

Funded in part by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and a grant from the Environmental Stewardship Fund under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

December 2015

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The purpose of this study is to evaluate the existing conditions of Lewistown Recreation Park and define opportunities and ideas that will revitalize the park and enhance it as a community recreation asset. Lewistown Recreation Park, known locally as Rec Park, is the hub of recreation activities in the Borough. The 26 acre property is home to the Lewistown Community Center, the swimming pool, walking trails, and numerous athletic fields and courts.

This recreation and park assessment evaluated what works well in the park, what facilities and areas could be improved, ideas to make the park function better and target citizen's interests, and ideas for beautification. The assessment was developed by completing field views of existing conditions; conducting interviews with key stakeholders to include Borough maintenance and engineering personnel, community athletic organization representatives, and municipal and county representatives; and conducting research. A conceptual plan accompanies the report to illustrate revitalization recommendations. An action plan is provided that details the strategy for implementing the revitalization plan.

General Information

The park is located on the south side of the Borough, bounded by East Charles Street to the south, South Dorcas Street to the west, Montgomery Avenue to the northwest, residential properties along Montgomery Avenue and East Chestnut Street Extended to the north, and an exit ramp from Route 322 to the east. There are three vehicular access points to the park; from South Dorcas Street, Cherry Street and East Chestnut Street Extended. A short segment of the Kishacoquillas Creek forms the southwest boundary of the park.



The park site is somewhat linear in shape, extending approximately 2,900 feet, or a little over one-half mile distance from South Dorcas Street to East Chestnut Street. The park is 820 feet wide at its widest point. The Lewistown Community Center is located on a separate parcel, contiguous to the park. The entire park, with the exception of two extremely small areas near the intersection of South Dorcas Street and Montgomery Avenue and the intersection of Depot Street and Montgomery Avenue, is within the 100-year floodplain of the Kishacoquillas Creek. Approximately two-thirds of the park is within the Kishacoquillas Creek floodway.

Impact of the Floodplain and Floodway

The following information is summarized from “Technical Information on Floodplain Management – Administrative Guidelines for Development, Planning Series #5” of the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services, Department of Community and Economic Development

The 100-year floodplain and floodway of the Kishacoquillas Creek significantly impact the development and revitalization options for Recreation Park. Under state law, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) has jurisdiction over all obstructions located within a floodway area. This means an applicant must obtain a state encroachment permit, as well as, a local floodplain management permit prior to conducting any development activities in a floodway. Federal and state floodplain management requirements only apply to new structures or to substantial improvements of existing structures.

PA DEP has jurisdiction over the development activities of governmental and quasi-public entities occurring within any portion of an identified floodplain area, not just the floodway. By virtue of the Pennsylvania Flood Plain Management Act of 1978, DEP was given the authority to regulate activities conducted by, or performed on property owned or maintained by other Commonwealth agencies, political subdivisions including local governments and, public utilities when located in a floodplain area. Recreation Park is owned by Lewistown Borough, and as such, work in the floodplain and floodway is regulated by PA DEP and will require permits from PA DEP. Permits are not needed for temporary

Floodplain – The lands adjoining a river or stream that have been or may be expected to be inundated by floodwaters in a 100-year frequency flood.

Floodway – The channel of the water course and portions of the adjoining floodplains which are reasonably required to carry and discharge the 100-year frequency flood.

activities and “temporary” refers to activities, which will be completed or terminated within six months from the time they were started.

Improvements within the Floodway –

- No encroachments, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements, and other developments are allowed within the floodway, which would cause any increase in flood heights.
- To develop a property located in the floodway, an applicant may be able to avoid an anticipated rise caused by a project by making compensating improvements, such as a channelization project to improve flow to offset the rise caused by a proposed improvement.
- Rebuilding or replacing an existing structure with one of equal or smaller dimensions is permitted in a floodway.

Improvements within the 100-year Floodplain –

- New, non-residential structures and substantial improvements to existing non-residential structures is permitted if the lowest floor (including basement) is built at or above the 100-year flood elevation or the space built below the 100-year flood level must be floodproofed in a watertight condition and certified by a registered professional engineer.
- FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) realizes that there are a variety of non-residential structures that because of their relatively small size, type of construction, and low damage potential, need not be elevated or “dry” floodproofed. These include such things as picnic pavilions, gazebos, boat docks, and other open sided structures as well as small accessory storage sheds.

