.

**Year 4**

A milestone for Year 4 will be the Institute’s first annual conference. The conference should emphasize best practices and a technology fair that highlights the latest park maintenance-related products and advancements. This year should also involve the launch of professional advocacy materials that make a case for park maintenance to help secure sponsors for conferences, solicit foundations for special projects, and gather financial support from elected and appointed officials. Efforts for reducing trash in local parks should initiate in Year 4 with the Institute identifying primary sources and originators of the trash. Planning should begin in Year 4 for an internship program as well.

**Year 5**

Finally, by the end of Year 5, it is assumed that the Institute will be at full operational capacity and most long-term tasks will continue with ongoing follow-up. Full staffing in Year 5 will ensure that these tasks occur. During this year the internship program will launch. In addition, the trash-prevention effort will advance to developing an approach for modifying the behavior of park users who litter. An agenda for the continued advocacy of the Institute should also be created in Year 5.

**The Economics of Start-Up and Sustainability**

The Pennsylvania Parks Maintenance Institute will have a number of specific revenues and expenses that will impact both the organization’s start-up and continued sustainability. These are identified and outlined in an income and expense pro forma (see Table 2) and are directly associated with the activities and their timing described above. During the start-up phase (Transition & Years 1 to 2), the Institute will rely heavily on grants for revenue. As the organization moves into the sustainability phase (Years 3-5), the Institute should see a significant growth in subscriptions and fee- and sponsorship-based revenue.

**Start-Up: Transition & Years 1-2**

The largest start-up expense in the Transition and beginning of Year 1 will be hiring a consultant to assist with getting the Institute up and running. The consultant’s role will likely involve assisting with organizing the Board of Directors, the hiring of the institute director/project manager early in Year 1 (including partial-year salary and fringe benefits), securing office space, hiring legal and accounting assistance, and finding library intern researchers to begin compiling the online technical assistance resources. We estimate these expenses to amount to $58,000 in the transition and just over $123,000 in Year 1. It is anticipated that the sole source of revenue during this first year will be organizational subscriptions. Assuming approximately 40 organizations purchase subscriptions with the Institute at an average of $375 per subscription (minus an assumed 20% discount for PRPS agency members), the revenue generated by subscriptions would amount to $13,500. To cover the remaining expenses, the Institute would need to secure start-up grants, likely from foundations and government sources. As-
### Table 2. The PA Park Maintenance Institute Five-Year Income and Expense Pro Forma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Transition</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Subscriptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Subscriptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Trainees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Annual Conference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Subscriptions (@ $375 average)</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$52,000</td>
<td>$82,000</td>
<td>$112,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20% Discount for PRPS</td>
<td>$(1,500)</td>
<td>$(3,000)</td>
<td>$(5,250)</td>
<td>$(8,250)</td>
<td>$(11,250)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Subscriptions for PRPS Agency Members— Assume half of subscriptions</td>
<td>$1,125</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,875</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline Certification Training Fees (@ $2,500 over 2 years)</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>$31,250</td>
<td>$43,750</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants for Interns, Website &amp; Branding</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Peer Consultation/Site Assessment Contract</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange Sponsorships</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$23,000</td>
<td>$26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual “Best Practices” Conference/Technology Fair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>$103,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start-up Grants</strong></td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$58,000</td>
<td>$123,500</td>
<td>$221,500</td>
<td>$219,625</td>
<td>$296,500</td>
<td>$342,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPENSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start-up Consultant</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute Director</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training/Technical Assistance Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits (@ 30%)</td>
<td>$10,500</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>$18,000</td>
<td>$25,500</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal/Accounting</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Expense</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline Certification Training Expenses</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line Technical Assistance Library Intern Researchers</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance Library Web Consultant + Base Website</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion/Newsletter Support Staff</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding Consultant</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Peer Consultation/Site Assessment Stipends</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange Consultants</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange Expenses</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual “Best Practices” Conference/Technology Fair Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$63,000</td>
<td>$79,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expense</strong></td>
<td>$58,000</td>
<td>$123,000</td>
<td>$221,500</td>
<td>$219,000</td>
<td>$294,500</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Suming $235,000 could be raised through this means for the Transition, the Institute should break even through Year 2.

Expenses will increase for the Institute in Year 2. While the start-up consultant will likely no longer be necessary, the full-time Institute director will be in place for his/her first full year with an assumed salary of $54,000 and fringe benefits of $16,200. Other expenses introduced in Year 2 include training expenses, a web consultant for the technical assistance library and the Institute’s website ($30,000), support staff for promotion, and consultant fees and expenses for the Park Maintenance Information Exchange. Collectively, these expenses for Year 2 would total just under $214,000. This includes $60,000 for expert peer consultants.

For revenue during Year 2, it is expected that the Institute will double municipal subscriptions to 80, which would net $27,000. Baseline certification training would also begin, with fees for 10 trainees, assuming a fee of $2,500 over two years, generating $12,500 in Year 2. Ideally, the Institute could secure increasing levels of sponsorships from private companies (e.g. John Deere, Toro, etc.) for the growing Park Maintenance Information Exchanges. While start-up grants required to cover anticipated expenses would be less than Year 1 due to these new sources of revenue, it is assumed that $80,000 would be necessary. A special purpose grant of $50,000 for the Library & Website is also anticipated. Together, these individual sources of revenue for Year 2 would total almost $217,000.

**Sustainability: Years 3-5**

By Year 3, the Institute will be entering the sustainability phase. The critical start-up elements should be in place, and the organization will be positioning itself to significantly increase its fee-based revenue generation through sponsorships, training, and municipal and individual subscriptions (see Table 3). During Year 3, a few new expenses are introduced that will be necessary for the organization to reach its potential. The expanded program will also create additional expenses. In addition, as the branding and communications component gets underway in Year 3, a consultant should be hired for that work, approximating $20,000 anticipated from a special purpose grant. Overall, the Year 3 expenses will likely be similar to Year 2 at $211,000.

### Table 3. Potential Fee Schedule for the PA Park Maintenance Institute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Subscription Schedule</th>
<th>Annual Fee</th>
<th>Number of Jurisdictions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population Under 5,000</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Counties: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 5,000 to 9,000</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>Municipalities: 1,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 10,000 to 24,999</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>Counties: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 25,000 to 49,999</td>
<td>$550</td>
<td>Municipalities: 317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 50,000 to 99,999</td>
<td>$700</td>
<td>Counties: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 100,000 to 249,999</td>
<td>$850</td>
<td>Municipalities: 198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 250,000 &amp; Above</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>Counties: 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Municipalities: 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Philadelphia and Pittsburgh</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Subscription Fee (PRPS Members Only)</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational subscriptions would be based on the population of the municipality seeking the subscription. We have divided the state’s almost 2,600 municipalities into seven categories and applied an annual fee to each category ranging from $200 for municipalities with populations of less than 5,000 to $1,000 for jurisdictions with populations of 250,000 and greater, including the Cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and 14 counties. These fees amount to an average of $375 per municipality annually. A 20% discount would be offered for municipalities that are already members of PRPS. Annual subscriptions to individuals, who must be members of PRPS to qualify, would be offered for $75.

For Year 3 revenues, organizational subscriptions would ideally increase to 140, netting over $45,000. Baseline certification training could expand this year to 25 trainees, increasing that revenue to over $31,000. Also, the Institute should be ready to accept individual memberships; fifteen would bring in a modest $1,175 assuming the subscription rate of $75. Because of these new funding sources, start-up grants would be less critical for sustainability, though the Institute would still likely need about $40,000 in start-up grants. The total revenue for Year 3 would amount to approximately $217,000.

Years 4 and 5 will see a ramping up of operations with the Annual Conference initiated in Year 4 and the necessity of a second staff person during Year 4 dedicated to training and technical assistance. This will require adding approximately $40,000 in salary and additional fringe benefit expenses in Year 5 and a portion of that in Year 4. In terms of new expenses, the annual best practices conference and technology fair is anticipated to cost about $63,000 to operate in Year 4, increasing to $79,000 in Year 5. Adding the conference and second staff person, overall expenses would reach $293,000 in Year 4 and $322,000 in Year 5. By Year 5, the Institute will need a staff person.

Revenues in Years 4 and 5 would continue to grow through increased organizational subscriptions—up to 300 by the end of Year 5, netting $100,000; increased individual subscriptions—up to 25; and certification trainees—up to 40 by the end of Year 5, netting $50,000. The largest revenue source starting in Year 4, however, is the annual conference, which could raise almost $70,000 for the Institute, increasing to over $100,000 in Year 5. The conference would significantly reduce the need for start-up grants, likely necessitating only $25,000 in grant funding for Years 4 and none for Year 5. While start-up grants will have totaled $300,000 for Years 1 through 4, the Institute will achieve operational sustainability and should no longer require grants as a revenue source.

**Initial Institute Development**

As discussed above, the first two years of the Pennsylvania Parks Maintenance Institute will be the organization’s critical start-up phase. It is during this period that the on-boarding of the Institute’s many activities and functions will begin. As this process occurs, it is important to identify the precise timing of each activity (see Table 4) as well as identify the entity that will be responsible for these tasks and assignments (see Table 5).

Much of the organizational capacity building will occur in the Transition and in Year 1. The Institute will need to create the organizational structure and recruit the Board of Directors. The Board will then establish a set of bylaws that will
Table 4. Start-Up Activities by Quarter for the PA Park Maintenance Institute—Years 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TRANSITION</th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
<th>YEAR 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>Q4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Capacity Building</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Structure, Board &amp; Management Model</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Staffing—Program Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Controls &amp; Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Fundraising</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion—Newsletter (as well as online and social media)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Issue #1</td>
<td>Issue #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Branding”/Communications</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fund</td>
<td>Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Recruitment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance Training &amp; Certification</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline Certification Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Curriculum/Identify Teachers</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Technical Assistance Library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop “Web-Friendly” Institute Library/Communicate Availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Peer Consultation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Details of Consultation Approach/Procedures/Topics</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify/Secure Funding Source(s)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify/Commit Initial Substantive Area Experts</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Availability of Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Requests/Authorize Peer Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Maintenance Information Exchanges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish/Maintain Relationships With State &amp; Local Officials</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28
connections, but with assistance from the start-up consultant. At this early stage it would primarily be starting a list of potential members. The first Institute’s Park Maintenance Information Exchange in December 2018 will occur during the Transition, with planning and coordination for that event currently underway.

By the second quarter of Year 1, the Institute should be ready to hire its Program Manager. This first staff person will be a milestone for the organization. The Board and consultant should continue to fundraise, and the Board should also continue its list of potential members. Also, during the second quarter, the consultant should begin developing the maintenance training and certification curriculum and identifying potential teachers. Funding should be allocated for hiring interns to review and catalog on-line training courses in the next quarter. Planning for the second Park Maintenance Information Exchange should occur in the second quarter as well.

The third quarter of Year 1 will involve a con-

| Table 5. Major Tasks/Assignments for the PA Park Maintenance Institute—Years 1 and 2 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Activity                        | BOARD | START-UP | PROGRAM | OTHER |
| **TRANSITION & YEAR 1**         |       | CONSULTANT | MANAGER | CONSULTANTS |
| Create Organization, Board & Procedures | X | X | | |
| Fundraise                       | X | X | | |
| Build Membership                | X | X | | |
| Hire Program Manager            | X | X | | |
| Initiate Promotion/Newsletter   | X | X | | |
| Plan for Baseline Certification Training | | X | X | |
| Secure Interns/Begin Research for Online Technical Assistance Library | X | X | | |
| Organize & Undertake Three Park Maintenance Information Exchanges | X | X | | |
| Develop Approach to Relationships with State & Local Officials | X | | X | |
| **YEAR 2**                      |       |           |         |         |
| Fundraise                       | X | | X | |
| Build Membership                | X | | X | |
| Initiate Promotion/Newsletter   | | X | X | |
| Undertake “Branding” Analysis/Planning | X | | X | |
| Implement Baseline Certification Training | | X | X | |
| Complete Research for Online Technical Assistance Library/Develop Website | | X | X | |
| Plan & Initiate Expert Peer Consultation Program | | X | | |
| Organize & Undertake One Maintenance Information Exchanges | | X | X | |
| Build Relationships with State & Local Officials | X | | X | |

**Code:** X Major Responsible Party X Supportive Party
tinuation of the above activities, while the start-up consultant recruits interns for the review and cataloging of available on-line training resources. In addition, the Board should begin identifying state and local officials with whom to build relationships. A second Maintenance Information Exchange should also occur in the third quarter.

During the fourth quarter, efforts should continue toward fundraising, membership identification, and developing training curriculum. Also, in the fourth quarter, the recruited interns can begin researching resources to catalog for the on-line training. Funding should be allocated during this time as well to develop the web-friendly Institute library. The role of the start-up consultant will wind down by the end of the year.

Key accomplishments of Year 2 will involve continued membership recruitment, training, peer consultation, and advocacy. Starting in the first quarter, funding should be allocated for hiring a consultant for the branding and communications campaign. Membership recruitment should be in full force by the Board at this stage with the goal of increasing membership by 40 members annually. Training should be fully implemented with the teachers and curriculum identified in Year 1, and research will continue for on-line training resources. At this time the Institute should also hire a consultant to begin developing the web-friendly Institute library. Activity will also begin this quarter on expert peer consultation. This will involve developing the details of the consultation approach, procedures, and topics, as well as identifying and securing funding sources for the peer consultation. Planning should continue in the first quarter for the Maintenance Information Exchanges, the third of which to be held in the next quarter. The program director will likely want to hire a consultant to assist with organizing the maintenance information exchanges. Advocacy efforts through relationship-building should be in full force at this stage, continuing throughout the year.

