

# PLAY FOR ALL

2022-2031



# LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

# Acknowledgements

---

## Board of Supervisors

James McCartney, Chair  
Fredric Weiss, Vice-Chair  
Dan Grenier, Secretary  
Suzanne Blundi, Treasurer  
John Lewis, Supervisor

## Park and Recreation Board

Douglas Krauss, Chair  
Michael D. Brody, Vice Chair  
Kim Rock, Secretary  
Dennis Wysocki, Member  
David Malinowski, Member  
Robert G. LaBar, Member  
Michael Blundi, Member

## Needs Assessment

### Volunteers

Parish Birla  
Danielle Stinson  
Noelle Codispoti  
George Schlieben  
Gordon Workman  
Kim Rhodes

## Pennsbury School District

Dr. Thomas Smith, Superintendent

## Organizations

Environmental Advisory Council  
Girls Scouts  
Boy Scouts  
Friends of Five Mile Woods  
Township Boards  
The Veterans Committee  
The 9/11 Garden of Reflection  
Foundation  
The LMT Seniors  
Program Participants  
Pool Members  
Pickleball  
Yardley Makefield Soccer  
LM Football Association  
Veterans Committee  
Pennsbury Athletic Association  
Yardley Makefield Tennis  
Lady Elite Falcons  
Lower Bucks Lacrosse  
LMT Swim/Dive Team

## Township Staff

Kurt M. Ferguson  
Township Manager  
  
Monica Tierney, CPRE.  
Director of Parks and Recreation  
  
Jim Majewski  
Director of Community Development  
  
Greg Hucklebridge  
Public Works Director  
  
Lynn Todd, CPRP.  
P&R Operations Manager  
  
Elizabeth Lawson, CYSA.  
P&R Program Manager  
  
Kathy Howell  
P&R Membership Coordinator

## Consultant



Toole Recreation Planning

Ann M. Toole, CPRP, CPP  
Certified Parks and Recreation Professional  
+1(267)261-7989 | Doylestown, PA

## Table of Contents

<b>Prologue</b>	1		Benchmarks	40
<b>Plan Summary</b>	4		Conclusion	41
Public Engagement	5		<b>Community Needs Assessment</b>	44
Level of Service	6		About Lower Makefield Township	44
Key Recommendations and Actions	7		Township Priorities	51
<b>Parks and Recreation System</b>	10		Values, Vision, Mission and Goals	60
The Pride of Lower Makefield Township	10		<b>Goals and Recommendations</b>	65
Parks, Facilities and Bike Paths	11		Protect Green Space	65
Parks and Recreation Service Area	12		Play for All	66
Recreation and Open Space Map	13		Connect Bike Paths	71
Pennsbury School District	14		Provide Opportunities	72
Recreation Facilities	14		Continued Excellence	75
Parks Classification	15		<b>Plan Implementation</b>	80
Level of Service	20		Strategy	80
Recreation Programming	21		Play for all	82
Organization, Management and Maintenance	24		Year 1 Action Plan	86
Organization Chart	26		Goals	87
Township Park and Recreation Planning	27		<b>Moving Forward</b>	94
Personnel	30			
Maintenance	36			
Risk Management and Safety	37			
Budget	38			

# Prologue

---

## The Play Precedence

Play is fundamental to the human experience. It is an irreplaceable means of expression that promotes health, education, dignity, and maximized human potential. This became even more evident because of the COVID-19 Pandemic when parks served as a refuge for many for their mental health and well-being. Recreation services provided opportunity for residents to continue to connect and play.

Play is so serious that the United Nations set forth an international treaty defining the rights of children to relax, to play, and to join a wide range of leisure activities. The treaty states that:

*Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to*

*participate freely in cultural life and the arts. That governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life. They shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational, and leisure activity<sup>1</sup>.*



---

<sup>1</sup> United Nations. (2012) Convention **on the Rights of a Child.** [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children \(unicef.org.au\)](#). Accessed April 1, 2022.

## Play for All

Kids who play are healthy, happy, creative, and intelligent. They learn about teamwork, fine motor skills, balance, and mindfulness. Often adults believe that play is only for kids. This is not the case. Adults who play continue to enjoy the same benefits.

**93% of the respondents to our public opinion survey for this plan stated that parks and recreation are important or very important to the quality of life in Lower Makefield**

Lower Makefield Township strives to meet the play needs of *all* residents along with the health benefits they deliver. Lower Makefield Township is a community that embraces play at all stages of life from the young to the young at heart.

The benefits of playing include improved brain functioning, managing stress, creative thinking, childlike exuberance, creating a sense of community, reducing isolation, improved relationships, and laughing more often. The Parks and Recreation Department introduces the benefits of play to our community through our parks, recreation facilities, programs, and nature-based public spaces.