Existing Conditions

The park was viewed several times to complete this revitalization assessment. The following facilities and existing conditions were noted in these field views.

Recreation Facilities

- **Swimming Pool** – A fenced area, approximately 1.3 acres, is associated with the swimming pool. The pool complex includes a bathhouse/concession/admissions building, a mechanical/storage building, and a swimming pool with a zero depth entry, spray toys, competitive swim lanes, and diving end. The swimming pool area has lights for evening use and vending machines located at the entrance to the bathhouse.
- **Adult Baseball Field** – One 90' baseline baseball field is located on the east side of Cherry Street/park entrance drive. The baseball field has a poor solar orientation. The field has dugouts, full outfield fencing and warning track, lights, a scoreboard, arch backstop, an announcer booth, and netting to contain foul balls. The field and amenities are located in close proximity to the entry and Community Center drives.
- **Youth Baseball Fields** – Two youth baseball fields occupy the western portion of the park site. The fields are



developed with a preferred orientation for morning play. The fields are well developed with outfield fence and warning track, bleachers, dugouts, and scoreboard. The fields do not have lights for night play.

- Tennis Courts – Two tennis courts are located west of the swimming pool. The courts are developed with the preferred north-south orientation. The court surface is cracked with weeds growing through the surface. Chain link fence is provided on the north and south ends of the courts. Two light standards light the courts. No color coat surface is provided.
- Basketball Courts – Two basketball courts are developed with the preferred north-south orientation. The basketball courts are part of the paved courts area that also contains the two tennis courts. The court surface is cracked. Fencing is provided at the ends of the courts. Two light standards light the courts. No color coat surface is provided.
- Football Field – A football field is located in the northeast portion of the park, close to the East Chestnut Street Extension entrance. The field has a northeast-southwest orientation that is acceptable, but off of the preferred north-south orientation. The field is surrounded by a 3-foot high chain link fence. Wooden benches area provided and bleachers are located on the northwest side of the field. A portable shed is used for storage and concessions.
- Soccer Field – A U-12 size (150' x 240') soccer field is located between the adult baseball field and football field. The soccer field has a northeast-southwest orientation,



closer to east-west than the football field. While this orientation is not preferred, the configuration of the tract and available space does not allow the preferred north-south orientation to be achieved.

- Picnic Pavilions – Three picnic pavilions are located in the park.

- A medium picnic pavilion is located opposite the swimming pool building on the south side of the park. The pavilion can accommodate approximately 8 picnic tables.



- A small picnic pavilion is located, west of the playground near the Kishacoquillas Creek. This small structure is showing age and the metal roof is rusting. The pavilion can accommodate 2 to 4 picnic tables.



- A second small picnic pavilion is located on the eastern side of the park, north of the football field, in a setting with mature trees. This small structure is identical to the other small pavilion and also in need of refurbishing to remove rust.

- Playground – New playground equipment has been recently installed between the large pavilion and western pavilion. The equipment purchase was funded in part by the Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund. This equipment is located within mulch safety area but no edging is provided to contain the safety surfacing mulch. New equipment includes two modular structures and a merry-go-round. An older slide and swings are also provided. Each piece of playground equipment is located in a separate mulch area.



- Walking Trail – A paved walking trail encircles the majority of the park site. Trail extensions connect to the courts, swimming pool, and pavilions. A trail link extends to the

South Dorcas Street parking area and a loop configuration encircles the southern youth baseball field. A recent policy change permits dogs on leash to be walked on the trail.

- Fitness Equipment – One piece of fitness equipment (chin up bars) is located at the eastern end of the walking trail.
- Softball Field Backstop – An abandoned backstop is located east of the adult baseball field.

Support Facilities

- Access Drives and Parking – Three access points and paved parking areas are provided for Rec Park.
 - The main entrance is via Cherry Street which extends as a drive into the park site. The drive separates the adult baseball field and the swimming pool and extends to the center of the site where it turns west into a large parking area. The parking is located between the swimming pool and basketball courts to the north and the large picnic pavilion and playground to the south. The parking area accommodates approximately 145 vehicles, including five accessible spaces.
 - A small parking area is elevated at the intersection of South Dorcas Street and Montgomery Avenue and access drives extend to each street. This parking area accommodates approximately 17 vehicles, including two accessible spaces.
 - A drive from East Chestnut Street Extended, extends into the park to a small parking area accommodating approximately 20 vehicles plus one accessible space.