In the second quarter of Year 2, the first issue of the Institute’s newsletter should be launched. The newsletter could report on the Institute’s happenings and advertise upcoming events and activities. This could be emailed and posted on agency websites. The newsletter would be prepared by the program director, possibly with the help of a consultant for design and layout. At this phase, the branding consultant would be hired to begin planning the branding and communications campaign. Membership recruitment, maintenance training, and on-line training resource cataloging would continue. With the library consultant in place, the web-friendly Institute library would start getting organized during this quarter. For peer consultation, the program manager would continue securing funding while identifying and committing substantive area experts. After continued planning and funding, the third Maintenance Information Exchange would occur in the second quarter.

The third quarter of Year 2 is a continuation of many of the second quarter’s activities. The marketing of resources for the expert peer consultation would begin at this stage with topics and funding in place. In addition, planning would continue for the fourth Maintenance Information Exchange to be held at the end of the year.

Finally, wrapping up the second year of start-up operations in the fourth quarter, the Institute would issue its second promotional newsletter—this one focusing on the soon-to-be launched on-line training library to generate interest and awareness. Concurrently or soon after, the library should be rolled out with fanfare. Recruitment efforts should be generating 200 members by year-end. Also, during the fourth quarter, the Institute should be ready to process requests and
authorize peer support for the expert peer consultation services. The Institute will end its second year with the fourth Maintenance Information Exchange.

**START-UP FUNDING**

Funding is a key to the success of the Pennsylvania Parks Maintenance Institute. A significant portion of the Institute’s revenue—anything other than subscriptions and fees—will be grants, at least initially. Table 6 summarizes the variety of grants we anticipate will be necessary to stabilize the organization financially by Year 5, all of which are included in the five-year income and expense pro forma in Table 2 above.

Totaling $300,000 over the transition and first four years of the Institute’s operations, the largest grants requirements are considered general start-up grants and are not tied to a specific activity or outcome. Some of this support could potentially include seed funding from PRPS. These grants are expected to amount to approximately $155,000 in the Transition and Year 1, reducing to $25,000 for Year 4.

Supplementing these start-up grants will be smaller grants that can support special projects. These include a $20,000 grant for the on-line technical assistance library interns, a $30,000 grant for the Institute website and technical assistance consultant to develop the web-based library, and a $20,000 grant for the branding consultant. In addition, the Institute will need $60,000 per year starting in Year 2 to fund the expert peer consultation and site assessment contract. The Institute will also require growing levels of sponsorships for the Information Exchanges. Furthermore, additional grants may be required for additional research and programming activities. These could include developing ways to identify primary sources of trash in parks as well as developing a case for the investment in park maintenance in Year 4; and developing approaches to modifying behavior toward trash in Year 5.

Beyond Year 5, some of the more specialized grants described above, particularly sponsorships, will likely be required to maintain the fi-
nancial stability of the Institute. However, the organizational start-up grants that were necessary to support operations during the first few years should render the Institute sustainable by Year 5 with no long-term deficits beyond.

**Startup Funding Sources**
The business plan calls for startup funding of $300,000 during the first three years, an amount that the consultant team believes is achievable. Twenty percent of the startup funding has already been raised by PRPS and preliminary discussions and introductions to funders are underway. The following sources of funding have been identified to accomplish the $300,000 startup goal (Table 7).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRPS</td>
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<td>Outside funding sources</td>
</tr>
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<td>DCED, DCNR most likely funders</td>
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<td>Private Foundations</td>
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<td>$50,000</td>
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<td>Community Foundations</td>
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<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$300,000</strong></td>
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**INSTITUTE LOGO**
During the planning process, SWELL worked with the planning team and Advisory Committee to develop a logo for the Institute. The logo below will be used to begin a branding and promotional work for the Institute.

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*Table 7. Startup Funding Sources*
ABOUT THE CASE STUDIES
The Planning team identified six case studies to illustrate the type of information and contacts that could be shared to help park maintenance practitioners solve problems, discover new tools and techniques, learn about best practices, and identify sources of help and information. The case studies include a mix of succinct two-page case studies, a video and a webinar. These three types of case study vehicles demonstrate different ways to present case studies in the future. The case studies include:

• Linwood Park: Volunteers Make Neighborhood Park a Reality. Lower Merion Township Montgomery County.
• Making the Case for Park Maintenance Staff, South Middleton Township, Cumberland County, PA
• Transferring Park Maintenance into Public Works, South Middleton Township, Cumberland County, PA
• Sports Field Maintenance Partnerships, Middletown Township, Bucks County
• Webinar on Establishing Park Maintenance Plans
• Video on Managing Invasive Species, Mile-A-Minute

FINDINGS
• Research into other organizations with similar missions to the Institute cautioned us against the Institute being the writer and producer of publications. It takes too long. The resulting materials are relatively ephemeral. Issues and interests change often in a relatively short or sudden time period. The work of the organization is better spent on facilitating getting the wide range of information produced by others to our target audience. A plethora of information from many sources is available but not organized for distribution and easy access.
• Parks and Recreation Departments have many important lessons learned and techniques developed that could help other if shared conveniently. There is no vehicle in place to find, document, organize and promote this information.
• Whoever seeks and collects this material must understand and recognize when they have come across important information to share. We have found that even those most intimately involved with their work do not recognize the value and merit of what they are doing in terms of modeling and helping others.

RECOMMENDATIONS
• The work on case studies should be focused on identifying good tools, techniques, methods and accomplishments and then working with those responsible to document their work simply and online in a concise case study.
• We are recommending that future case studies development be done online modeled after the Case Study format used by the City parks Alliance as shown in the following link: https://www.cityparksalliance.org/submit-case

While online case studies would be easily searchable and readily available, the challenge is
to identify them and get them documented online. In our work on the case studies, we have found that interviewing practitioners about their project or program was an effective way to generate case study information and for worthy case studies that interview could be interactively producing the online information.

You’ve Got to Have Friends: Volunteers Make Neighborhood Pocket Park a Reality

Municipality:
Lower Merion Township
75 East Lancaster Avenue
Ardmore, PA 19003

Project contact:
Christopher Leswing
Director Building and Planning Department
610-645-6116
cleswing@lowermerion.org

A former parking lot becomes a green oasis in densely-populated Ardmore, presenting the Township with new maintenance challenges.

When a church parking lot was threatened by redevelopment, the Ardmore community rallied around the creation of the now one-acre Linwood Park, an exemplary showcase of free public gardens, with programs and events. The initial design and purchase were possible due to leveraging of federal and local funds, including private donations from residents. From the start, the Township recognized that the long-term maintenance was more than the current staff could manage.

Accomplishments
The park would not have been possible without the formation of the Friends of Linwood who:
• Raise $2,500 to $4,000 per year for plantings, mulch, chalk and tools for programming and maintenance.
• Organize and execute Saturday maintenance mornings, several times a month, where 3 to 5 volunteers maintain the park.
• Coordinate with Township staff for more extensive, seasonable management conducted by court-ordered community service from local universities and business volunteer groups.
• Serve as the eyes and ears on the park, by working closely with Township Parks and Recreation staff. For example, the Friends report large branches that may require arborist services, and they have purchased benches that Township crews install.

Keys to Success
• The original design, by a Professional Landscape Architect, considered that the park would be maintained by volunteers. Masses of similar items were intentionally included to facilitate easier maintenance.
• Organization is key to volunteer maintenance teams. The Friends, with occasional help from Township staff, remain involved to ensure that untrained volunteers can execute tasks.
Lesson Learned
Mulching perennial beds proved especially daunting with volunteers. The Friends learned to divide volunteer groups of 30 people into smaller teams, assigned very specific tasks such as filling wheel barrels, filling buckets, spreading mulch. Equally important, a roving quality control crew stayed on site and follow up to correct any deficiencies. This well-managed team can complete seasonal mulching and clean up in about three hours.

“Friends of Linwood keep this local gem sustainable, both ecologically and environmentally.”
– Chris Leswing, Director, Building & Planning Department, Lower Merion Township

Making the Case for Maintenance Staff

Municipality:
South Middleton Township,
Cumberland County
520 Park Drive
Boiling Springs, PA 17007

Project contact:
Kurt Uhler
Director of Public Works
717-258-44421
kuhler@smiddleton.com

Spring Meadows Park Master Plan included an action plan for maintenance.

Spring Meadows Park is not only important to South Middleton Township but also has statewide significance. It is in the location of South Middleton Township Authority’s well #2 that provides possibly the best source of water supply from a single well in Pennsylvania. This parkland was purchased not only to provide open space and recreation facilities, but also to ensure that the wellhead area remains uncontaminated. Therefore, the care and maintenance of this site is integral to the conservation of the community’s essential natural resource, water, as well as for recreational use.

As part of the master planning process, South Middleton Township had identified the importance of planning for the future maintenance, operation, programming, and support of Spring Meadows Park. The Parks & Recreation Department worked closely with the planning and design team to establish an action plan for park maintenance. Since the Township addressed park maintenance as part of the design process, elected officials, township management, and the parks and recreation management team are now able to make informed decisions about implementing the recommendations of the park master plan, the allocation of
resources, budgeting, staffing and partnerships for maintenance, and programming for the park.

During the master planning process, the Parks and Recreation Department had two full-time employees including the Recreation Director and the Parks & Facilities Director. The Parks & Facilities Director is responsible for planning, organizing and performing the maintenance of all township parks and recreation facilities. Three part-time Maintenance Workers have a 32-hour workweek from March through November. These workers mow grass, remove trash and litter, and provide custodial services for restrooms. There was no workload cost tracking system in place to document the need for more full-time staff. The Spring Meadows Park Maintenance Plan made recommendations for maintenance goals, park quality standards, organization, staffing, budget, revenue generation, partnerships, workload cost tracking, employee development, and policies.

Accomplishments
- In 2014, the Board of Supervisors voted to add its first full-time Maintenance Worker under the Parks & Facilities Director based upon the facts and figures produced in the Operations & Maintenance Plan of the Park Master Plan.
- In accordance with township policy and benefits, a maintenance worker is going to college for an education in turf management with an eye toward becoming a future park maintenance supervisor.
- In 2018, the Board of Supervisors hired a second full-time maintenance worker based on the case made by the Parks & Facilities Director for the requirements to maintain the park. The Board of Supervisors named the importance of “ensuring that the park would forever look as good as it did the day the ribbon was cut”, the concept promoted in the park master planning process for maintenance.

Keys to Success
- Establishment of inventory, quality standards, workload, equipment and labor costs, potential revenue sources, and cyclic maintenance requirements was essential to making the case for park maintenance support.
- Recommendations for staffing increases commensurate with additional maintenance responsibilities resulting from park development were based upon facts and figures that conveyed the need to protect the township’s commitment to invest $4.25 million in park improvements.
- Work sessions with township parks and recreation staff, township management and the Board of Supervisors were essential. The participation of members of the Board of Supervisors during the planning process helped to build understanding and support for park maintenance.

Lessons Learned
Importance of: Having elected and appointed officials involved throughout the planning process; generating facts and figures to illustrate staffing needs and benefits; employee development planning; and how to make the case for maintenance. An outside planning team helped staff make the case for maintenance that they could not do on their own.
Transferring Park Maintenance to Public Works

Municipality:
South Middleton Township, Cumberland County
520 Park Drive
Boiling Springs, PA 17007

Project contact:
Kurt Uhler
Director of Public Works
717-258-44421
kuhler@smiddleton.com

Excellent sports field maintenance is a hallmark of South Middleton Township.

The trend in Pennsylvania’s municipalities is toward designating park maintenance as a function of the Public Works Department. Without facts and figures to make the case for the unique nature of parks and recreation facility maintenance, it is challenging for parks and recreation departments to argue against the logic of such an organizational structure. Public Works is typically a much larger department with more employees and equipment so at face value, this transition makes sense. However, the skill sets, tasks, and priorities during certain times of the year present inherent challenges for maintaining a public park system as a great public space.

When South Middleton Township’s Public Works Director retired, the Township tapped the Director of Parks & Facilities to become the new Public Works Director. In order to ensure that parks remained as maintenance priorities within a public works department, the Township Board of Supervisor, Township Manager and the Director of Parks & Facilities worked together to establish the organizational framework that would serve the Township well by ensuring that parks remain a priority as Public works functions are carried out.

Keys to Success

As Kurt Uhler, South Middleton Township’s new Public Works Director, points out: “People drive along roads at 50 M.P.H. but walk in parks so the level of detail that they see in maintenance is very different and much more exacting in parks.” Understanding the commitment of the Board of Supervisors to Parks and prepared with information about the requirements of park maintenance, Kurt was able to make the case for the transition of parks into Public Works including:

• Retaining two divisions within Public Works: a Parks Crew and a Road Crew.
• Sharing resources and staff between the two divisions as the Township needed
• Ensuring that those working on parks have the skill sets needed which are much different from filling pot holes.
• Maintaining the integrity of park maintenance, that is park maintenance tasks would be prioritized within park requirements and not as a sub-set of Public Works.
• Employee development in parks and recreation facility maintenance is key.
Accomplishments
The Board of Supervisors had invested significantly in Kurt over the years and wanted the ensure that he would stay with the Township as the new Public Works Director. Together, they were able to establish and put in place the optimal organizational elements necessary for both successful Public Works and Park Maintenance functions. Park Maintenance will continue to have two full-time employees and four seasonal part-time employees while Road Maintenance will have 13 full-timers. They will help each other out when needed but park maintenance tasks will be performed by those with the appropriate skill sets. With a shared “kitty” of workers, employees can be drawn for projects and tasks where needed and trained.