## Parks and Recreation Value

Parks and recreation have three values that make them essential services to our Township:

- Economic value
- Health and environmental benefits
- Social importance

Just as water, sewer, and public safety are essential public services, parks are also vital to the quality of life in Lower Makefield Township. They provide health benefits and contribute to the economic and environmental well-being of the residents. Desirable communities like



Lower Makefield Township have a robust, active system of parks, recreation, and open space that improve.

**Play for All** advances and celebrates our community's parks and promote the health and well-being of our residents, our economy, and our environment.



# Parks and Recreation Plan Summary

---

For Lower Makefield Township residents, the Township's parks, recreation, and trails play an elemental role in providing and maintaining a wide variety of valuable facilities and services that contribute to their quality of life. To do this in a manner that is in alignment with the community's needs, the Township employed a planning process that involves the public and delivers realistic goals for the future. This Parks and Recreation Plan assessed community recreation needs, the current parks and recreation system, and anticipated future conditions to set an operational framework for the Township over the next ten years.

## Planning Process

Lower Makefield Township developed this plan as a collaborative process with Township Management, Parks and Recreation Department, Planning Department, Parks and Recreation Board, a citizens advisory group, and a professional parks and recreation consulting firm, Toole Recreation Planning. The project included:

### Lower Makefield Township by the Numbers

Population: 33,180  
Area: 18.3 square miles  
Number of Parks & Green Spaces: 21  
Parkland: 820 acres  
Trails: 25 miles  
Annual Investment: \$65 per capita  
Ratio of Township Budget: 12%  
Cost Recovery: 75% of budget  
Grants since 2017: \$1,260,519

Field tours of the parks and recreation system and open space

Assessment of recreation programs, organization and staffing, maintenance, financing, and support

- Needs assessment of the community regarding parks, recreation, trails, and open space
- Public engagement
- Development of vision, mission, goals, recommendations
- Strategic plan

## Public Engagement

The robust public engagement process resulted in more than 2,500 citizens providing their ideas, concerns, and suggestions for seizing opportunities to improve parks and recreation. These included:

- Public opinion survey generated 1,926 responses
- Surveys with Sports Leagues and LMT Seniors
- Interviews with 25+ key stakeholders
- Focus groups with Citizens Advisory Group and Sports Leagues (two)

- Work Sessions with Township management and the Planning and Parks and Recreation Departments (six)
- Parks and Recreation Board Meetings (four)
- Public Meetings (two)
- Extensive use of social media via Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter

## Findings

Overall, the community values the Township's parks, recreation facilities, and open space. The rural agrarian charm of the Township is a great source of community pride. The community views the parks and recreation system as a key asset. The most important finding was that while the parks and recreation system receives highly favorable ratings, the community needs more facilities and services. Furthermore, residents want "something for everyone." Finding the right balance of open space conservation and active recreation is vital. In achieving this balance, a mix of additional athletic facilities along with a variety of facilities for walking, socializing, fitness, public art, connections with nature, conservation of natural resources, and safe places is needed. The key is balance which launched the "Play for All" theme.





Residents identified the following priorities:

- Add more ball fields and/or turf fields, lighting, and indoor recreation space
- Provide more diverse recreation facilities
- Protect green space
- Expand the trail system
- Increase indoor recreation space
- Maintain all facilities to a high quality
- Balance active and passive recreation
- Ensure that parks and programs are accessible and comply with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)
- Continue to provide operational excellence and financial support

While segments of the community support and advocate for very specific and discrete interests including ball fields, nature, and diversifying facilities to serve more residents, these groups all share the same common vision: *A top notch parks and recreation system that works for all and makes our community a great place to live.* This plan urges these discrete interest groups to come together on park and recreation planning projects for the good of the community at large. Through collaboration, it will be possible

to address these priorities and to improve all our facilities as recommended by this plan.

## Level of Service

Lower Makefield Township has invested successfully in open space conservation, parks, facilities, and trails. The Level of Service that the Township has established is 23

acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Based on the community needs that emerged in this plan, that Level of Service is recommended to be 28 acres of land per 1,000 residents based on the anticipated population 35,500

by 2030. The immediate

recommendation is to seek another 80 to 100 acres in the immediate to short term and an additional 80 to 100-acres before remaining open space is lost to development. Ideally each of these 80 to 100-acre recommendations should be configured as single sites to create a community park with a mix of active and passive facilities including

---

*“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don’t play together, the club won’t be worth a dime” - Babe Ruth*

---

natural features to serve the community optimally and conserve our natural resources.

Programs and services should continue to emphasize service for active healthy lifestyles and connections to nature for people of all ages, interests, cultures, and abilities.