- Batting Cages – Two batting cages are located west of the youth baseball fields. The batting cages are open pole structures with netting.
- Material Storage Buildings – A block storage building is located along the embankment, north of the youth baseball field. The building is in disrepair and materials and equipment are placed around the building, suggesting that it is not large enough to store necessary equipment and materials. The interior of the building was not viewed.



- Concession Stand – A temporary structure is located northwest of the football field to provide concessions to spectators.
- Concession/Restroom Building – A block concession and restroom building is located along the northern embankment between the youth baseball field and the tennis courts. The building is showing its age. Access to the interior of the structure was not provided.
- Community Center – The Community Center is located on a separate parcel north of the park along the east side of Cherry Street. The Community Center offers a community room, activity room, conference room, and kitchen for community programs and rental. Parking for Community Center activities is provided on the building parcel. Stairs connect the Community Center to the park.
- Portable Toilets – Three portable toilets were located in the eastern end of the park; two at the football field and one at the soccer field.
- Overflow Parking Area – Met-Ed has an electrical sub-station located on the property east of the community center. This property is primarily open and extends to Montgomery Avenue. Overflow parking occurs on the parcel during sports games and tournaments.
- Overhead Electric Lines – An overhead electric line on wooden poles parallels the northern boundary of the park.
- Sanitary Sewer Line – Sanitary sewer manholes were noted along the north property line, indicating that a sanitary sewer line parallels this boundary. A survey is not available to verify the location and size of the sewer line.



Natural Features and Considerations

- Vegetation – Mature trees line the stream banks of the Kishacoquillas Creek and extend along the southern park boundary at East Charles Street and eastern boundary at the Route 322 exit ramp.
- Grading – The site is separated from the surrounding developed area by steep embankments along the northern boundary line. The majority of the park is gentle slopes, typical of floodplain areas. There are steep slopes on the outside of the trail on the east and south side of the park, which is the embankment of the Route 322 off-ramp.
- Kishacoquillas Creek / Drainage – The Kishacoquillas Creek is located to the east and south of the park site and runoff is directed as sheet flow toward the creek. The embankment for the Route 322 exit ramp and East Charles Street separates the park from the creek with the exception of approximately 500 linear feet of the stream located closest to South Dorcas Street. Drainage culverts carry water to the creek beneath these roadways.
- Flooding – Seasonal and severe event flooding affects the park site. Waters from the Kishacoquillas Creek overflow its banks and back up in culverts under East Charles Street and the Route 322 exit ramp into the park.



General Park Assessment

Rec Park provides the combination of recreation facilities, activity areas, and setting typical of a community park. Facilities are provided for competitive play, self-directed activities, and the casual enjoyment of the outdoor setting. Community special events occur in the park. Team sports fields, the swimming pool, and picnic areas make the park the center of recreation activities from spring through fall. The trail draws visitors to the park throughout the year.

The location of the park within the Kishacoquillas Creek 100-year flood plain and with significant areas within the floodway, severely limits the opportunity to development new permanent facilities. New improvements cannot create a water encroachment or obstruct water flows within the floodway.

The park site is nearly maximized with improvements, with only a small area on the western portion of the property that remains open and undeveloped. The size of the park and linear configuration create a facility-oriented layout. Facilities are located adjacent to each other with little room between to create gathering areas or “hub” for facility orientation and socializing.

While it is obvious that there has been recent investment in some aspects of the park, such as the swimming pool and playground equipment, there are areas of the park that appear tired and outdated. These areas, with equipment and facilities that are older, in disrepair, or past their life-cycle, along with the quality of the materials used in the park, negatively affect the visual aesthetic of the setting and the visitor’s experience. Telephone poles used for light standards, structures painted various colors, and rusted roofs on pavilions and dugouts affect the experience of spending time in the park.

The size of the park, the extend of current facilities, and restrictions associated with the floodway and 100-year floodplain limit the opportunity to add significant new improvements to the park. Minor improvements are needed to address the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and visitor safety. Convenience facilities are desired by users such as expanded spectator seating and additional restrooms and concession stands. Small improvements to the park can make a significant impact on the accessibility, safety, function, aesthetics, and overall user experience. Successful park elements and park elements that need improvements are outlined below.