Lessons Learned
• In other municipalities where park maintenance was transferred to Public Works without proper attention to the requirements and skill sets of park maintenance, money was saved on salaries, but the quality of park conditions deteriorated.
• Legacy planning is crucial. When Kurt became the Public Works Director, the provision was made for a Park Superintendent to head the Park Crew, ensuring that an employee who was trained and expert in park maintenance could step up. Township supported education for staff enabled a worker with supervisory potential to pursue a degree in Turf Management, a major skill set needed in park maintenance.
• Park maintenance being transferred to Public Works is a common practice so preparing for it to optimize the care of the parks is essential.
• Park maintenance training for designated employees in a Public Works Department is necessary to develop or enhance the skill sets required for park maintenance. Examples of such skill sets include but are not limited to turf management, ball field maintenance, playground safety inspections, natural resource management, and customer service.

Sports Field Maintenance Partnerships

Municipality:
Middletown Township, Bucks County
3 Municipal Way
Langhorne, PA 19047

Project contact:
Paul Kopera
Parks & Recreation Director
215-750-3890
pkopera@middletownbucks.org

Sports field maintenance partnerships provide excellent field conditions and save money.

How can a community have premier ball-fields on a limited park maintenance budget?
By partnering with community sports groups!

The Middletown Township Parks & Recreation Department has found excellent success in partnering with two community sports organizations on the maintenance of ball fields in two community parks. The Langhorne Athletic Association maintains the ball fields in Middletown Community Park and the Middletown Athletic Association maintains the ball fields in Twin Oaks Park.

The Township waives the $25 per hour user fee for these leagues. In return, the leagues take care of all ground, trash, minor repairs and mowing. The Township provides lighting, irrigation, and any fencing work. The leagues are very collaborative in offering the use of the fields when available to others. They support township programs by mowing fields in preparation for activities sponsored on site by the Township.

**Keys to Success**

A harmonious relationship with good will and a spirit of cooperation enable the Township parks and Recreation department and the Leagues to work together in archiving their goals and vision for service to the community through sports and excellent park facilities. The three entities all feel like they are “in it together”.

Another key to success is an effective working relationship between the parks and Recreation Department and the Public Works Department. Together they operate as “One Team”. They collaborate in equipment purchasing to benefit both departments. Training is key as well. Training on mowing around sprinkler heads is key to avoiding costly sprinkler head replacement.

Avoiding territoriality and ownership of public facilities is key and works well here as other groups and programs use these facilities too beyond just league play. This has also enabled the leagues to help cover their costs. For example, the Langhorne Athletic Association spend $60,000 per year on mowing. Through their agreement with the Township, they have joined forces with Lower Bucks Lacrosse League who pays $10,000 of the mowing costs. The $60,000 also includes $15,00 of expenditures for mowing school ball fields so that the School District does not have to pay for this and the fields are used for community recreation.

**Accomplishments**

The Township and two sports leagues have joined forces in finding ways to provide top notch community recreation services and facilities in a way that both can afford. The Township foregoes about $10,000 in fees and lost the responsibility of about $20,000 in maintenance costs for these facilities which include 19 ballfields both diamond and rectangular.

**Lessons Learned**

- Importance of the spirit of collaboration
- Importance of written agreements
- Importance of longer-term lease to spur investment
- Importance of ensuring availability of fields for general community use
- Good will is important and makes everything work better in parks and recreation!
Webinar: Park Maintenance Plan as a Best Practice

Organization:
Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
4855 Woodland Drive
Enola, PA, 17025
www.PSATS.org

Project contact:
James Wheeler
Chief Development Officer
717-763-0930, x 128
jwheeler@psats.org

PSATS Municipal Government Academy (PMGA): public safety, planning, administration, and public works. PMGA enrollees can earn one secondary credit per webinar. On June 27, 2018 the Public Works track focused on park maintenance in a webinar entitled “Best Practices: Parks and Recreation Operations”. The description of the course was as follows:

Parks and recreation facilities require constant attention to keep them safe and enjoyable. With constraints on time and funds, it is imperative that your township have an effecting maintenance and operations program. This webinar will review a number of items that will prove useful in developing a plan of action for keeping your parks and recreation facilities at their best.

The link to the webinar is: https://connect.psats.org/trainingevents/upcoming-events?webproductid=8fe3ea3f-e77a-e811-8112-3863bb36ed90

Video: Invasive Plants and Managing Mile-A-Minute

Organization:
Natural Lands
1031 Palmers Mill Road
Media, PA 19063
info@natlands.org

Project contact:
Ann Hutchinson, AICP
Senior Director Municipal Planning
Natural Lands
ahutchinson@natlands.org
610-353-5587 x 230

About the Webinar
PSATS offers webinar training called PSATS’ Webinar Wednesdays, series of webinars on Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. Each month, the topics rotate among the four tracks of the
About the Video
The purpose of this video is to demonstrate the value of using this method of presenting information by the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute. Natural Lands wrote, directed, produced, and filmed this five-minute video on invasive plants and managing the Mile-A-Minute Invasive plant.

Our research found that park maintenance practitioners like videos for training. In our world today, people regularly log onto YouTube to find out how to do something. We also learned that related commercial enterprises such as TORO, Home Depot, and Lowe’s are using videos successfully in attracting and educating customers on maintenance tasks. We found that parks and recreation department are producing their own videos that are conducive to sharing. Facilitating the sharing of park maintenance videos would be a function of the Institute. There is a host of videos related to maintenance on line – the trick is to organize them in an easily accessible way for maintenance practitioners without much time for research.

The link to the video is: https://youtu.be/hMcj1DSYCs
ABOUT THE MAINTENANCE PLANS

This report includes three examples of park maintenance plans:

• Parks Maintenance Plan, Cranberry Township, Butler County—A full maintenance plan for a parks and recreation system.
• Multi-Municipal Maintenance Plan, Mifflin County, Oliver Township, Bratton Township and McVeytown Borough—A maintenance management plan for a park and boat launch serving the region.
• Tank Farm Maintenance Management Plan, Potter Township Beaver County

Cranberry Township Park Maintenance Plan

Municipality:
Cranberry Township, Butler County PA 2525 Rochester Road
Suite 600
Cranberry Township, PA 16066

Project contact:
Pete Geis
Director of Parks & Recreation
724-776-4806
Pete.Geis@cranberrytownship.org

About the Plan
The Cranberry Township Parks Maintenance Plan was developed by the Grounds Manager within the Public Works Grounds Maintenance Division. The former Grounds Manager who developed the plan has a degree in turf management and is a Certified Sports Filed Manager, one of only 250 in the United States. As she developed the park maintenance plan, she started with ball fields and moved into all other aspects of park maintenance. The Cranberry Township Parks Maintenance Plan is an excellent example of the kind of plan every municipality would like to have. In fact, Cranberry Township receives calls from all over the United States of America to request permission to copy it, to request the software to tailor to other communities and for information about how the plan works. The Grounds Maintenance Manager Position is in transition until a replacement for the former manager is secured. The Parks & Recreation Director does not manage park maintenance but is listed as a contact on an interim basis. Mr. Geis is the person who receives the calls from around the country and refers people to the Grounds Manager. He attests to the excellent condition of their parks and recreation facilities due in large part to implementing the Parks Maintenance Plan. The link to the plan is: https://www.cranberrytownship.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/16787
Mifflin County Multi-Municipal Park Maintenance Plan

Municipalities:
Mifflin County, Bratton Township, McVeytown Borough and Oliver Township.
Mifflin County
20 North Wayne St.
Lewistown, PA 17044
http://www.co.mifflin.pa.us

Project contact:
Bill Gomes, AICP
Director of Planning & Development
717-242-0887
wgomes@mifflinco.org

About the Plan
Mifflin County developed a boat launch on the Juniata River. In a remarkable feat of securing land donated via a 25-year lease; several grants from PA DCNR, the National Park Service, and PRPS for planning design and development; and other donated services, the County created the only public boat launch in a 22 mile stretch of this beautiful river. The next challenge was figuring out how this site was going to be maintained by a county without a parks and recreation department and largely small rural municipalities that operate parks and recreation via volunteer boards and limited public works departments.

Bill Gomes, Mifflin County’s Director of Planning and Development worked collaboratively with the County Commissioners, Bratton Township, McVeytown Borough, and Oliver Township on an agreement to jointly care for this important recreation facility. This was a tall order due to limited resources, challenges on liability, need to adhere to the quality standards desired by the property owner, the County, and the municipalities. For more than a year, the parties came together in the following written agreement in which the municipalities dedicate a line item in their budget for the care of the boat launch and park, taking turns each yet for the performing the tasks required. The County holds the insurance policy. The following agreement spells out the details of the agreement.

Tank Farm Park Maintenance Plan

Municipality:
Potter Township, Beaver County
206 Mowry Road
Monaca, PA 1506
www.pottertwp-pa.gov

Project contacts:
Rebecca Matsco, Chairwoman,
Board of Supervisors
724-495-6220
matsco.pottertwp@gmail.com

Victoria E. Michaels, Executive Director
Independence Conservancy
PO Box 248
Industry, PA 15052-0248
vemichaels@gmail.com

About the Plan
Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park is an 88.84-acre site. Potter Township owns the 62.7-acre Tank
INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT
MAINTENANCE OF JUNIATA RIVER BOAT LAUNCH IN
BRATTON TOWNSHIP, MIFFLIN COUNTY

THIS AGREEMENT is made and entered into this _____ day of ________________, 2015,
by and between:

BRATTON TOWNSHIP, a Second Class Township of Mifflin County Pennsylvania

-AND-

OLIVER TOWNSHIP, a Second Class Township of Mifflin County Pennsylvania

-AND-

MCVEYTOWN BOROUGH, a Borough of Mifflin County Pennsylvania.

Bratton Township, Oliver Township and McVeytown Borough are hereinafter collectively
referred to as the “Parties.”

WHEREAS, the County of Mifflin entered into a lease agreement (hereinafter the “Lease”
attached hereto and incorporated herein) with the owner of a tract of land along the Juniata River in
Bratton Township, Mifflin County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, identified as Mifflin County Tax
Parcel No. 13-05-141D (hereinafter the “Owner” or “Property”); and

WHEREAS, the leased portion of the Property (hereinafter called the “Premises”) is depicted on
Exhibit A to the Lease; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Lease is to provide public recreation for a boat launch and
necessary parking on the Premises; and

WHEREAS, the Parties approved the Lease and acknowledged their responsibility for the
maintenance only of the Premises, which includes the parking area, and that the maintenance
contemplated consists of garbage removal, lawn mowing, snow plowing and normal pavement repair.
The municipalities are not assuming any responsibility or liability for catastrophic events or
extraordinary damages and repair to the premises; and

WHEREAS, the Parties desire to enter into this Intermunicipal Agreement pursuant to paragraph
6 of the Lease and 53 Pa.C.S. § 2301 et. seq. in order to govern the costs, expenses and responsibility for
the maintenance of the Premises.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants contained herein and intending to
be legally bound hereby, the parties agree as follows:
1. TERM – Twenty-five (25) years. If the Lease is extended, this Agreement may be extended by consent of all the Parties.

2. AGREEMENT AREA - The Premises as identified and depicted on Exhibit A to the Lease, consisting of 1.80 acres.

3. BUDGETING, ADMINISTRATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF COSTS AND EXPENSES

(a) **Budgeting.** Each Municipality agrees to budget $1,000 dollars annually during the term of the Lease to be placed into a separate account to be maintained by each Municipality. This allocation will be used to fulfill each Municipality’s obligation under the Intermunicipal Agreement as to maintenance and will revert to the respective Municipalities if not exhausted at the end of the Lease. Each Municipality shall not be required to maintain more than $5,000 in this account at any one time.

(b) **Administration.** Bratton Township will procure any materials and equipment necessary for the maintenance of the Premises based upon the Operating Budget; however, no costs in excess of $1,000 per year shall be incurred without the written agreement of all Parties. Bratton Township will maintain all records relating to the budgeting, maintenance, operation, and insurance for the Premises. Oliver Township and McVeytown Borough will have access to said records.

(c) **Assignment of Costs.** All costs and expenses incurred in the maintenance of the Premises as defined herein shall be shared equally by the Parties. There shall be deducted from the foregoing costs and expenses, any federal, state, county, private or other grants, which are specifically designated by the granting entity to be reimbursement for operation, administration or maintenance.

(d) **Financing.** Each party shall have the exclusive obligation and control over any manner and means of procuring any necessary financing for each party’s share of the costs and expenses contemplated by this Agreement. No party shall be required by this Agreement to participate with any other party in any joint financing or application for public grant money, but such may be done by agreement of the parties.

(e) **Maintenance.** For the months of March through November responsibility for maintenance of the Premises shall be on an alternating basis. Bratton Township shall be responsible for the month of March, Oliver Township for the month of April, McVeytown Borough for the month of May, and the cycle shall repeat thereafter in months of June through November. For the months of December through February, each municipality shall select a month for maintenance responsibility.

(f) **Operating Advisory Committee.** If the Parties are unable to agree upon an Operating Budget or if a dispute arises with respect to the administration or assignment of costs or upon the request of at least two of the Parties, each Party shall select one voting member to serve on an Operating Advisory Committee to facilitate a beneficial working relationship among the Parties. The Operating Advisory Committee will meet as
required at Bratton Township, or other location agreed upon by the Parties, and take any
formal action on the financial, maintenance, operation, and insurance procurement for the
Premises. Each member of the Operating Advisory Committee shall cast one vote and
have access to all records, accounts and other information relating to operation, maintenance
and insurance of the Premises. The minutes of each meeting of the
Operating Advisory Committee shall be recorded and sent to the Secretary of each of the
participating parties.

4. INSURANCE - The County of Mifflin will carry liability insurance of not less than $1,000,000
and naming the Owner as an additional insured on said policy. Each of the municipalities herein will
name Owner as an additional insured on their general liability policy for the purpose of the performance
of their maintenance obligations hereunder.

5. FREE ACCESS – the Parties agree that the Premises shall be open to the public without charge
for a boat launch area and parking related thereto. The public shall have access to the Premises via the
closest public road or as indicated on Exhibit A to the Lease. The Premises, or a portion thereof, may be
closed for maintenance, repairs or construction as necessary.

