



All For One, Fun For All!

Bethlehem's Parks & Recreation Master Plan



Town of Bethlehem, New York Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Final Presentation October 14, 2015



Agenda

- ❑ Planning Process Summary
- ❑ Key Issues Matrix
- ❑ Key Issues Summary
- ❑ Facilities and Amenities Improvement Themes
- ❑ Level of Service Analysis
- ❑ Inventory Assessment Analysis
- ❑ Recommendations Goals
- ❑ Recommendation Objectives
- ❑ Q & A



Planning Process Summary

- ❑ Community Input
 - ❑ Community-wide public meetings
 - ❑ Focus Groups
 - ❑ Stakeholder Meeting
 - ❑ MindMixer / mySidewalk
 - ❑ Survey – Conducted by FRIENDS of Bethlehem Parks & Recreation
- ❑ Facility Inventory
- ❑ Level of Service Analysis
- ❑ Assessment and Analysis
- ❑ Needs Assessment
- ❑ Operational and Marketing Analysis
- ❑ Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan



Key Issues Matrix

| 2014 Data Source | Qualitative Data | | | | Quantitative Data | | | Consultant's Analysis and Professional Expertise | |
|--|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------------|--|---|
| | Consultant Team | Staff Input | Public Input | Existing Documents | FRIENDS Survey | Town Data | Facility Assessment/LOS | Preliminary Recommendations | |
|  <p>Key Issue - Rating Scale</p> <p>a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed</p> | | | | | | | |  <p><i>The Leading Edge in Parks, Recreation And Open Space Consulting</i></p>  <p><i>All For One, Fun For All!</i> Bethlehem's Parks & Recreation Master Plan</p> | |
| Organizational | | | | | | | | | |
| Need better marketing and communication of activities and facilities | a | b | a | | | a | | | Develop Marketing Plan to improve awareness and communication |
| Increase staffing for maintenance | a | a | a | | | | | a | Hire and train staff for current and future parks maintenance demand |
| Increase staffing for programming and future facilities operations | a | a | a | | | | | | Hire and train staff for current and future programming and facility usage demand |
| Review current field allocation policy and update | a | a | | a | | | a | | Review existing field allocation policy and industry best practices to update current policy |
| Programs and Service Delivery | | | | | | | | | |
| Need more programming for families, teens, seniors | a | b | a | | | b | | | Expand program opportunities for teens, families, seniors |
| Increase programs in wellness/fitness, cultural, special needs | a | a | a | | | b | | | Expand programs in wellness/fitness, cultural, special needs |
| Increase number of Music and Arts events in parks | a | b | b | | | a | | | Expand neighborhood & community special event opportunities |
| Increase aquatic opportunities (pool, river front) | a | a | a | | | a | | | Review current schedule to maximize usage and meet demand |
| Develop outdoor/nature-based/environmental program offerings | a | b | a | | | a | | | Look for opportunities to offer additional non-sports programming |
| Explore opportunities to develop non-traditional sports programs | a | b | a | | | a | | | Based on demand and trends consider developing pickle ball, disc golf and archery |
| Facilities and Amenities | | | | | | | | | |
| Maintain and improve existing facilities | a | a | a | | | a | a | a | Continue to implement existing plans & Master Plan |
| Renovate and update Elm Avenue Park Pool Complex | a | a | a | | | a | a | a | Make renovations and update to accommodate families with individuals with Special Needs and the general public |
| Work with the Bike and Ped Committee to identify connections using the current priority network | a | a | a | | | a | a | a | Continue to develop greenways and expand to connect neighborhoods to parks with the Bike and Ped Plan |
| Meet future population demands through additional recreation facilities | a | a | a | | | a | a | b | Future facility expansion should include multipurpose use facility |
| Explore outdoor amphitheater / special event venue | a | b | a | | | a | | b | Future facility expansion should consider additional entertainment venues |
| Explore opportunity to develop Mountain Biking Trails | a | b | a | | | b | | a | Working with the community look for opportunities on current public lands |
| Explore opportunities for on leash dogs in select town parks | a | b | a | | | a | | b | Working with the community and Animal Control to develop guidelines |
| Make needed repairs and updates to the Henry Hudson Park | a | a | a | a | | a | a | a | Find funding options to make repairs identified in the Shoreline Stabilization Study and explore construction of a kayak launch |
| Update ADA Transition Plan | a | | | | | | | a | Using the Town's current Transition Plan and develop a P&R specific plan |
| Explore the establishment of network of Community Gardens | b | b | | | | | | b | Working with community develop community gardens |
| Explore adding a separate area for small dogs | b | b | | | | b | | b | Based on demand look for opportunities to provide separate spaces for large and small dogs |
| Explore the addition of another picnic shelter to meet demand | a | a | a | | | | | a | New park development and renovations should include additional picnic shelters |
| Make repairs to the Fit Trail and replace outdated fitness equipment | a | a | a | | | a | | a | Explore options to make repairs to the Fit Trail and to replace the current fitness equipment with fitness stations at points along the trail |
| Explore adding a Trail System at Elm Avenue Park | b | b | b | | | a | | b | As Elm Avenue Parks is redesigned and renovated, explore options to add a circular trail around the perimeter of the park |
| Replace the playground at Elm Avenue Park | a | a | a | a | | a | a | a | Replace the wooden playground at Elm Avenue Park with an industry standard playground. Engage the community in it's design and installation. |
| As opportunities arise look at adding additional park land | b | b | b | b | | b | | b | |
| Explore Shade options | a | b | a | | | a | | a | Explore options to add shade to parks and facilities either through tree plantings or shade structures |
| Level of Service | | | | | | | | | |
| Identify gaps that are in need of service based LOS | a | | a | | | | | a | Consider geographic barriers when looking at future facilities and services |
| Verify other Service Providers are not filling gaps | a | b | | | | | | a | Continue to map HOA and other service provider amenities that fill service gaps |
| Develop LOS criteria for catchment areas and acreage by population | a | | | | | | | a | Using the NRPA 2015 Field Report as a benchmark, adopt LOS criteria for the Town |
| Finance | | | | | | | | | |
| Utilize equitable user fees | b | b | a | b | | a | | | Develop Cost Recovery Policy |
| Pursue grant opportunities | a | a | a | a | | a | | | Explore alternative funding opportunities |
| Explore funding options that provide dedication revenue for parks and recreation | a | a | a | | | | | | Impact fees, tax levy, in lieu funds..... |