Successful Park Elements

Many elements of Lewistown Recreation Park are successful and provide recreation benefit to visitors. This is supported by the high use of the facility for both programed and self-directed recreation activities. Consider the following successful elements:

- Rec Park offers diverse recreation facilities and leisure opportunities. Athletic fields and courts for organized and pick-up play serve organized league and sports enthusiasts. The picnic areas and playground provide self-directed passive recreation opportunities. The swimming pool and walking trail offer opportunities fitness and wellness recreation activities.
- The park setting offers mature trees, un-programmed open space, and views and access to Kishacoquillas Creek.
- The riparian buffer along Kishacoquillas Creek is stabilized with mature trees, understory vegetation, and wildflowers.
- The baseball fields are well developed with amenities to include dug outs, fencing, and spectator accommodations.
- The swimming pool has recently received investment to modernize the facility and offer features, like zero-depth entry and spray toys, that users are interested in.
- New playground equipment has been added.
- The three picnic areas are nicely located within areas of mature trees for shade and nearby open space for informal picnic activities.
- The trail system is well developed in the park and heavily used. The trail loop encircling the park offers a one-mile walking circuit and extension to the sidewalk system on South Dorcas Street for convenient connection to the Kish River Walk.

- There is sufficient, well distributed parking, as well as, overflow parking available for park users.

Park Elements that Need Improvement

The following park elements and activity areas should be considered for improvement, enhancement, and additions to maximize the public recreation benefit. While many of the improvements cited can be completed without extensive planning and design, some of the suggested improvements should be preceded by a planning and design phase.

Safety Improvements

Safety improvements should be prioritized as improvements are undertaken in the park. Recommended safety improvements include:

- Separate the trail and parking area on the north side of the main parking area. Construct a wood guide rail to define the limits of the parking area and provide separation that enhances the safety for trail users.
- Eliminate chain link fence at athletic fields that is three to four-foot in height. Fences in this height range pose a safety concern for athletes running into them and hitting them at their mid-section. Install five-foot high fences or eliminate the fence if unnecessary.
- Fencing between the adult baseball field warning track and adjacent walking trail should be a minimum of six-feet high to block long balls.
- Assure that the screen that blocks foul balls in the area of the adult baseball field is in good working order to address foul ball hazards for spectators and vehicles traveling on the entry drive.
- Remove tree hazards. Several trees appear to be dying or have areas of dead branches that pose a safety hazard. Inventory and assess trees in the park and remove dead or dying trees or branches that pose safety hazards.
- Install cross walks at locations where the walking trail crosses the entry drive.
- Improve the playground to be age-segregated. Age-segregation



separates children into two play areas; one for 2-5 year olds and a second area for 6-12 year olds. Age-segregation is recommended by the Consumer Product Safety Commission Guidelines for Playground Safety.

Tot lots and youth playgrounds must be developed within areas of safety surfacing and located for safe play. When developing playground areas, the following general guidelines should be incorporated into the design:

- The playground layout, equipment, and safety zone should comply with the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Guidelines for Playground Safety.
- Playgrounds must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which requires that an accessible route be provided from walkways/parking areas to the playground equipment and that a portion of the equipment offer activities that can be utilized by physically challenged children.
- Playgrounds should be age-segregated to accommodate children of different ages and abilities. The playgrounds should have signs identifying the age appropriate areas of play.
- American Society for Testing and Materials references for public playground safety:
 - F1487 Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use.
 - F2373 Standard Consumer Safety Performance specification for Public Use Play Equipment for Children 6 Months through 23 Months.
 - F1292 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment.

Playgrounds should be designed to stimulate imaginative play as well as physical activity. Playgrounds should be interesting environments that engage children while providing convenience facilities for adults such as benches and shaded areas.

- Remove bleachers with more than three seat rows without safety railing (CPSC safety guideline).

ADA Improvements

Parks are public facilities, and as such, must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, referred to as the ADA.

The walking trail in Rec Park provides an accessible route connecting facilities in most areas. The following improvements are needed to fully comply with the ADA:

- The entry to the swimming pool bathhouse from the trail exceed five-percent slope and should be reconfigured to provide an entry walk that does not exceed five-percent and has a cross-slope of less than two-percent.
- The trail link to South Dorcas Street exceed five-percent slope. Reconfigure the trail alignment to provide a trail link that does not exceed five-percent slope, or a ramp with maximum 8.33% slope and handrails, to be ADA compliant. Fill will be required to achieve the desired slope which may be off-set by floodway excavation along the stream/riparian buffer area.

