



Community Parks Protection

Position Statement

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Many municipalities faced with difficult financial decisions may consider selling open space or community parks. While this may help resolve a fiscal problem in the short-term, it may also lead to a long-term loss. Moreover, many parks in Pennsylvania are protected under law due to state and federal funds they have received.

The importance of local parks was affirmed by the Commonwealth's Courts that found, under the Donated and Dedicated Property Act, parks cannot be disposed of or used for private purposes without an Orphans Court ruling. This decision supports the position that public parks and spaces are permanently protected providing community services and benefits including those that accrue to the local economy.

Local parks and open space areas help limit municipal expenses by reducing construction and impact on the streets system, sewer systems, and require less in terms of local services such as police, fire, and ambulance. "Green Parks" areas also help reduce the impacts of storm water for many communities.

A municipality may find relief in short term by selling public spaces but the long-term impact will be negative. PRPS supports protecting public spaces and preserving them in perpetuity.