Key Issues Summary

Organizational:

- Need better marketing and communication of activities and facilities.
- Staffing appropriately for programming and future facilities operations.
- Provide maintenance staffing to keep up with the quality of service and demand.
- Review current athletic field allocation policy and update.

Key Issues Summary

Programs and Service Delivery:

- Increase programming for families, seniors, and teens.
- Increase programs in wellness/fitness, cultural, and special needs.
- Increase the number of art and music events in parks.
- Develop outdoor/adventure-based/environmental program offerings.
- Increase aquatic opportunities (pool and river front).
- Explore opportunities to develop non-traditional sports programs.

Key Issues Summary

Facilities and Amenities:

- Maintain and improve existing facilities.
- Renovate and update Elm Avenue Park Pool Complex.
- Develop connectivity of neighborhoods and parks
- Meet future population demands through additional recreation facilities.
- Make needed repairs and updates to the Henry Hudson Park.
- Explore opportunities to develop mountain biking trails.

Key Issues Summary

- Explore an outdoor amphitheater/special events venue.
- Explore opportunities for on leash dog access to select parks.
- Update ADA Transition Plan.
- Explore the establishment of a network of community gardens.
- Make repairs to the Fit Trail and replace outdated fitness equipment.
- Replace the playground at Elm Avenue Park.
- Consider redesign of Elm Avenue Park.
- Explore shade options in parks and at athletic fields.

Key Issues Summary

Level of Service (LOS):

- Identify gaps that are in need of service based LOS.
- Verify other service providers are not filling gaps in service.
- Develop LOS criteria for catchment areas and acreage by population.

Key Issues Summary

Finance:

- Employ equitable user fees.
- Explore funding options that provide dedicated revenue for parks and recreation.
- Pursue grant opportunities.