- Provide an accessible route to all facilities to include the new playground equipment, batting cages, player's areas at athletic fields, and spectator seating. All recreation facilities should be connected by an accessible route to accessible parking spaces.
- Add accessible spectator areas at each field and court.
- Develop an accessible route between the Community Center and the park trail. The slope and close proximity will require a ramp configuration. Ramp slopes cannot exceed 8.33-percent and must have handrails on both sides. A ramp and spectator seating area could be designed for the hill between the Community Center and the adult baseball field, providing ADA compliant access between the facilities, as well as, spectator seating.
- Many of the paved trail treads are aged and cracked, some with weeds growing in the cracks. Cracks should be repaired and sealed to maintain accessibility standards.

The US Department of Justice issues regulations under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The US Access Board publishes design guidelines of the ADA which can be referenced at www.access-board.gov.

Parks should have a parking area with designated accessible parking spaces and an accessible route (trail) that extends from the parking area or sidewalk to each park facility. For a trail to be considered an accessible route it must meet the following criteria:

- Trail Surface – Material must be firm, stable, and slip resistant.
- Width – Minimum clear tread width of 36-inches is required, with passing areas located at intervals of 200-feet maximum. Passing areas shall be 60-inches by 60-inches minimum. Passing spaces are not required on accessible routes with a clear width of 60-inches (5') or greater.
- Running Slope – Trail running slope shall not be steeper than 5% (1:20). Ramp with handrails on both sides of the ramp are required for slopes over 5%. Ramp running slope shall not be steeper than 8.33% (1:12).
- Cross Slope – Trails and ramps shall have a maximum cross slope of 2%.

Athletic fields are public facilities and accessible routes must extend to the spectator areas and to the field of play. Spectator areas should accommodate designated space for persons in wheelchairs to view field activities. Additional ADA requirements that pertain to athletic facilities include:

- Within a site, an accessible route is required to connect to the boundary of each area of sport activity (ADA Section 206.2.2). A sports activity includes a field or court and where multiple sports fields and courts are provided, an accessible route is required to each field or area of sport activity.
- For court sports, at least one accessible route shall directly connect both sides of the court (ADA Section 206.2.12).
- At least one wheelchair space shall be provided in team or player seating areas serving areas of sports activity (ADA Section 221.2.1.4).

Functional Improvements

Rec Park was developed over time as recreation needs were identified and improvements have occurred on an individual facility basis. This assessment provides the opportunity to step back and assess the park as a whole and consider opportunities to enhance the overall and individual facility functions within the park setting. (Improvement priorities are designated as LT – Long Term, MT – Medium Term, and ST – Short Term, see page 18) Suggested functional improvements include:

- Add additional loops to the trail system. A loop connection is suggested on the southwest side of the football field, surrounding the northwest youth baseball field and, at the northwest side of the park. The trail on the east side of the swimming pool fence should be widened to better function as loop trail. Loop trails add to the diversity of trail use and expand accessible routes throughout the park site to access facilities. (MT)
- Create a trailhead location for the park trail – a point to start trail activities that facilities that includes support trail activities. Provide a kiosk or sign with a trail map indicating trail length and general park information. Provide benches for visitors to wait and gather with friends before and after trail activities. Provide a bike rack for parking bicycles before and after trail activities. (MT)
- Provide a defined trail extension to the intersection of South Dorcas Street and Montgomery Avenue to facilitate crossing the streets to access the Kish River Walk on the west side of South Dorcas Street. Provide cross walks and signage to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety. (MT)
- Extend a wide walking trail to the Montgomery Avenue sidewalk. The trail that connects to the restroom/concession building should extend past the storage building and up the slope to Montgomery Avenue providing a new pedestrian access point. Add bollards near the street entrance that can be removed when vehicles need access to the Maintenance Storage Building. (MT)
- There is no edging to define the safety surfacing limits for the playground equipment. Edging retains the safety surfacing mulch and defines the proper depth and limits for the safety mulch areas, as well as, enhancing the ease of mowing and maintenance operations at the mulch limits. (LT)
- Locate the playground equipment so that equipment to serve tots (ages 2-5 years old) is grouped together and a separate area is developed to serve youth (ages 6-12 years old). (LT)
- Remove the angled fencing at the tennis courts and provide new fence that is parallel to the court sides to improve mowing patterns and enhance play by retaining errant balls on the courts. Extend courts to the north to develop space between the basketball courts and tennis courts. Rehabilitate the surface of both the basketball courts and tennis courts. Address the cracks, resurface, and apply a top color coat and paint lines. Consider adding a bleacher area or other type of spectator seating at the basketball courts. (LT)
- The park should have site furnishings that enhance the convenience of visiting the park and create a welcoming environment. Picnic tables should be provided at pavilions, and informally in clearings near activity areas. Benches should be provided at gathering places, and periodically along trails, especially where there are scenic views. Park furnishings that provide for the leisurely enjoyment of the park are suggested. Furnishings should consider the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities and includes picnic tables that accommodate wheel chairs and benches in shaded locations. Trash receptacles should be located in activity areas and at trailheads. (ST)

