

Chapter 6 RECREATIONAL RESOURCES and ACTIVITIES PLAN

Introduction

East Goshen has a large and diverse parks and recreation program, coupled with an impressive network of open space threading neighborhoods across the Township. Management of these lands, as well as provision of recreational programs and activities, is a vital component of the Township's services.

GOAL: Provide recreational programs, activities and facilities to meet the needs of residents.

Objective 6A Provide stewardship for the protection and effective utilization of Township owned land.

Objective 6B Develop and promote recreational activities for a diverse population.

Objective 6C Participate in and plan for regional recreation programs, activities, and facilities.

Objective 6D Use trails to provide recreational opportunities and/or link residential communities with East Goshen parks, open space and area merchants.

Recommendations

Objective 6A Provide stewardship for the protection and effective utilization of Township owned land.

- **Recommendation 6A-1** Review Township owned Parks and Open Space lands and develop a resource management maintenance program.

DISCUSSION:

The Township has an extensive system of park lands. How these lands are managed provides a critical early assessment of the Township's response to environmental indicators. As the County's Integrated Water Resources Plan, *Watersheds*, points out, there are several opportunities for the Township to show that management of land can be undertaken without negative impacts to water quality, species diversity, and local habitats.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 6A-1-1** Evaluate the current methods used to maintain Township-owned parks and open space lands.
- 6A-1-2** Develop a management maintenance program to reduce environmental impact.
- 6A-1-3** Publish the management maintenance program in the Township newsletter and on the Township website as a way for the Township to "lead by example".
- 6A-1-4** Implement the management maintenance program.

Objective 6B Develop and promote recreational activities for a diverse population.

- **Recommendation 6B-1** Evaluate existing recreation programs annually and provide financial and staff support to enhance programs.

DISCUSSION:

East Goshen has a wide array of recreational programs available to Township residents, though many of these programs are geared toward children and families.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 6B-1-1** Continue to pursue a range of programming suitable for all age groups and economic means.
- 6B-1-2** Implement an evaluation system through the Township website for program feedback.

Objective 6C Participate in and plan for regional recreation programs, activities, and facilities.

- **Recommendation 6C-1** Continue to coordinate with West Chester area athletic directors and parks and recreation directors to evaluate and consider developing regional recreation programs for the West Chester Region.

DISCUSSION:

Given the Township's current programming and facilities, the ability to expand participation and programming outside of the Township is a valuable element for the purposes of increasing the use of sports programs and field trips. Coordination among West Chester area municipalities is a critical means to pool municipal recreation resources and work cooperatively to create a regional approach to recreation and cultural programming, either as a separate group or in combination with the region's colleges and universities (notably Immaculata University and West Chester University).

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 6C-1-1** Meet with the West Chester area athletic and parks directors to coordinate regional programs and activities.

Objective 6D Use trails to provide recreational opportunities and/or link residential communities with East Goshen parks, open space and area merchants.

- **Recommendation 6D-1** Use short trail segments to link significant destinations within the Township.

DISCUSSION:

The Township contains a number of separate neighborhood entities that are not directly linked to each other. Through the use of short links or trails some of these entities can be joined together to allow for greater movement. Additionally, links can be created to allow access to local businesses within the Township. Examples would include the proposed bridge from Bow Tree to the Plank House and a path/walk along Boot Road toward the Shopping Center.

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 6D-1-1** Investigate adding connector routes between neighborhoods and/or neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- 6D-1-2** Install connector routes as demand requires and funding becomes available.
- **Recommendation 6D-2** Continue to explore the addition of connector routes along major roads within the Township.

DISCUSSION:

The Township has an established trail network through the Township Park, located on both sides of Paoli Pike, and connecting to the Plank House and Blacksmith Shop along East Boot Road. According to the 2001 Township Resident Survey, there is support for additional trails in the Township, as 59% of residents indicated it was at least somewhat likely they would use such trails. In addition, 50% of residents indicated that additional taxation support of trails was supportable, with 73% support among those residents who were at least somewhat likely to use the trails. This support indicates the Township should continue to explore possible trail locations. Given that residents did not favor trails “in their back yards,” it is recommended that any additional trails be confined to along major roads or major open space areas.

Any trail analysis should consider ways to link adjacent residential neighborhoods, the Township’s existing parks, and locations for existing and future employers, commercial retail outlets, and other public facilities, such as East Goshen Elementary School, the Township Building, and the East High School/Fugett Middle School complex. Greenways should be included as potential links. Consideration should be given to integrating components of environmental design into any trail recommendations so as to minimized the impact on natural resources. The recommendations should also consider access and use of paths for alternative transportation for bicycle as well as pedestrian traffic. Finally, consideration should be given to potential connections to available regional trails connecting through adjoining municipalities.

Examples of possible connector locations would include along Route 352 (North Chester Road) fro the Blacksmith Shop south to Rose Hill (East Strasburg Road), Paoli Pike from Ellis Lane to Goshenville, and a bridge over Ridley Creek on the Ashbridge open space.

In addition to tax revenues discussed above, other sources of funding may be available through grants from the Chester County Parks and Recreation Department, through enhancements programs as defined by PennDOT, and through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).

ACTIONS NEEDED:

- 6D-2-1** Continue to investigate connectors along major roads to link significant destinations.
- 6D-2-2** Implement connectors when demand warrants and funding becomes available.
- 6D-2-3** Seek out and apply for funding and/or grants available from external sources when projects are identified.

REFERENCES:

- A Toolbox for Managing Change in Chester County – Volume I.* Chester County Planning Commission. 1997.
- A Toolbox for Managing Change in Chester County – Volume II.* Chester County Planning Commission. 1999.

Watersheds, An Integrated Water Resources Plan for Chester County, Pennsylvania and its Watersheds, prepared by the Chester County Water Resources Authority, West Chester, Pennsylvania. 2002.

Linking Landscapes, A Plan for the Protected Open Space Network in Chester County, Pennsylvania, prepared by the Chester County Planning Commission, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 2002.