6. SIGNS – the Parties understand that they may erect and maintain signs and notices as may be
necessary to inform the public that the Premises is open as a boat launch area and of the laws and
regulations pertaining to its use.

7. CONSTRUCTION - This Agreement shall be construed under the laws of the Commonwealth of
Pennsylvania.

8. ASSIGNMENT – This Agreement may not be assigned by any party.

9. NOTICES - Notices shall be effective on the date they are received and shall be sent either by
hand delivery, certified mail, or overnight delivery. Notices shall be sent to the following:

   For Bratton Township: 133 Mountain Lane
                        McVeytown, PA 17051

   For Oliver Township: 4670 U.S. Highway 522 South
                        McVeytown, PA 17051

   For McVeytown Borough: 10 N. Queen St. - PO Box 321
                          McVeytown, PA 17051

10. EFFECTIVE DATE - This Agreement shall become effective upon execution by all parties.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereunto have signed this document on their behalf and have had their signature duly witnessed.

Attest:

Claudia Nye 2/17/15
Secretary (date)

Stanley Allen 2/17/15
Chairman (date)

Board of Supervisors of Bratton Township

Joyce Hammer 1/8/15
Secretary (date)

Barbara Budrow 1/8/15
Secretary (date)

Board of Supervisors of Oliver Township

Borough Council of McVeytown

Barbara Budrow 1/8/15
Secretary (date)

Barbara Budrow 1/8/15
President (date)
Farm that adjoins Independence Conservancy’s “lemon wedge” of 7.53 acres and the 18.61 acre “gaiter tail”. Potter Township and the Independence Conservancy have joined together not only in property but also in spirit in a unique public/private partnership to plan, appropriately improve, and manage the site as a conservation area with responsible recreational use by the public. Together they have the passion, commitment, and creativity to demonstrate how conservation and recreation can be achieved through collaboration and leveraging minimal financial and human resources.

In 2017/18, a planning team of Stromberg Garrigan & Associates, Landmarks SGA, Toole Recreation Planning, 4ward Planning, and KU Resources. The team included landscape architects, architects, recreation and community planners, economic development specialists and engineers worked with Potter Township and Independence Conservancy to develop a park master plan for this site.

**About Potter Township**

Potter Township is a second-class township located in central Beaver County. It is a 6.73 square mile dynamic community with a population of 574. The community is experiencing growth from new housing developments and the anticipated Shell Cracker Plant, along with its potential economic benefits. While Potter Township is growing and changing, it retains a homey atmosphere and a close-knit community. The Township has one small park adjoining the municipal building. It has a fireplace, play equipment, and a basketball court. The Recreation Board offers activities and events such as movie nights in the park, a summer camp, and works with the local library in programming in the Township Building.

**About Independence Conservancy**

Independence Conservancy was incorporated 1999. It is a land trust and operates as an independent steward of the Raccoon Creek Watershed in Beaver, Washington, and Allegheny Counties in western Pennsylvania.

**About the Tank Farm**

Better known as “The Tank Farm”, the Monaca Air Force Petroleum Oil and Lubricant Retail Distribution Facility (MAFPOL) was constructed by the Department of Defense in the 1940s. It was located in Potter Township, along Raccoon Creek. The Tank Farm was used to store more than 10.4 million gallons of high-octane gasoline, or aviation fuel, underground during World War II. The top-secret storage area was camouflaged to look like a farm to hide the fuel tanks with the purpose of preventing the site from becoming a bomb target during the war.

**The Challenge**

The planning and operation of an 88-acre nature-based park is a major undertaking for this small Township with only employee dedicated to Public Works and no parks and recreation staff. Independence Conservancy is a small but mighty organization that gets things done via creativity, hard work and partnerships. Together Potter Township and Independence Conservancy are uniquely capable of implement the park master plan over time and phasing in park maintenance in a sustainable manner to ensure the protection of the natural resources, important history and projected financial investment in this site.

**The Maintenance Plan**

The following section presents the operations and management plan for the Tank Farm.
Potter Township
Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Master Plan
Operations, Management, and Financing Plan

Introduction
Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park is the crown jewel of Potter Township. The park is an exceptional natural area featuring woodlands and meadows adjoining Raccoon Creek. The area has been used for generations as a popular recreation destination by visitors wishing to enjoy the beauty and natural features of the site and access the Raccoon Creek even without any site improvements for use as a park. The Raccoon Creek Region Conservation Plan includes references to the importance of this area by citizens who wish to continue enjoying it, citing their long history of enjoying it even though it was not a park.

Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park is an 88.84-acre site. Potter Township owns the 62.7-acre Tank Farm that adjoins Independence Conservancy’s “lemon wedge” of 7.53 acres and the 18.61 acre “gaiter tail”. Potter Township and the Independence Conservancy have joined together not only in property but also in spirit in a unique public/private partnership to plan, appropriately improve, and manage the site as a conservation area with responsible recreational use by the public. Together they have the passion, commitment, and creativity to demonstrate how conservation and recreation can be achieved through collaboration and leveraging minimal financial and human resources.

The purpose of this master plan is to establish a course of action to establish Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park as a nature-based facility for conservation of natural areas, the heritage of the site and recreational use, as it is improved over time. To that end, Potter Township and Independence Conservancy identified the importance of planning for the future operations, management, and support of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park as part of the park master planning process.

In establishing this Operations, Management, and Financing Plan, the consulting team worked with the Plan Study Committee, a Township Supervisor, the Executive Director of Independence Conservancy, the Road Foreman, and the County Parks and Recreation Director; and reviewed Township and Conservancy information on plans, management, and budget.

About Potter Township
Potter Township is a second-class township located in central Beaver County, Pennsylvania. The Ohio River Forms Potter Township’s northern boundary and Raccoon Creek flows through Potter Township to its confluence with the Ohio River. Potter Township is a 6.73 square mile dynamic community with a population of 574. The community is experiencing growth from new housing developments and the anticipated Shell Cracker Plant, along with its potential economic benefits. While Potter Township is growing and changing, it retains a homey atmosphere and a close-knit community. The Township has one small park adjoining the municipal building. It has a fireplace, play equipment, and a basketball court. The Recreation Board offers activities and events such as movie nights in the park, a summer camp, and works with the local library in programming in the Township Building. The planning and operation of an 88-acre nature-based park is a major undertaking for this small Township.
About Independence Conservancy

Independence Conservancy was incorporated in 1999. It is a land trust and operates as an independent steward of the Raccoon Creek Watershed in Beaver, Washington, and Allegheny Counties in western Pennsylvania.

Independence Conservancy Mission

- Stewardship of the Raccoon Creek Watershed through environmental education, restoration and community partnerships;
- Conserving land to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, natural & cultural resources, scenic views & quality of life; and
- Educating people about the function and values of wetlands.

Independence Conservancy is the first and only land trust based in Beaver County. The Conservancy is an all-volunteer organization, active throughout the Raccoon Creek Watershed. As a 501c3 non-profit organization, it is supported entirely by public donations, project grants and stewardship programs - not by tax dollars. The Conservancy is an all-volunteer group of environmental enthusiasts who share a vision of clean water, beautiful vistas and special places in the Raccoon Creek Region preserved forever. The Conservancy has adopted land trust Standards and Practices. Land trusts are private, nonprofit organizations that work cooperatively with landowners to protect and conserve land for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic, or productive value – values that sustain life on earth. Independence Conservancy works with local governments and other nonprofits to protect clean water and green space in the Raccoon Creek Region.

Organization and Staffing of the Township and the Conservancy

Potter Township and Independence Conservancy have been collaborating on the planning of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. The Conservancy has been assisting with the Tank Farm from many years in its planning for the Raccoon Creek Greenway and ensuring that the Tank Farm is listed as a priority in any state, county, or regional plan for the area.

Potter Township Organization

Potter Township operates with an elected body, the three-member Board of Supervisors, who set policy and share daily operational responsibilities. The Roads Foreman oversees the maintenance of all public properties.

The Recreation Board is an advisory board of residents, who are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The main purpose of the Recreation Board is to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors concerning the operation, conduct, and maintenance of township park and recreation opportunities. The Board offers public recreation opportunities such as special events and the summer camp.

Independence Conservancy Organization

The Independence Conservancy has an Executive Director. The Director pursues grant funding that help provide support for projects. The Conservancy operates with a contingent of
volunteers. In a most recent County, the Conservancy had 52 partners in western Pennsylvania on Conserving projects. About 38 organizations and individuals donated funds and services to the Conservancy. In addition, the Conservancy has more than 100 volunteers annually working on projects.

**Budget**

A parks and recreation budget has two categories: capital and operating. The Capital budget is for improvements or purchases that cost more than $10,000 and last more than seven years. The operating budget is for the day-to-day operations of the parks and recreation system. Although the budget presents a $7,700 park operating budget, this is artificially lower than what the Township spends since the hours of the Road Foreman maintaining the existing park are not counted. Assuming four hours per week on this park, the 208 hours including wages and benefits at $19.27 per hour would be another $4,008. Figuring supplies and materials at $6 per work hour would be $1,248. The per hour cost of a mower at $40 per hour at 30 cuts annually would be about $1,200. The total estimate for wages, benefits, equipment use and materials and supplies would be about $6,456 making the total for parks estimated at $14,156 and the total for parks and recreation. With a small staff, it is not customary to track workload costs but for the purposes of planning for parks and recreation, estimating what the Township actually spends on parks and recreation is illuminating. The estimated expenditures for parks of $14,156 plus the recreation budget of $8,500 would be a total of $22,656.

**Benchmarks Give Perspective**

Benchmarking comparisons are not inherently good or bad, but instead offer perspective in considering how to move forward. Benchmarks allow elected and appointed officials to gauge comparisons with other park systems for their own information and use. It is useful information in working toward the Township achieving its own goals.

- Potter Township’s 2018 budget is $734,152. Parks and Recreation is about 02.2 percent of its budget on recreation. If the estimated value of the Road Department wages, equipment, and materials were added, the Township would be allocating about three percent. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources recommends a minimum of five percent. However, with one small park in place that is consistently maintained as safe and clean, this percentage works. When considering the addition of a

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75-acre nature-based park, the impact on the budget would be significant if the Township tried to maintain this park with municipal work forces alone.

- Township budget figures do not include the value of volunteers who contribute important knowledge, time and support for public parks and recreation in Potter Township. The 2017 value of a volunteer hour is about $23.89 in Pennsylvania according to the Independent Sector.3
- With a population of 574, the Township is spending about $28.22 on parks and recreation per capita based on the adopted budget. Using the estimated budget, the per capita expenditures would be $30.05. In Pennsylvania, the average municipal investment is about $36 per capita. Nationwide, it is $72 per capita.
- The Township Recreation Board provides programs and activities without charge. The only revenues are for trees. Typically, a public parks and recreation department that offers programs, generates 35 percent of its budget from program fees and charges. A really good department would be recovering as much as 80 percent of its budget from fees and charges. Given the small size of this Township, the only way to offer the scale of programs and services likely to generate significant fees and charges would be to work with other municipalities in a multi-municipal parks and recreation system.

Recreation Opportunities, Management, and Maintenance

The development of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park will occur over many years as resources allow through grants, gifts, partnerships, fundraising, and municipal support. As amenities are added in the park, recreation opportunities and visitation will multiply, maintenance responsibilities will increase, and new partnership opportunities will emerge.

Recreation Opportunities

Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park will offer nature-based recreation opportunities for fun, health, fitness, relaxation and restoration, and building strong family and community bonds through socialization. About 78 percent of the use of public recreation facilities is by park visitors using facilities at their own discretion. Only about 22 percent of use is for organized scheduled programs. Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park’s purpose is to retain as much of the natural features as possible with a few well-placed and designed amenities to support visitors connecting with nature with access to the Raccoon Creek for fishing and boating. Other uses would include environmental education and special community events. Long term, camping could become a viable option.

Walking and Hiking—Walking is the chief form of recreational activity. The park will offer a total of 5.36 miles of trail in a combination of paved, aggregate and natural surfaces.

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

Family Play and Building a Sense of Comm-
munity—Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park will be the community hub of Potter Township and a likely regional destination because of its size and features.

Picnic Hubs—Picnic areas with pavilions and accompanying facilities such as horseshoes, play areas, and restrooms will be the home to social gatherings.

Weed Beach—Weed Beach already attract people who want to enjoy this location, socialize, and swim. While this is not a major swimming destination by any means, it will still attract use. Use may tend to be heavy in July and the swing week of the last week of June and the first week of August. Security for this area will be important. Maintenance could be significant with litter, especially cigarette butts which are labor intensive. Along with public health reasons, this plan recommends establishing the park as a smoke free facility. An interpretive sign at Weed Beach enlisting the help of visitors in keeping the area clean and safe will be an important tool to control litter and undesirable behavior.

Fishing—With the Raccoon Creek along the boundary of the park, fishing will be a very enjoyable activity. Litter is an undesirable by-product of fishing with fishing areas notoriously strewn with papers, wrappers, and by-products of angling. Enlisting “Friends of Fishing on Raccoon Creek” may be an important strategy along with signage and regular litter patrols to keep the area clean.

Non-Motorized Park Use—The park will have a policy prohibiting all motorized vehicles, except for the cars parking in the approved parking lots.

Mountain Biking—This plan recommends that there be no mountain biking unless Potter Township and Independence Conservancy form a partnership with the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) to promote responsible mountain biking in Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park.

Interpretation and Education—Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park has an important heritage that encompasses: military, industrial, environmental. Cultural and land use themes. These themes need to be interpreted through exhibits, signage, programs and events.

School Programs—A major source of revenue could be school district programs in any of the themes cited above.

Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park as a Venue—Programs and events can and should be provided by other community-based organizations. With a small staff, facilitating programs rather than directly providing them would result in more public recreation opportunities at a higher quality than the park staff could provide on their own. A policy on programs offered by other in the park should be developed. This is particularly important in this age of bicycle and running events offered by a commercial company.