Facilities and Amenity Improvement Themes

- 1. Connecting People to Parks**
(connectivity to and within)
- 2. Connecting People to People**
(cultural/historical/meeting spaces)
- 3. Connecting People to the Environment**
(river/ adventure sports/ nature)



Inventory Assessment Summary

- Most parks are in excellent condition; maintenance is generally great but a few locations have aged significantly.
- Elm Avenue Park pools, playground, office building, and maintenance structures need major repairs, upgrades, or replacement.
- Turf throughout the park system is of high quality, with some attention needed to help with drainage and erosion in playing field areas and non-playing field areas.
- There is a good variety of neighborhood and regional parks throughout the Town, as well as number of alternative service providers.
- Most parks do not incorporate cultural or historical aspects of the community, beyond specialty parks.
- The dog park is heavily used and exhibits wear and tear.

Recommendations

- Primary Focus on:
 - Maintaining
 - Sustaining
 - Improving

- Priority Timeframe
 - Short-term (up to 3 years)
 - Mid-term (4-6 years)
 - Long-term (7-10 years)



Goals

1. Continue to Improve Organizational Efficiencies
2. Increase Financial Opportunities
3. Continue to Improve Programs and Service Delivery
4. Continue to improve Facilities and Amenities

Organizational Efficiencies

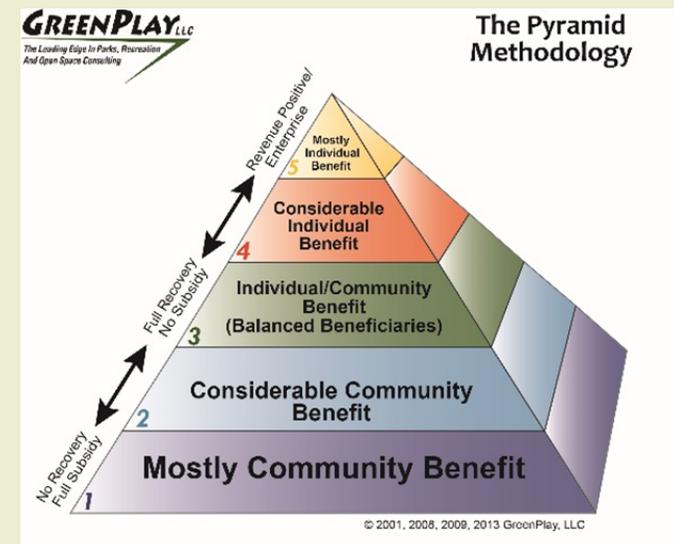
- Maintain and increase a level of service quality to citizens
- Enhance and improve internal and external communication regarding department activities and services
- Provide improved signage Town-wide to make it easier for patrons to find and use parks, facilities, and trails

Organizational Efficiencies

- Improve access to athletic fields
- Increase appropriate partnerships and collaborations within the community
- Staff appropriately to meet current demand and maintain established levels of service

Financial Opportunities

- Consider implementing a cost recovery and pricing policy
- Pursue grant and philanthropic opportunities
- Pursue opportunities for a dedicated revenue source for parks and recreation



Improve Service Delivery

- Explore opportunities to increase recreational activities based on demand and trends
- Explore opportunities to increase the number of events based on demand and trends
- Explore offering more non-athletic and non-traditional programs
- Explore increasing aquatic opportunities

Improve Infrastructure

- Maintain and improve existing facilities and amenities
- Expand greenways and trails connectivity
- Meet current and future population demands through new land acquisition and redesign of current facilities
- Develop additional aquatic opportunities

Improve Infrastructure

- Develop new amenities at existing parks based on level of service analysis
- Develop individual park master plans
- Continue to improve ADA accessibility at all facilities

Thank You For Your Time and Interest!



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Daniel P. Biggs, RLA
Direct: 463-4400 x5517
biggsd@wseinc.com

Questions?
Your Project Team

Art Thatcher, CPRP
Direct: 757-592-3103
artt@greenplayllc.com

Tom Donlin, CPRE
Direct 443-995-9079
tomd@greenplayllc.com