- Develop a new, larger (if possible) maintenance facility to accommodate current maintenance equipment and materials. (LT)
- Signage System – A comprehensive signage system is important to guide visitors to the park and inform and direct visitors once they are at the park site. A comprehensive signage system should include a park entrance sign, park rules sign, direction signs, trail mile markers, and interpretative signs. Park signs can be unifying elements in parks and should have common design themes.
 - Entrance Sign – Entrance signs should include the park name and Borough name and logo. Entrance signs should be located at the three park entrances. (ST)
 - Information Kiosk – One information kiosk is suggested at the park hub / trailhead near the entrance to the swimming pool at the intersection with the walking trail. Kiosks are used to orient visitors and provide information about the park and typically include a park and trail map, rules and policies, and announcements. The kiosk could be developed as a two, three, or four sided sign structure to accommodate desired information. (MT)
 - Directional Sign – Directional signs help visitors locate the park. Directional signs should be located on key streets in the Borough to guide visitors to the park. (ST)
 - Mile Marker – Mile markers should be located along trails to identify length intervals and facilitate wellness and fitness activities. (ST)

Visual and Beautification Enhancements

This assessment considered opportunities to enhance the aesthetics of the park setting. Visual and beautification enhancement recommendations include:

- Remove, replace, or paint rusty chain link fence. Fencing is a visual distraction and not desired in floodplain areas as fence will trap debris during storm events. Prioritize removing fence that is not necessary for safety or functional reason. Removal will have an overall positive impact by opening up more area in the park, limiting visual clutter, and lower maintenance costs associated with mowing at fence lines and ongoing fence repair and upkeep. Remove the chain link fence at the football field. (ST)



- Remove the chain link fence along the northern property line in the area of the football and soccer field. (ST)
- Remove the abandoned softball backstop. (ST)
- Paint or replace the pavilion roofs. (MT)
- Add color throughout the park. In addition to the site furnishing, consider adding shade sails, color metal roofs on pavilions, and perennial and ornamental grass planting areas. (ST)

- Standardize the bench, picnic table, bike rack, water fountain, trash receptacle models and colors used in the park to create a uniform image. Continue using the blue bench and other complementary site furnishings throughout the park. (MT)
- Landscaping should be introduced to solve problems and enhance the visual image and park function. Landscaping in Rec Park is recommended in the following locations:



- Native vegetation to fortify the riparian buffer along the Kishacoquillas Creek. (ST)
- Remove pavement to create islands in parking areas and plant deciduous trees to shade cars and reduce the heat island effect. (MT)
- Add deciduous trees throughout the park to enhance the setting, create a sense of place, and provide shade. (ST)
- Plant low lying areas, such as parallel to East Charles Street and in engineered depressions (rain gardens) to absorb water and filter pollutants. Water loving plants should be introduced to eliminate surface water. (ST)
- Colorful perennials, shrubs, and flowering trees at the park entrances and main gathering areas to enhance the aesthetics of the setting. (ST)
- Plant a buffer to screen the northern property line at the electrical sub-station and at the homes to the northeast of the electrical sub-station which have private yards that are open to the park. Comply with the electrical companies requirements for planting within their right-of-way. (ST)
- Planting to visually buffer maintenance, storage, and other functional aspects of park operations from public view. Add planting on the west side of the material storage building to screen from the Montgomery Avenue trail approach. (LT)
- Develop a native grass and wildflower meadow along the riparian buffer of Kishacoquillas Creek and on steep slopes to provide habitat and minimize maintenance. (MT)
- Monitor the park on an ongoing basis for invasive species. Any invasive species that currently inhabit the site should be removed and native vegetation planted in its place.