Ownership
Potter Township will continue own the Tank Farm property. Independence Conservancy will continue to own the “Lemon Slice” and the “Gaiter Tail”. Together they will form Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park.

Any facilities to be developed in the future will be owned by the respective property owner. A Shared Use Agreement would be developed for the park and any future facility.

Park Management
The management of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park will be a joint venture between Potter Township and Independence Conservancy. In discussions about the future management of the park, the following principles were formulated:
Independence Conservancy will manage Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. A Shared Use Agreement will formalize the terms of park management.

- Management includes planning, directing, organizing, scheduling, programming, maintaining, and evaluating park operations.
- The Township will set forth rules and regulations for the park adopted as a Township Ordinance.
- It is recommended that a Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Advisory Committee be formed. Representatives would include key stakeholders such as on the Plan Advisory Committee. The Plan Advisory Committee could be transitioned into the Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Advisory Committee.
- An optimal organization for this park would include the Director, a Naturalist, an Environmental Educator, administrative/customer service staff, a part-time seasonal staff, and support from the Township with off-season park maintenance needs.
- Policies are needed to ensure that park management has adequate control over the park. Policies should include Naming, Gifts, Revenue, and Events, which could potentially include the commercial use of the park.

**Maintenance**

- Independence Conservancy would be responsible for park maintenance.
- Potter Township will provide township equipment to the Conservancy to use in maintaining the park. The Township already practices equipment sharing as Potter Township owns the Fire Trucks used by the Fire Company.
- The Conservancy will provide some equipment including a Gator, a dump truck, and a tire cutter.
- The Township will continue to provide a summer intern to the Conservancy for park maintenance.
- A paid maintenance staff is needed. The typical means of supporting park maintenance is through township funds. The Conservancy has expressed the possibility of using volunteers for maintenance. The Township would allow volunteers to use Township equipment. Parks need routine ongoing maintenance to be kept in a safe, clean and ready-to-use condition. Relying on volunteers for the majority of maintenance would be an onerous task. Volunteers should be used for specific projects but not for routine maintenance. In situations like this, park organizations are seeking and using retirees to work on a part-time seasonal basis. This would be a workable strategy for Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. However, a budget is needed. For a park this size, a part-time seasonal maintenance staff of two to four workers is needed.

**Financing**

Two aspects of financing need to be considered: park development and park operations.

- **Development** — Park Development would be accomplished through grant funding. The primary sources of grant funding for park development are funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission also has funding for boat access and fishing areas. The County also receives a share of Act 13 funds from the Marcellus drilling projects. Shell has been a great partner that offers a potential source of funding.
- **Operations** — A park of 88 acres that is nature based should have a budget of a bare minimum of $50,000 and more in the range of
$88,000. This would provide for part-time seasonal staff, materials and supplies, utilities and some seed money for programming or events. The Park Manager should be spending about 60 percent of her/his time on partnership building and sponsorship development with 20 percent on visitor services and 20 percent on operations and administration.

- **Endowments**—The Township and the Conservancy should consider establishing and endowment requirement for any gift of a facility to ensure its long-term sustainability. This could range from something as small as a tree or a bench up to a major building. For a small gift, the operations and maintenance cost of the gift could be woven into the price of the gift. For a large donation, the endowment could be negotiated. In any case, the Township and Conservancy should establish a Gifts Policy for the park.

**Safety and Security**
The Township and the Conservancy would continue to work with the Regional Police Force. The more use the park gets, the safer it will be. The park master plan recommends the installation and use of solar operated security cameras on the buildings. The monitoring of these cameras will need to be planned and implemented.

**Planning**
- A Stewardship Plan for the Park is needed.
- A formal maintenance management plan needs to be established. This master plan with its operations chapter could form the basis of that.
- A Capital Campaign could be considered for any specific facility such as the building or the play area.
- A Gifts Catalog could be created.

- The design of facilities recommend in the Park Master Plan should be undertaken with professional designers licensed in Landscape Architecture, experienced in creating great public spaces, and in nature-based facilities and outdoor recreation.

**Programming**
The single most important way to generate park use is through programming.

With a small staff, the nature and scale of programming should be determined. Starting small with a few events or programs, preferably in partnership with other providers, would help to launch programming at the site. Exploring grant programs to establish environmental education and working in conjunction with the school district would be a solid start.

**Maintenance**
Maintenance management is the process by which park managers plan, direct, control, and evaluate the care of parks and recreation facilities. Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park must reflect an inviting, clean, and attractive appearance; an effective level of service; and the reality of fiscal and human resource limitations of the Township and the Conservancy.

Routine scheduled maintenance provides the foundation for effective park maintenance, security, safety, and risk management. Refer to the Annual Maintenance Calendar for an overview of the tasks and schedule needed for routine maintenance in Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. As a well-designed and maintained park, Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom would attract many visitors year-round. The more use a park gets, the less vandalism occurs and the safer it is. When park visitors see that a park is well cared for, the risk of vandalism and other undesirable anti-social behaviors tends to diminish. Parks that are not
well tended get fewer visitors and more vandalism. Investing in park maintenance saves money long term.

**Maintenance Challenges and Opportunities**

The Road Department maintains the Township’s only park. The Independence Conservancy has a long and successful history of undertaking major maintenance projects as widely ranging as junk tire removal to streambank stabilization. The maintenance of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park requires a variety of skill sets including natural resource management, custodial care, and customer service. The conservation of the natural resources and scenic beauty of this park are crucial to goals of the Township and the Raccoon Creek Greenway. Other tasks for this park include: safety inspections and compliance with guidelines and regulations to enhance the safety of park visitors as well as reduce the Township’s and Conservancy’s exposure to liability, citizen outreach and response, budgeting, procurement, personnel management, contract management, policy development, programming, and promotion. Most of these administrative tasks will fall to the Conservancy with support from the Township and the Park Advisory Committee.

**Work Force Requirements**

The Independence Conservancy has a long and successful history of generating volunteer support for its projects. However, Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park is nearly 90 acres and more typical of a county or regional park than a community park given its size and natural resources foundation and use. It is essential that at least two seasonal part-time positions be funded permanently. Volunteers are not free nor reliable for repetitive ongoing routine requirements of a park to keep it safe, clean and functional.

To supplement a dedicated work force, the following alternatives are viable:

- **Prison Labor** — Trail maintenance, invasive species removal weed abatement, fire breaks, furnishings installation, litter pick up and removal. The Conservancy already uses prison workers for projects.
- **Service Groups** (shrub and tree planting, special projects, environmental education and tours)
- **Volunteers** — Major project days such as Community Days, assistance at special events, natural resource management projects.
- **Adopt-A-Park or Friends of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park** — A membership-based group that could help to support the park. With the many aspects of military, environmental, nature, cultural heritage, there are many different interests to tap.
- **Contractual** — Any routine repetitive maintenance activity that can be measured, quantified, inspected, evaluated, and be conducive to cost projections (Mowing, weeding, edging, pruning, blowing, trash removal, restroom maintenance, parking lot and pavement cleaning)
- **Township Maintenance Crews** (Emergencies, Installation of equipment, projects etc.)

**Sustainable Park Design and Maintenance**

Protection of the natural features of this park is a primary goal of the park design and its future maintenance. A focus of this plan is on establishing and managing the park in a way that facilitates responsible public use in harmony with the natural features. Traditional park maintenance focuses largely on mowing and litter pick-up/removal. The park design is oriented toward natural resource management with minimal mowing. Often the public may expect a manicured appearance in certain aspects of parks, it is impor-
tant to educate them on why it is important for parks to set the bar in practices that promote the healthy natural elements of public lands. Adopting maintenance practices that conserve natural resources requires planning, training, expertise, and public education.

Pack-It-In-Pack-It-Out Policy and Practice
Trash and mowing are typically the largest expenditures by task in park maintenance. This park master plan minimizes mowing to less than two acres. To address trash and the cost of its pick up and removal, Independence Conservancy can consider establishing a “Pack-It-In-Pack-It-Out” policy which would be a tremendous cost saver. The means that signage is posted in an interesting and educational manner specifying that park visitors must carry out any trash that they bring in. Given the uses of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park, perhaps a hybrid approach to such a policy is needed. For the rental pavilions, trash cans would be available at the pavilions and permittees would be instructed to carry their bags of trash to a remotely located dumpster where a trash hauler would remove it from site. Since the Blending Barn Pavilion would command higher fees and be targeted at higher end but not quite formal events, trash receptacles would be available and park staff or contractors would be responsible for removing it from the pavilion. Two other areas of concern regarding trash are:

- **Potter Beach**—This area must be managed to prevent “nuisance” types of use that generate bottles, cigarette butts and trash.

- **Fishing Spots**—Fishing areas tend to generate a lot of trash. Interpretive signage and reaching out to anglers could help deter this. This park master plan has no trash barrels along the creek, so packing-it-it-packing-it out is key here.

- **Creating Sustainable Community Parks and Landscapes**: A Guide to Improving Quality of Life by Protecting Natural Resources, Second Edition (PDF) is a DCNR guidebook that:
  - Outlines the benefits of enhancing the natural resources in local parks
  - Explains how to maintain parks in a sustainable manner
  - Provides a step-by-step guide to help park staff achieve those results.

**Continued Need for Partnerships**
Potter Township was way ahead of other communities in public/private partnerships with the Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park and the Independence Conservancy. They are particularly well-suited to partner in the development and operation of the park. The planning team found that all parties share a common vision for the Park, its conservation, use and interpretation of its cultural heritage.

**Establishing Maintenance Goals**

The goal of park maintenance of Potter Township and Independence Conservancy is to provide clean, safe, and attractive facilities and the conservation of natural resources for the enjoyable use by the people who live, work, and visit this area through implementation of an efficient and effective management program.

The following guidelines formalize the approach to park maintenance operations in the Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. The guidelines apply to municipal and Conservancy employees, contractors, and volunteers who assume responsibility for park maintenance tasks.

- All maintenance will be accomplished in a
manner displaying respect and concern for the environment as well as public and private property. Maintenance practices that are rooted in a strong conservation ethic are to be instituted.

- Maintenance tasks will be accomplished in a way that does not endanger the health or safety of the employees nor the public.
- All maintenance tasks will be performed as quickly and economically as possible without any loss in efficiency.
- All equipment and materials will be operated and maintained in such a way as to insure safe, effective use and long life.
- Work will be scheduled in such a manner as to make the most use of the resources of other community organizations who are involved or who may become involved.
- Preventive maintenance will be used in a continuing effort to avoid major problems and correct minor ones.
- All maintenance work will be performed with a sense of pride.

**Maintenance Standards**

Maintenance standards set forth the level of care that park and recreation facilities receive.

**Importance of Assigning Maintenance Standards**

Assigning maintenance standards will enable Potter Township to maintain Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park with respect to needs and resources. Targeting the appropriate level of care will enable both parties to direct resources to balance public use with natural resource conservation. The maintenance standards provide a common frame of reference for the community including elected and appointed officials, Independence Conservancy Board, the Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Advisory Committee, Township employees, maintenance staff, administration, contractors, partners, sponsors, park visitors, and the citizens. The common agreement will facilitate discussions and communications about the Park. This will enable elected and appointed officials, Township management, and Conservancy management to establish and implement policies on use, fees and charges, volunteer requirements, staffing levels, contractual service requirements, and other issues that may emerge. It will also enable officials to communicate with the public about the capacity of the Conservancy and the Township to undertake actions in response to citizen demands on the park, park maintenance tasks, natural resource protection actions, and requests for additional facilities and/or services.

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

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

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

To protect the investment of Potter Township and the Independence Conservancy in Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park; conserve the natural beauty and resources of the site; facilitate safe and enjoyable use by park visitors; provide efficient and effective public service; and ensure park security, the following stan-
Inspections—Mode I—Park inspection of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park’s core visitation areas such as the play area, picnic hubs and creek access should be done daily during peak season. Mode V should be done every other week in the natural areas. Recommendations for play area inspections are daily or weekly, depending upon usage.

Turf Care and Meadows—Turf care would include general park areas. Mode II turf care would include the one grass area of 1.1 acres continue to be mowed weekly. The park will have about 25 acres of meadows kept in Mode V which are far less expensive and more environmentally friendly and in keeping with the park mission. The meadow would be mowed once around St. Patrick’s Day and once around the Fourth of July and no more than twice annually. This is opposed to mowing 25 acres every five days.

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

Forestry—A forestry management program should be developed to provide short, medium, and long-range management for this important asset of the Park. Typically, municipalities obtain the services of county conservation district or a Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry Service Forster and a private consultant.

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

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

Litter Control—Mode II which is once per day seven days a week during peak season, weekly during non-peak, and monthly in cold weather months. Litter is always picked up after a special event. For special use facilities such as a picnic pavilion, the permittee should be responsible for litter pick-up while Independence Conservancy would have it removed from the park.

Surfaces and Paths—Mode III so that surfaces are cleaned and repaired when appearance has notably been affected. Note: The primary trail path is proposed as mulch for the purposes of a liberal maintenance cost estimate. However, this 2.72 mile four-foot wide path could easily be a grass surface to reduce maintenance costs. The mulch trail would require replenishment every two to three years at a cost of about $116,000 or $35,333 to $58,000 annually. A grass trail would be about $3,200 per mile and not require replenishment. Generally, park management teams can out together a volunteer trail group to take care of natural surface trails.

Pavilions and Picnic Areas—Mode II—Cleaned before every rental. When not rented inspected weekly during peak season and monthly during off-season.

Repairs—Mode II—when safety, appearance or function in question, repairs are made.

Restrooms—Mode I. Should be done at least once per day. Special events or times of high use may warrant more than one service per day.

Projecting the Cost Basis for Maintenance

The maintenance budget must reflect the desired condition of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park in accordance with the financial resources available through Township and Conservancy funds or alternative support. The maintenance budget to a large extent determines the quality
of the park in terms of its safety, beauty, usability, and desirability as a place in which to spend one’s time. Estimating what a park will cost to maintain helps in decision-making, staffing, the setting of fees, policy formulation, the allocation of resources, and securing non-traditional methods of support such as sponsorships and partnerships.

Figure 1 presents the Management Impact Statement for Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. The Maintenance Impact Statement is a tool to use in projecting the costs for any project, facility or even a program. Using this tool in conjunction with the planning, design, and construction process will enable the Independence Conservancy and Potter Township to determine ahead what the costs of sustain the improvement are as well as potential sources of support before taking on a project.

Table 1 presents the requirements for maintenance tasks for labor and equipment for the Full development of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. Labor is rounded up to $20 for wages and benefits based upon the current rate of $13.77 plus estimated payroll taxes and benefits. The equipment rate is an estimated rate for the value of the Township equipment that will be used for these tasks based on the federal government’s FEMA equipment rate schedule.

Since there is no history of workload cost tracking for this as yet to-be-developed park, Table 1 presents projections for tasks and associated costs for labor and equipment. These cost estimates are for the park as proposed and developed. Changes in the design would have related changes in maintenance requirements. The costs are for the outdoor recreation facilities, pavilions and restrooms. The cost for the operation of the building should be developed when the plans and specifications are developed. As facilities are phased in, maintenance requirements will be too. Costs should be tracked to see what the requirements area. Establishing cost hubs will help with future budget projections, setting fees, getting volunteer support, and so on.

The Maintenance Budget
Estimating what the park will cost to maintain helps in decision-making, staffing, setting of fees and charges, policy formulation, budget planning, resource allocation and securing non-traditional methods of supporting park operations such as partnerships.

Park Maintenance Staff—Independence Conservancy has no maintenance staff and the Road Foreman is the only maintenance employee of Potter Township. The Township has a line item in the budget for summer intern who assists the Road Foreman. The Township would continue this in the future and include Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park in the intern’s duties. When fully improved, the Park will require the equivalent of about two full time employees based upon a 40-hour work week for 50 weeks. This can be established as seasonal part time employees, but their work hours would be about 3,822.

Materials and Supplies
Since materials and supply costs require a projection, budgets from other parks served as the basis for formulating potential allocations. For materials and supplies, the hourly estimate rate would be between $5 and $7 dollars per labor hour to set a materials and supplies budget. We are recommending using the $5 per labor hour rate for a total of $19,110.

Utilities and Energy
The utility and energy budget needs to be based upon the park improvements not present con-
Figure 1. TANK FARM/ROCKY BOTTOM PARK MANAGEMENT IMPACT STATEMENT

PURPOSE
1. To assess the impact of a proposed project or program in terms of capital and operating costs, including capital cost, human resources required for operations, maintenance costs including labor, equipment, materials, supplies and cyclic repair, and the effect of on other Independence Conservancy or Potter Township operations, budgets, programs, and projects.
2. To use this information to make an informed decision about moving ahead with the proposed project or program.

METHOD
Determine:
Capital cost of proposed project or program.
1. Operating costs for proposed project or program. Include:
   a. Number of staff hours required
   b. Cost of staff hours in salary, wages, benefits and payroll taxes.
   c. Cost of materials and supplies.
   d. Utility costs.
   e. Miscellaneous costs.
2. Impact on other facilities or responsibilities should the proposed project be undertaken.
   a. Will the project/program require funds needed for other facilities or services?
   b. Will the project/program require staff time needed for other facilities or services?
   c. How will the project impact the quality of services that the Conservancy or the Township has set as a goal?
3. Revenue Sources from Independence Conservancy, Potter Township, and/or Other Means of Support
   a. Township funds – additional appropriation
   b. Township funds – within current budget
   c. Conservancy funds
   d. Other municipal sources
   e. Grants
   f. Gifts or donations
   g. Non-tax funds to be generated for the project/program through fees, charges, sponsorships, partnerships, and/or other means.
   h. What partner(s) will make a commitment to support the project or program for a defined time period? Will they support the project over its life expectancy?

DECISION-MAKING:
Based upon the above information, does Independence Conservancy and/or Potter Township have the resources from any source (public, private, or combination of sources) to move ahead with this project or program?
Table 1. Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Outdoor Facilities and Natural Features Maintenance Task Budget: Labor and Equipment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance Task</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Units/Hour</th>
<th>Total Hours/Task</th>
<th>Frequency X Hours</th>
<th>Hourly Rate</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL PARK INSPECTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Site drive through per hour</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>50 X 2 = 100</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Site drive through per hour</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>50 X 2 = 100</td>
<td>$12.30</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Park Inspection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRASS CUTTING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>1.3 acres</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1.3 hours</td>
<td>50 X 1.3 = 65</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>2 acres</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1.3 hours</td>
<td>50 X 1.3 = 65</td>
<td>$42.40</td>
<td>2,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Grass Cutting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NATURAL AREAS MANAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meadow</td>
<td>25 acres</td>
<td>$5,000 per acre to establish. Years 1-3: $</td>
<td>Years 4-5+: $500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest &amp; River</td>
<td>25 acres</td>
<td>$500 per acre. $1,015 work hours plus equipment use.</td>
<td>$1,015 in equipment cost.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom Area</td>
<td>58 acres</td>
<td>$20,300 in work hours. $8,700 in equipment cost.</td>
<td>$20,300 in equipment cost.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LITTER CONTROL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pick-up labor and travel</td>
<td>Focus Points</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100 X 4 = 400</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers – labor</td>
<td>28 barrels</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>100 X 2 = 200</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>1 truck</td>
<td>5.5 hrs.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>100 X 5.5 = 550</td>
<td>$42.40</td>
<td>23,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Litter Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash Removal Contract</td>
<td></td>
<td>estimate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TREE CARE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Cyclic</td>
<td>10% of planting budget</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRAILS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crushed Limestone Trail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual prep - Labor</td>
<td>1.5 mile</td>
<td>1 mile/36 hours</td>
<td>1.5 X 36 = 54</td>
<td>1 x 54 = 54</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>1.5 mile</td>
<td>1 mile/36 hours</td>
<td>1.5 X 36 = 54</td>
<td>1 x 54 = 54</td>
<td>$42.40</td>
<td>2,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine Labor</td>
<td>1.5 mile</td>
<td>1 mile/4 hours</td>
<td>1.5 X 4 = 6</td>
<td>4 x 6 = 24</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine Equipment</td>
<td>1.5 mile</td>
<td>1 mile/4 hours</td>
<td>1.5 X 4 = 6</td>
<td>4 x 6 = 24</td>
<td>$42.40</td>
<td>1,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Trail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved and Pruned Meadow Trail and mowing/pruning of Crushed Limestone Trail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>1.14-mile grass + 1.5 mi. limestone</td>
<td>Annual preparation of pruning = four times annually for mowing 50 hours in work hour and 50 hours in $2,120 in equipment cost.</td>
<td>3,120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulched Trail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>2.72 miles</td>
<td>$5,200 per mile labor and equipment. (Replenishment every two years. $116,000) 160 work hours = $5,200 150 equipment hours = $5,504</td>
<td>$8,704</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11,824</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued)
### Table 1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maintenance Task</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Units/Hour</th>
<th>Total Hours/Task</th>
<th>Frequency X Hours</th>
<th>Hourly Rate</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAVED SURFACES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection, sweeping, cleaning – Labor</td>
<td>81,300 SF</td>
<td>1,000/.1 hour</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
<td>6 x 8 = 48</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>81,300 SF</td>
<td>1,000/.1 hour</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
<td>6 x 8 = 48</td>
<td>$42.40</td>
<td>2,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLAY AREA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspections</td>
<td>1 play area</td>
<td>1/1/2 hour</td>
<td>1 X .5 = .5</td>
<td>36 x .5 = 18</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair, &amp; Restoration</td>
<td>1 play area</td>
<td>1/24 hours</td>
<td>1 X 24 = 24</td>
<td>1 X 24 = 24</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 play area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PAVILIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>3 10' X 20' pavilions</td>
<td>1 pavilion/.5 hr.</td>
<td>36 X .5 = 39</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>3 30' X 60' pavilions</td>
<td>1 pavilion/1 hr.</td>
<td>3X 1=3</td>
<td>26 x 3=78</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>2,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>1 Blending Barn pavilion with fireplace</td>
<td>1 pavilion/1.5 hr.</td>
<td>36 x 2=72</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2 pavilions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SITE FURNISHINGS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Tables – preparation</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1 table/4 hours</td>
<td>63 X 4 = 252</td>
<td>1 x 252 = 252</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>5,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Tables – routine</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1 table/1 hr.</td>
<td>63 X 1 = 63</td>
<td>2 X 63 = 126</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>2,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches – preparation</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1 bench/3 hrs.</td>
<td>18 X 3 = 54</td>
<td>1 x 54 = 54</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches – routine</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1 bench/1 hrs.</td>
<td>18 X 1 = 24</td>
<td>3 x 18 = 54</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Racks – preparation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 rack/5 hrs.</td>
<td>3 X 5 = 15</td>
<td>1 X 15 = 15</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Racks – routine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 rack/.5 hrs.</td>
<td>3 X .5 = 1.5</td>
<td>3 X 1.5 = 4.5</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grills – check and clean</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1/8 hrs.</td>
<td>12 X .8 = 9.6</td>
<td>5 X 9.6 = 28.8</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grills – Repair</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1/4 hrs.</td>
<td>12 X 4 = 48</td>
<td>1 X 48 = 48</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Signage</td>
<td>System</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
<td>1 X 4 = 4</td>
<td>4 X 4 = 16</td>
<td>$27</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1,572</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restroom Cleaning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/.8 hrs.</td>
<td>2 X 1 = 2</td>
<td>150 x 2 = 300</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Labor Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Labor and Equipment Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$134,655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$6,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ditions. This plan recommends developing a cost projection for energy for the parks. The addition of any buildings and lighted outdoor facilities and cameras should include the cost of energy or energy alternatives as a factor such as the solar power recommended for the cameras and lighting.

**Training**
State-of-the-art information and training in parks and recreation would be an important investment. A suggested formula for staff development is one to two percent of the parks and recreation budget annually. Training can include a mix of conferences and seminars as well as planned in-house meetings in which staff would request an outside guest to address topic of interest to the Township related to parks and recreation. For Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park, the training budget should be about $2,000 based upon budget projections.

The priority for training is getting an employee trained as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector if any equipment that requires meeting Consumer Product Safety Commission Standards. Having a Certified Playground Safety Inspector on staff who will conduct regular safety inspections with a written reporting system will ensure that the playgrounds are optimally safe and would limit the exposure to liability of the Conservancy and the Township.

**Stewardship Plan**
Developing a stewardship plan for the care of the parks’ natural resources, especially the trees and Raccoon Creek area is key. Contracting with a conservation organization is affordable and they can provide training so that Conservancy and Township employees can carry out the work, enlist volunteers, and work with community-based organizations.

**Building Operating Costs**
The projected operating costs for the buildings should be determined in conjunction with the development of plans and specifications.

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

- **Infrastructure**: Roads, parking lots, trails, utility lines for water, sewer and electric. 10 – 30 years.
- **Play Equipment**: 10 years plus replenishment and updating of natural features and materials annually.
- **Buildings and Structures**: Roofs, furnishings, picnic tables and benches, shelters, bridges, fencing. 10-50 years.
- **Equipment**: trucks, cars, tractors, trailers, and other large units based upon number of hours of operation, miles used and repair costs.

**Budget Projection**
Table 2 presents the projected operating budget of $175,650 for park maintenance. This budget
comes out to about $1,973 per acre cost overall. This is below the typical range of about $1,500 to 3,000 per acre in municipalities in Pennsylvania. Actual maintenance along with workload and cost tracking will facilitate cost refinement. The budget below does not include the operating budget for future buildings other than a restroom and the pavilions. While the topic of financing is challenging, public recreation close to home is very important for citizens especially for families looking for ways to spend time together that do not cost too much money. Public parks and recreation offer many opportunities for that. If high quality facilities are available, that is a tremendous public service.

Table 3 presents the revenues for Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Parks. Potential revenues for parks and recreation could be derived from pavilion rentals, programs, a friend’s organizations and user fees.

Establishing Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park and Raccoon Creek Greenway System Goals for Success

Research into successful park and recreation systems elsewhere conducted by the Trust for Public Land and the National Recreation & Park Association offers guidance for how Independence Conservancy and Potter Township can organize its operations via implementation of the

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Table 2. Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park, Projected Operating Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Management – 80% of Conservancy Directors Time</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance Labor wages and payroll taxes – 3,822 hours</td>
<td>76,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and Supplies</td>
<td>19,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities estimated</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port-A-John Rentals</td>
<td>5,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree Care Contract</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash Removal Contract</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and custodial maintenance TBD</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage and refuse removal - projected</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance - projected</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency (items such as safety inspections etc.)</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$175,650.00</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship Plan for Natural Resource Management – One time cost</td>
<td>$10,000 – 15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIP Reserve Budget – 2% of development costs annually in fund dedicated to cyclic repairs and park improvements with phasing.</td>
<td>Package A: $10,324 Package B: $11,862 Package C: $1,675 Package D: $4,645 Package E: $18,747 Package F: $30,591</td>
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The factors common in successful award-winning parks and recreation systems throughout the United States include the following:

- Parks must rank high on the political agenda to get funded.4
- The public is involved in the planning, design and operation of the park.
- The park design conveys a strong vision and purpose for the park.
- The parks are programmed with many and varied activities for visitors of all ages.
- The parks and each of their facilities are safe and clean. Clean, attractive appearance is crucial to a park’s success and positive perception by the public and the business community.
- A mix of public and private funding sources support park improvements and operation.
- Parks advisory boards, directors and staff must play a leadership role in insuring that parks are part of overall community and economic planning.5 This is recommended in the Operations and Management Plan for Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park.