Park Landscaping

A well-designed landscape can lower maintenance requirements and long-term maintenance costs. Low maintenance, drought resistant plant material should be used. Elements such as signs should be placed within landscaped areas to minimize hand mowing. Mow lines should be established which reduce mowing, especially outside of activity areas. The main entrances to the park should be attractively landscaped with a signature design highlighting the facility. Consider low maintenance plantings for these areas that include native flowering shrubs, perennials, and warm season grasses to add color.

Where planting is introduced into the park, native plant material should be used. Plant material native to Mifflin County is adapted to the geographic location and, as a result, will require less maintenance, withstand the extremes in climate change, be less susceptible to disease and pests, and propagate naturally. Native plant material will provide needed habitat and food for small mammals and birds. The introduction of native plants and enhancement of native plant areas will help reduce the opportunity for exotic species to establish a foothold on the site. Additionally, consideration should be given to choosing plant material that will withstand flooding, as well as, withstand occasional wet conditions.

Park and Recreation Enhancements

Recreation Park offers a wide variety of recreation amenities and leisure opportunities. The park is nearly maximized and there is limited area to add facilities. The floodplain and floodway limit the type and extent of additional park development that can be introduced on the site. The following improvements and enhancements are recommended for Rec Park:

- Create “hubs” or gathering areas at facilities. These ‘hubs’ provide a location for people to gather before and after participating in athletic and fitness activities and a convenient area for spectators to watch activities. Convenience facilities such as benches, bleachers, trash receptacles, bike racks, information signs, shade, etc. should be provided in ‘hub’ areas.
- Ice Skating / Performance Area – Add a multi-purpose area at the northwest corner of the park that includes a depressed impoundment for ice skating in the winter and stage with a backdrop for small performances. The existing embankment at the South Dorcas Street parking area should be terraced for lawn and lawn chair seating to view the stage and ice skating activities. Consider a removable fabric shade structure to shelter the stage. The existing plaza overlook should be incorporated into the design. Incorporate a bonfire pit or warming hut with a fireplace into the area for winter use. A fire pit/fireplace should be sheltered from the prevailing northwest winter winds. Provide trails that encircle the area and provide an accessible route to the facilities. In addition to a performance venue the setting could be used for summer movies, celebrations, and ceremonies. The embankment seating should be developed in a manner that reduces maintenance. The depressed impoundment grading should be developed to offset embankment fill associated with the seating area. (LT)
- Basketball Spectator Area – Create a seating, viewing area at the basketball courts. Basketball is a social activity that involves casual spectators and informal teams. Informal seating will accommodate players not actively using the court and others who enjoy watching the court activity. (LT)

- Adult Baseball Field Spectator Area – Integrate spectator seating into the hillside between the Community Center and the adult baseball field. Explore the opportunity to incorporate a ramp into the seating area/hillside to provide access between the upper parking area and the lower field/park area. (LT)
- Playground – Expand the new playground to be age-segregated. Add tot equipment. Design the playground area as a destination with age-segregated play areas, “hub” gathering area with benches and picnic tables for care-givers, a small pavilion for birthday parties and informal use, and planting/nature scape areas to visually enhance the playground and introduce natural play opportunities. (LT)
- Tennis Courts / Pickleball – Consider restriping the tennis courts for pickle ball. Pickleball is a court sport best described as half way between tennis and ping-pong. The court is 44’ x 20’ and divided into two courts by a 36” high net. It is played as a singles game with one person/side or as a doubles game with 2 people on each side of the net. Pickleball is becoming very popular with older adults. Evaluate the use of the tennis courts in Rec Park and at the High School to determine if tennis or pickleball will best serve residents. Eliminate additional pavement unnecessary for court area and re-establish as lawn, creating a separation from the basketball courts. (LT)
- Stream Access – Provide a stabilized stream access area for fishing, viewing Kishacoquillas Creek, and launch/landing for paddle craft. (LT)
- Field Lights – Add lights to the youth baseball fields. These lights could also be used to light the ice skating/performance area. (MT)
- Trail Lights – Add trail lights to supplement the existing lights along the trail and enhance the safety and security of using the trail at night. (MT)
- Remove benches that are outdated and in disrepair and replace with the blue benches. (ST)
- Renovate or replace the storage building and concession/restroom building. (LT)
- Paint all buildings and structures (announcer boxes, dugouts, etc.) with a unifying color pallet. (MT)
- Replace trail, drive, and parking pavement that is in disrepair with cracks, and weeds growing in the cracks. (MT)
- Remove razor wire at the top of the chain link fence at the swimming pool. (ST)
- Add a new scoreboard at the football field. (MT)
- Parkland Acquisition – Explore acquisition of contiguous land to expand the park and address park needs as possible. (LT)
 - The electric utility property, east of the Community Center is currently used as overflow parking. If acquisition is possible a subdivision would be required to separate the sub-station area from the remainder of the property. Improved parking in this area would continue to serve overflow needs and would be more convenient for visitors to the soccer field and football field.
 - The residential properties east of the electric utility property and/or the properties at the southern terminus of South Pine Road could offer additional parkland. These properties are