These factors can serve as the model for Independence Conservancy and Potter Township. The key recommendations detailed below were derived from the involvement of the Master Plan Study Committee, input from Township staff, key person interviews, and the experience of planning team.

**Recommendations**

1. **Reinforce the Importance of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park with a Guiding Principle, Core Values and a Mission**
   
   Elected and appointed officials need to have a clear vision for the Park to get behind it and support it. In defining the vision and mission for Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park, the community

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public participation process identified important values as the foundation for planning and operating the park. These included:

**Guiding Principle**
Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park was created to conserve important natural features, strengthen the Raccoon Creek Greenway by carrying out the recommendations for the Tank Farm adjoining Independence Conservancy lands that were included in many related planning projects, and provide a scenic community place for the enjoyment of all and, in so doing, to establish Potter Township’s place among the best places to live in Pennsylvania. Given our responsibility of caring for our community’s most important public space, we are committed to ensuring that Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park is maintained as a safe, clean and attractive destination in perpetuity.

**Core Values**
- **Conservation** — The conservation of important natural areas is a priority.
- **Public Confidence** — We value the public and work to anticipate and meet their needs.
- **Excellence** — We value the highest quality results in every aspect of our work.
- **Communication** — We value clear, consistent communication, teamwork and an open dialogue both internally and with the public.
- **Integrity** — We value ethical conduct in all aspects of park operations and management.

**Mission Statement**
The mission of Potter Township with respect to Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park, in partnership with the Independence Conservancy, is to conserve, interpret, and maintain the Park for the enjoyment of our residents and as a legacy for future generations of park visitors.

2. Establish a Shared Use Agreement between Potter Township and Independence Conservancy.

Potter Township and Independence Conservancy are uniquely positioned to manage Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park collaboratively. The two organizations have been working together in the conservation of the Raccoon Creek Greenway including securing the Tank Farm property. About 80 percent of the Conservancy’s responsibilities will be related to the Tank Farm/Raccoon Creek Park. The items identified for inclusion in the agreement include the following:
- Potter Township will own the Tank Farm property and all improvements built upon it.
- Independence Conservancy will own the “Lemon Slice” and the “Gaiter Tail” and all improvements built upon it.
- Together the properties will be known as Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park or other name as decided upon in the future.
- Independence Conservancy will locate its headquarters in the park in a designated building.
- Independence Conservancy will be the prime management organization for the park in charge of:
  - Planning,
  - Directing,
  - Controlling,
  - Financing,
  - Implementing and
  - Evaluating all park operations
  - And Implementing the Park Master Plan.
- Potter Township will support Independence Conservancy’s operation by:
  - Providing township equipment to the Conservancy for maintenance. The agreement shall specify the terms of use of the equipment with respect to training, tracking,
and naming of all parties that are approved to use the equipment.

• Approve a line item in the budget for a summer intern.
• Assist Independence Conservancy on projects that are mutually agreed upon and within the capacity of the Conservancy and the Township to carry out.
• Authorize the Regional Police to work with Independence Conservancy on the safety and security of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park and its visitors as its designated representative for this publicly owned site.
• Provide programming assistance through events to be planned and directed by the township Recreation Board in collaboration with Independence Conservancy.

• Provide for all insurance required by the carriers of each organization.
• Adopt a formal Rules and Regulations Ordinance in Potter Township that will apply to Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park and so that people understand the rules of the park and so that the Police can enforce the rules and regulations.
• Set forth the length of the agreement, the terms, and the process and schedule for amending the agreement.
• Carry out the following steps in negotiating the agreement. The agreement is an essential tool that will specify the terms of how Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park will be managed, the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, and support of the park. A formal agreement will provide consistency and sustainability for the Park over time, as key stakeholders change, and memories fade.
  1. Appoint the negotiators for the agreement.
  2. Work with the solicitors and insurance carriers of each organization.
  3. Use the Park Master Plan as the foundation for the agreement. All improvements must be in keeping with the Master Plan.
  4. Identify the properties and facilities that will be owned and managed by each entity and whether third parties can use the Park or any of its facilities.
  5. Jointly inspect and develop a baseline of existing conditions prior to signing the agreement.
  6. Determine facility use parameters including access, security and who will be in charge of scheduling.
  7. Determine all tasks that must be performed in managing the park and assign responsibilities for them to various entities with emphasis on the Township and the Conservancy.
  8. Allocate responsibility for all maintenance tasks, budget, fundraising, financial support, and others to be identified as part of the negotiations.
  9. Specify the budget process for the park annually for capital improvements and operations.
 10. Determine the process for park improvements for any improvement Valued at more than $5,000.
 11. Specify provisions for an annual joint inspection of the Park by the chief elected and appointed officials along with follow-up action on items specified in the joint inspection.
 12. Decide who will develop, maintain and repair public property.
 13. Establish employment methods.
 14. Establish an official communication protocol for the park to be implemented right away.
 15. Work together in establishing the costs of the agreement and how to support those
costs. The allocation of budget is the more pressing problem of their collaborative partnership.

16. Identify ancillary documents. Such would include a Risk Management Plan, Rules and Regulations, Naming, Gifts and Donations, Fundraising, and Special Events. Others may be identified. Since these will take time to develop, a schedule for developing them should be considered in the initial agreement.

Since the potential exists for donations to the Park early on, consider establishing an endowment requirement for all major donations. The endowment requirement would include the costs for maintenance so that the Conservancy would be able to sustain the gift over its lifetime. The endowment can be a separate price or can be built in to the price of the donated item. For example, a park bench might cost $1200 but the installation cost could be another $500 - $1,000 and annual maintenance could be another $100 for its life of 10 years so the price of donating a park bench would be $3,200. Figures are an example only and would be adjusted accordingly. Use the Management Impact Statement as a tool for determining the endowment. For facilities such as the buildings that could become gifts to the park, the endowment would be particularly important.

• Specify the budget and financing methods and process.
• Establish a communication protocol between the Conservancy and the Township.
• Determine the term of agreement, methods of evaluation, and renewal.

3. Continue to Involve the Public in Park Planning, Design, Programming and Operation. Public support is vital to park success.
• Continue to involve the public in park planning as the master plan is phased in over time.
• Consider the establishment of a Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Friends Group as a 501C 3 private non-profit organization to support the park and its maintenance, programming, and operation.
• Join the Pennsylvania Parks & Recreation Society to take advantage of the current information available about parks, recreation, funding, and technical support. One of their services is a “no match” grant program of $2,500 called RecTAP. The RecTAP grant can be used to solve a problem, tackle an issue or seize an opportunity. It enables the Township to address a specific idea in a relatively short timeframe. Projects that the Township could consider include the establishment of a park friends’ group; addressing a fundraising initiative; natural resource management planning; and other subjects that could support the Township’s interests.

4. Implement the Park Master Plan.
Follow the recommendations in phasing in the park improvements. Continue the momentum begun in the master planning process by developing a work plan for year one.

• Consider applying for three grants in the first year to stoke momentum if matching funds are available: the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Community Conservation Partnerships, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and County Act 13 funds. These grants can be used to match each other but the order of submission must be planned to accomplish the matching.
• Look for other community partners to collaborate on a planning element of the master plan such as a specific facility or park feature.
5. Make the Park a Well-Visited Place with Many Recreation and Educational Opportunities.

Recent research by the RAND Corporation commissioned to study the use of parks found that the number one factor in getting people to use parks and increasing the use of public parks was programming. This study was commissioned as part of a public health initiative in getting people to be more active to prevent disease. The special events and summer program are well attended. Finding ways to expand programming and using the park for educational purposes with school groups through partnerships or part time staff would be well-received in this community.


Having a written formal maintenance management plan is the single most important tool a municipality can have in risk management and reducing its exposure to liability. This information will also help in planning the phasing in of the master plan. Information that should be quantified includes:

- Workload
- Labor requirements
- Material and Supply requirements
- Equipment
- Utilities and Energy

Workload Cost-Tracking

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

- Park tasks such as mowing, snow-removal, leaf pick-up, litter pick-up, vandalism repair
- Natural resource management
- Trails
- Facilities such as pavilions and restrooms
- Special use facilities such as ballfields that can be configured as cost centers

7. Establish policies that will support park goals and management.

Official effective policies need to be in place regarding park operations and use. The point is to spend time on policies that are needed to ensure sustainable operating practices but not to spend time on generating prolific rules and regulations. Policies should make operations easier, smoother, and facilitate the generation of public support. Examples of policies that should be considered in the immediate time frame based upon the current park operations scenario include the following.

- **Revenue Policy** — Develop a formal revenue policy for parks and recreation that specifies the philosophy of the Conservancy and the Township on alternative revenue sources and policies on fees and charges, grants, gifts, donations etc.
- **Gifts and Donations Policy** — It is the intent of Independence Conservancy and Potter Township to encourage and facilitate public and private gifts, bequests, and such contributions that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. The true costs of installation, maintenance and cyclic replacement for park donations should be considered as part of the donation price. Provisions regarding the repair and replacement of such equipment and terms of the agreement should be defined.
- **Sponsorships** — Independence Conservancy can seek sponsorships for events and services. The purpose of such sponsorships is to increase the Conservancy’s ability to improve the park and deliver services. In appreciation of such support, the Conservancy should set
forth a formal policy to provide sponsors with suitable acknowledgement of their contributions. However, such recognition for park and recreation facility improvements should adhere to the aesthetic values and purpose of Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. In addition, such recognition must not detract from the visitor's experience or expectation, nor would it impair the visual qualities of the Park and its natural features or be perceived as creating a proprietary interest. The following link connects to Portland, Oregon’s policy on sponsorships that can be a model for Potter Township: http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=155566

• **Naming Rights**—Naming Rights are a financial transaction and form of advertising in which a corporation, business, individual or other entity purchases the right to name a facility or event, typically for a defined period. For large properties like an athletic field, the term ranges from three to 20 years. The distinctive characteristic for this type of naming rights is that the buyer gets a marketing property to promote products and services, promote customer retention, or increase market share. The following link presents an example of a Naming rights Policy from Metro Tacoma Parks and Recreation.

  • https://www.metroparkstacoma.org/file_viewer.php?id=51256

• **Advertising**—The intent of an advertising policy is to generate revenues from paid advertising and sponsorships to offset some of the costs associated with producing program brochures and other informative literature, maintaining and improving athletic and other recreation facilities, and procuring capital equipment related to recreational facilities which would not otherwise be funded in the department budget. The policy must be rooted in the aesthetics and mission of the parks as well as the visitor experience. The following link provides a model of an advertising policy from Los Alamos for adaption in Potter Township.


8. Establish A Risk Management Program

Having safe facilities for visitors as well as protecting the public investment in Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park is essential to Potter Township and Independence Conservancy. Public perception that the park is safe is important to Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park’s success. Effective risk management can help to protect park visitors, the Conservancy and the Township. Coordination with Potter Township’s insurance carrier is helpful in reducing risk. Supportive insurance carriers offer advice, on-site assessment and sometimes grant funding to support safe facilities through proper maintenance management. Their advice will be helpful in identifying and adopting practices to insure visitor and park safety. Potter Township’s insurance carrier inspects the Township’s park by the municipal building annually, a practice that should continue at Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park.

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

1. **Risk Identification and Assessment**—It is necessary to identify all the sources of potential hazards in the Park. As the park manager, the Conservancy must have knowledge at all times of any risk related to the Park. This includes park conditions as well as the employ-
ees or volunteers that might make the Conservancy or the Township subject to liability as the result of how they complete their duties, and any other liability.

2. Risk Assessment — Independence Conservancy should inspect and evaluate the park with each facility in the park as part of its ongoing operating practices. This would also include tracking and maintenance of records of the incidents of injury reported in the Park.

3. Risk Management Plan — The Risk Management Plan is important for both safe operations as well as in establishing credibility in case of litigation. The plan should include the following documents all of which should be reviewed by Independence Conservancy’s solicitor. Coordination between the Conservancy and the Township on Risk Management should be part of the agreement:
   - Statement that Independence Conservancy is committed to safety for citizens, employees, volunteers, and public facilities
   - Program registration information
   - Accident forms
   - Health forms if appropriate
   - Participation forms and waivers
   - Rental agreements and leases
   - Program dates and documents
   - Operations information and policies
   - Reports for maintenance and procedures.
   - Inspection program and reports
   - Policy on background checks for Township employees, volunteers working with children and for permittees of municipal facilities who are providing community recreation services.

**Recommendations for Moving Forward**

The following recommendations will enable to Potter Township and Independence Conservancy to adopt a practical achievable action plan to ensure that the master plan is implemented:

1. Use the model of successful parks and recreation systems to pattern the operations and management of Tank Farm/Independence Conservancy. Having this vision of successful parks and recreation systems in mind will help in planning, decision-making and in the allocation of time and resources.

2. Develop an implementation plan for the Park Master Plan. Include in this plan an action plan for year one with specific steps, roles, and responsibilities defined and funding sources determined including plans for grant applications.

3. Negotiate and adopt a Shared Use Agreement for the Park.

4. Strive to establish the home for Independence Conservancy on site as soon as possible.

5. Join the Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society. Consider seeking $2500 non-match RecTAP grants to help the Conservancy work on special issues or opportunities related to the Park.

6. Reconfigure the Park Master Plan Study Committee as the Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park Advisory Board.

7. Settle on a name for the Park.

8. Establish and adopt an ordinance establishing the park as a smoke free facility.

9. Establish a policy on dogs in the park and include it in the Rules and Regulations to be adopted by ordinance.

10. Address the need for funding for maintenance staff for the park and how the funding for two full-time workers or the equivalent combination of seasonal part time employees phased in over time as improvements are made. While the project budget for the fully developed park is estimated at $175,650, this will be phased in over time. Where to begin?
We are recommending that a $50,000 baseline budget be set forth. This would translate into $555 per acre, providing base funding for management and part-time seasonal workers to get going on managing the park as visitation increases and undertaking select start-up projects.

a. $25,000 as a shared expense with other Conservancy responsibilities for park management, partnership building, plan implementation, base programming, and policy development. 60 percent of the Park Managers time should be spent on outreach and partnership building to build sustainable revenue generation; 20 percent on park maintenance management and a base program; and 20 percent on plan implementation, administration and projects.

b. $20,000 for 1,000 maintenance hours.

c. $5,000 for materials, supplies, and expenses.

11. Work with a conservation organization to develop a natural resource or stewardship plan for Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park. Adopt an implementation schedule with roles and responsibilities to ensure that the plan is carried out.

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

13. Identify one to three signature programs or events to hold in the park. Seek partners and sponsors for the event or program. Consider forming an event committee to carry out the activity.

**Potter Township: The Big Picture**

Potter Township has accomplished a great deal in establishing the park next to the Township Building, constructing a wonderful municipal building, securing the Tank Farm, and establishing a productive collaboration with Independence Conservancy. Ideas to consider beyond this park master plan that would benefit the Township include the following:

1. Develop and adopt a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. Grant funding is available for this but undertaking a “mini” plan would be a relatively small expense with a speedier timeframe for completion as an investment in generating the fee-in-lieu of the dedication of parkland.

2. Establish a Mandatory Dedication of Park Land Ordinance. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan is a requirement for adopting a Mandatory Dedication of Parkland Ordinance. The Ordinance offers developers the opportunity to donate parkland or pay a fee-in-lieu of parkland. The Township could use such fees to help develop Tank Farm/Rocky Bottom Park.

3. Reach out to municipalities in the School District and the School District to determine if any other municipality would join in partnership in developing the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan and exploring the potential to establish a multi-municipal parks, recreation, open space and trail system. Together, the municipalities could establish and grow a system for parks, recreation programs, open space conservation and trails than no one municipality could afford on its own.
Appendix C: Workload Cost Tracking

One of the most challenging aspects of park maintenance management is workload cost tracking. A review of many park master plans and parks, recreation and open space plans, and Peer Studies found that establishing and implementing workload cost tracking systems for parks and recreation facilities was a common recommendation. However, this recommendation has been implemented infrequently.

Examples of workload cost tracking were generated from Manheim Township using TRIMS and the City of Pittsburgh using Cartegraph software. It is important to note that these partial reports and screen captures of the types of reports that can be produced are merely to convey the importance of counting for the purposes of this report. Given the scope of this project, it is not possible to present the entire volumes of reporting generated in Pittsburgh and Manheim Township. The reports from such systems are voluminous and can be tailored to queries made for certain topics and information. This would be impossible by hand. To inspire others to pursue workload cost tracking, particular benefits of doing this for Manheim Township and the City of Pittsburgh are shown along with samples of reports on cost tracking.

It is interesting to note that when the planning team was researching examples of workload cost tracking, trash and litter removal and mowing were the two examples that came to forefront. These tasks are the single most significant tasks performed by a parks and recreation department in terms of staff time and budget. When planning a park maintenance management system, it is wise to address the tasks in priority of time, expense and impact. Trash and mowing are usually at the top of the list.

Manheim Township’s Workload Cost Tracking

Municipality
Manheim Township Department of Park Planning & Recreation
1241 Lititz Pike
Lancaster, PA 17601
https://www.manheimtownship.org/253/Recreation-and-Park-Planning

Project contact:
Margaret Earnest, Director
Email Margie Earnest
Phone: (717) 290-7180 ext. 3104

Manheim Township’s Workload Cost Tracking
The Manheim Township Department of Park Planning & Recreation uses TRIMS software to track park maintenance costs. With this software, the Department is able to track costs by park, facility, task, and staff hours. The Director is able to use this information to make decisions about staffing budget, fees and charges, partnerships, and policies.

The workload cost tracking reports are extensive the sample report on the following two pages presents a “snap shot” of a five-week report that goes on for more than 2,500 rows. The image is presented to convey the types of information that can be generated through workload cost tracking using computer software. An administrative assistant helps the manage the reporting of park maintenance information.
Benefits of Cost Tracking Information

When Manheim Township reviewed workload cost tracking reports over the course of a year, the cost of trash and litter removal was apparent. The annual $35,000 expenditure to remove trash from parks was significant enough for the Department to explore options regarding this task. The management team decided upon enacting a carry-in, carry-out policy for trash and litter. The Department created an educational program to inform the public about this policy. The only place where trash cans are now located is at the concession stands. The Department now saves close to $35,000 annually on trash removal and litter lick-up.

Example of Workload Cost Tracking Report in Manheim Township

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Trash: Major Expenditure in a Parks and Recreation Budget

The City of Pittsburgh/Department of Public Works maintains more than 160 parks. The year-round daily tasks include emptying thousands of litter receptacles in its parks and along the street right-of-ways for many decades. In some neighborhoods this task is done at least three (3x) per day on three (3) different shifts. What isn’t known is how all these receptacles came to be in their current locations—yes most are on transportation routes or at bus stops, or where crowds tend to gather, or at picnic shelters and playgrounds, but over time we have come to learn that a lot of litter recep-
tacles really don’t belong where they have been placed.

**Asset Management System**

We have been blessed to have an Asset Management System (Cartegraph) for almost as long as we have been performing this task, but the supervisory staff or senior management only used the data more for performance statistics rather than to make better management decisions for the six (6) Street Divisions and six (6) Park Divisions. Historically, we spend about 100,000 work hours and almost $2 million dollars performing this task, which equates to nearly 50 to 52 full time employees. The charts on pages 56 and 57 from calendar years 2016 and 2017 provide a more accurate account of expenditures, which are very near to the historical averages.

**Strategies Based on Workload and Cost Tracking**

In 2016, we made a departmental decision to reduce the amount of time we were spending on emptying litter receptacles. The decision was based partly on the data from Cartegraph and a hunch that we could experiment with what had been the process for decades. The maintenance divisions were instructed to perform the task only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays with the exceptions being the business districts and areas around the universities and cultural assets which would still be collected daily. They were also instructed to perform deferred maintenance tasks on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Months after this decision was made there was no noticeable increase in complaints to our 311 Call Center related to emptying litter receptacles.

Due to this positive outcome, we moved a step further with a pilot project in one maintenance division of placing sensors on the litter receptacles that would give us data related to how much refuse was in the receptacle and whether it truly needed emptied. Understand that in almost all of our maintenance divisions there are several hundred receptacles and the crew spends almost the WHOLE day riding around to check those receptacles just to see if they need emptied. The data from the sensors were unbelievable—we found some receptacles wouldn’t need to be emptied for 30 days, 4 months, even 1 year. There were many days where less than 20 of over 160 receptacles needed to be emptied.

**Results**

What did the data allow us to do? First, we found that we could remove or relocate receptacles because they were hardly ever used. Second, we found that the crew emptying the receptacles had more time in the day to perform other maintenance functions. Third, we found that the sensor data not only would tell us what receptacles needed emptied, it would map out the route the crew should drive to perform it in the most efficient manner.

In 2017, because of the success of the pilot project, we did an RFP to install sensors in all our litter receptacles. We are standardizing our litter receptacle (Victor Stanley Ironsites Model SD-42) and replacing a multitude of different styles and manufacturers across the city and in our parks. The rollout started in August, 2017 and it continues today. We are about 90% deployed and expect to be complete by the end of 2018. We currently have set a 60% fill rate and the crews are informed by way of a daily printed report what receptacles have reached that percentage, but it is something we will monitor in the future and the percentage could go up or down depending on a number of variables.
Outcomes
What outcomes do we expect from this project?
• Conservatively a 30% reduction in man hours and cost (15 employees, $600K), but we strongly believe that the reduction will be closer to 50% (25 to 26 employees, $1,000,000). If this pans out, each maintenance division could see an additional 1.25 to 2.2 employees available to perform deferred maintenance tasks
• Standardizing the litter receptacles improves the visual appearance throughout the city and in our parks
• The ability to reduce the number of or redeploy litter receptacles

Benefits
Technology and various IT platforms has given us the ability to better manage our resources and maintenance crews. Our Asset Management System (Cartegraph) is used to manage not only emptying litter receptacles, but every task we perform on the streets and in the parks. We can use that data to redefine task and frequency schedules, or to ensure that goals and objectives are being met or identify/defend our expenditures in any neighborhood or park.

As to the sensors on the litter receptacles, more technology that allows us to produce a number of reports, manage those assets, and create routes to effectively and efficiently empty the receptacles.

Finally, more technology with GPS on all our vehicles to ensure that the crews follow the route prescribed from the litter sensor data.

All of this technology does cost money – pays for the Cartegraph licenses, or the cost for each sensor for its monitoring, and the same for the GPS units in the vehicles, but it is money well spent as long as it allows you to better manage your resources. We continue to hear that we have to do more with less and “can’t get blood from a stone” but the use of technology allows us the opportunity to redefine the way we have done a task or program for years. In this case we choose a year round function, probably a task many of you also do year-round, but if looking for more savings in seasonal work (i.e. turf maintenance) choose a task that has a significant impact on your operations and change it so you can do it in less time and have the ability to redeploy maintenance staff to perform that deferred maintenance.
Screen Capture of a Sample Time Sheet Used to Track Labor

Screen Shot Capture of Creating a Work Order by location, date, staff, equipment, materials and supplies.
About Millersburg
Located along the Susquehanna River a half-hour from the state capital, Millersburg Borough occupies a compact ¾ of a square mile with a population of 2,532. A charming river town, the Borough has a 20-acre parks and recreation system with five public parks that include a riverfront park, a town square, a sports area, a community parks with a swimming pool, an historic canal park, and an active family-oriented recreational park.

Borough Resources
The Public Works Department maintains the five borough parks as well as all public properties and the streets. Three full-time workers are in the Public Works Department including the Crew Leader and two workers. A part-time worker serves on weekend duty and restroom care. The Borough’s budget for parks and recreation is about $86,581 including Public Works salaries, benefits and wages devoted to park maintenance; equipment; supplies; materials; utilities; and related expenses. The Borough generates about $5,000 in pavilion rental fees, user fees, and vendor fees.

The Borough is a model of collaboration. For all special events such as the Christmas Display, Cherry Blossom Festival, Wine Festival, Halloween Party and Parade, Veteran’s Day Event, and the fireworks display are all supported by private sector partnerships. Partners include the Fire Company, Lions Club, Rotary and MAWT (Millersburg Area Working Together).

Workload Cost Tracking: Simple and Effective
The Borough Manager uses a simple paper and pencil method for tracking workload in park maintenance that would be easily replicated in any community with a limited staff and budget. Workers write their hours on bi-weekly time sheets in three categories: parks, streets, and public properties.
With paper and pencil in hand, the Manager adds up the hours in each division of Public Works by which he determines the number of hours spent on park maintenance. Without detailing hours by task or facility, the Manager can still estimate where and what the crew was doing based upon time of year and events occurring.

Findings
Based upon this simple, effective method of determining park maintenance workload, the Manager has found that 44% of the Public Works Department staff time is spent on Park Maintenance. He meshes the workload costs with the budget reports on park expenditures to get the true cost of park maintenance.

Benefits
Knowing workload hours and expenditures for park maintenance, the Manager is able to:

- Respond to Borough Council requests about costs and citizen requests about park conditions and needs
- Prepare agreements with park facility permittees based on real information
- Support the work of partners who sponsor events
- Determine where efficiencies can be made to save even minutes a day. With a small crew, saving minutes matters.
- Determine cost saving measures such as in a recent park master plan, recommendations related to increasing park maintenance efficiency and effectiveness were explored and recommended including purchasing a Gaitor to facilitate event set up, exploring the use of sensors in trash cans to reduce time spent on trash removal, naturalizing areas instead of mowing and contracting out repetitive services such as restroom cleaning.
- Changing Christmas display lighting for energy efficiency, lowered operating costs and reduced set-up time.

Without the information on actual workload and costs, making the argument to support changes such as equipment purchasing would be most difficult. Saving time on little things adds up and enables the Borough to do “more with less”. Armed with good data, the Manager provide Borough Council with solid information on which to make informed decisions in a timely manner. As a result, Council invests in parks, partners have stepped up to support events and services not possible by the Borough alone, and the parks are consistently safe, clean, functional and beautiful!

“Millersburg Borough has had a lot of compliments on how nice the parks always look.”
— Christopher McGann, Millersburg Borough Manager
Appendix D: Organizations Contacted

The Planning Team contacted numerous organizations to determine if maintenance was a focus of any other entity.

Major Findings
The National Recreation and Park Association addresses maintenance periodically but it is not a focus. NRPA sponsors the two-year Maintenance Management School. It operates for one week each year. The 250-student school generally has a waiting list.

The Eppley Institute in Indiana provides a range of services that includes some work in maintenance but also provides a wide range of other services.

Central Parks Conservancy Urban Parks Institute is focused on parks in New York City and provides nationwide support on a wide range of urban parks topics.

The Florida Institute of Park Maintenance Personnel is now defunct due to travel restrictions among municipalities. Former officers provided our planning team with all of their materials for consideration in setting up the Pennsylvania Institute.

Institute at the Golden Gate is dedicated to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area only.

Others Contacted:
- City Parks Alliance
- Penn State Extension Service
- Aspen Institute
- National Environmental Educational Foundation
- Gehl Institute
- Next City
- Institute for Sustainable Communities
- North American Association of Environmental Education
- 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania
- PSATS
- PML
- PAPMM
- Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks

CONCLUSION
The Planning Team did not find any organization solely devoted to local park maintenance. However, related organization in Pennsylvania all expressed interest in partnering with the Institute.