attractive for facility development as they are above the floodway boundary and have sufficient area for grading that could possibly be developed with restrooms and concession buildings.

- The former miniature golf property on the west side of Cherry Street, opposite the Community Center offers multiple park-related opportunities. This parcel is approximately 0.6 acres and the majority of the parcel is above both the floodway and 100-year floodplain. There are numerous park enhancements that could be explored for this property if acquired to include:
 - Skate Park – There has been interest expressed in the community over the past decade for a skate park that is developed with ramps, rails, accommodations for free-style skate board activities, but a suitable location has not been found. The parcel on Cherry Street is in an open and visible location from the Borough streets and park drive. Ramps and other improvements could be accommodated due to the elevation of the parcel above the floodplain. The size of the parcel is compatible with skate park development.
 - Parking – The parking and circulation situation at the Community Center is not ideal and this parcel would offer additional parking that could serve the Community Center and park and could readily connect to the Community Center with an accessible route. The main vehicular entrance to the Community Center could be relocated to Cherry Street.
 - Restrooms / Concession Building – The location of the parcel above the floodplain provides the opportunity to develop a new, modern restroom/concession building to serve the park. The parcel is nearly central to the northern boundary of the park, and, while not specifically convenient to an existing facility, the location would offer a central location for these support facilities which are greatly desired by users.
 - Entry Sign – This property would provide a location for a new entry sign announcing the park and Community Center.

Action Plan for Recreation Park Revitalization

A strategic action plan is suggested to revitalize Recreation Park and enhance it as a community recreation asset. The following action steps are listed in priority order to implement the recommendations of this assessment. Action items may require additional planning, design and engineering, and permitting prior to undertaking enhancements.

- Highest Priority – Implement Safety Improvements as the highest priority. Refer to the list of Safety Improvements on pages 10 and 11 and define a schedule to address improvement listed.
- Second Highest Priority – Undertake ADA Improvements as the second highest priority. These improvements are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Short Term - Low Hanging Fruit – Undertake small, doable project that will have an immediate impact and benefit. These improvements should include initiatives that can be undertaken by municipal work forces without extensive investment of time and money. Potential Short Term - Low Hanging Fruit project are designated with a (ST) reference in the Park Elements that Need Improvement section of this report.
- Medium Term Improvements – Undertake park improvement projects that can be completed by municipal work forces, but will take time to coordinate and investment by the Borough. Include

costs for Medium Term Improvements in the annual capital budget. Medium Term Improvements are designated with a (MT) reference in the Park Elements that Need Improvement section of this report.

- Long Term Improvements – Undertake larger park improvement projects that will require planning, design, engineering, permitting, and significant investment on a long term basis. Begin the planning for these projects in the short term time-frame to include reaching out to potential partners; securing funding through community fundraising, donations, and apply for grants; and completing planning and design, engineering, and permitting. Planning and design may involve Site Development Drawings for small specific improvements or park master plans for holistic consideration of major improvements such as the ice skating / performance area or best use and configuration for acquisition parcels.

Long Term Improvements are designated with a (LT) reference in the Park Elements that Need Improvement section of this report. Long Term Improvements include holistic improvements to the playground area, court improvements, introduction of ice skating / performance area, maintenance / restroom / concession building enhancements. Strive to undertake the Long Term Improvements to Recreation Park in a holistic manner and not piecemeal in order to provide a sense of presence and accomplishment in the public view.

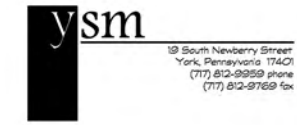
Lewistown Recreation Park Revitalization Concept Plan

Lewistown Borough, Mifflin County, PA

December 2015

Prepared for:
Lewistown Borough

Prepared By:



Legend	
	TREE
	WALKWAY
	PROPERTY LINE
	100-YR FLOODPLAIN
	FLOODWAY