## Key Recommendations and Actions

To address the issues and opportunities identified as key, this **Parks and Recreation Plan** constructs a vision and action plan for parks, recreation, open space, and trails over the next decade. Public input, partnerships, and the assessment of existing resources guided the development of the following strategy. It will help to achieve the vision and goals for improving the quality of life in Lower Makefield Township through parks, recreation, trails, and open space. These steps require time, funding, creativity, a strong sense of collaboration and goodwill and immediate to short term action in 2022-2025

### 1. **Protect as much of the remaining open space as possible.**

Work toward securing 80 to 100-acres of land for a community park. Seek potential partners among willing landowners to join forces on this.

### 2. **Provide additional capacity for athletic facilities.**

- Update the Snipes master plan and develop this 38-acre site as a community park with a mix of active and passive recreation facilities and conservation of identified natural features worthy of protection. Engage the public in updating the plan.



- Provide Caiola Park with ball field lighting.
- Line practice areas for sports at Memorial Park.
- Analyze and provide solutions to improve Macclesfield Park. Use a team of traffic engineers, landscape architects, and sports field specialists to evaluate circulation, parking, safety, turf conditions, layout, and field capacity. Develop an action plan for solutions.

**3. Upgrade existing parks and recreation facilities.**

Other improvements include Memorial Park expansion, restroom upgrades at the Pool at LMT, and expansion of indoor recreation facilities.

**4. Continue to advance the bicycle and sidewalk systems.**

Continue with trails that are funded and the Trail Maintenance Plan through 2024. Plan and design additional trail segments with “shovel ready” designs to capture grant funding from newly established federal funding.

**5. Keep the parks safe, clean, functional, and pleasing.**

Continue to provide maintenance support for the parks and recreation system. Explore software for maintenance workload

tracking and management.

**6. Expand recreation programming in accordance with capacity and partnerships.**

Follow through with outreach on this plan to involve the Pennsbury School District and neighboring municipalities to engage in a discussion on how to serve tweens and teens during non-school hours with a variety of opportunities. These include music, art, drama, dance, fitness, nature, STEM, and sports. Continue to support the partnering groups as the main providers of recreation programs and events.

While this **Parks and Recreation Plan** lists a comprehensive set of recommendations and improvements, the strategy above sets forth a plan to move ahead by using a mix of public and private funding and support.

As Lower Makefield Township evolves and the needs, interests, and lifestyles of our resident’s change, our parks, recreation, and bicycle and sidewalk network system must go forward, stay relevant, and be the best part of everyone’s day.



BWags Photography

# Parks and Recreation System

---

## The Pride of Lower Makefield Township

Lower Makefield Township is known for its high quality of life, an excellent school district, and an enviable 802-acre parks and recreation system with facilities that include athletic fields, an award winning golf course, and aquatics center, community center, and trail system with 26.4 miles that's growing. Situated in Bucks County, the Township's unique natural landscape features – the Delaware River, creeks, greenways, and farmland provide exceptional recreation opportunities that have been incorporated into its parks and open space.

Since 2017, the Parks and Recreation Department has increased recreation programming via interesting and diverse opportunities year-round for all residents from the young to the young at heart. Programming is a key element of the Township's Parks and

Recreation System. This chapter provides an overview of the Township's parks and recreation service area, current parks and recreation facilities, programs and services, maintenance, organization, and financing.



### Lower Makefield Township Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Bike Paths

Name of Facility	Lot Size	Usable Area	Soccer	Football	Baseball	Softball	Basketball	Sand Volleyball	Tennis	Playground	Paved Trails	Unpaved Trails	Open Fields	Pavillion	Parking	Lights
Measurement	Acres	Acres	Field	Field	Field	Field	Court	Court	Court		Miles	Miles	Acres		Stalls	
Kingdom	25	12				1	1		4	1		0.1	0.4	1	260	Yes
Stoddart Fields	6	6			3			1						1	45	No
Greg Caiola Baseball Complex	14	10			2										100	No
Fred Allan Softball Complex	23	19				3				1	0.3		0.5	1	120	No
Macclesfield Park (Phase One & Two)	95	79	12	3	3			4		1	1			2	600	Yes
Memorial Park	64	57	2			1	2	2	3	1	1.7		9	2	138	No
Veterans Square Park	3	3								1	0.1		0.6		50	No
Heacock Meadows Facilities	5	5					1		2	1						No
Lower Makefield Township Dog Park	4	3											0.4		30	No
Peake Farm	2	2								1						No
Yardley Hunt / Schuyler Drive	1	1							4						12	No
Yardley Hunt / Revere Road	2	2							3						12	No
Community Center	12	10													79	n/a
Bexley Orchard Recreation Area	2	2											1.56			
LMT Multi-Use Bikepaths											21	4				n/a
<b>Current Totals</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>12.46</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1446</b>	
Makefield Highlands	181	162													184	No
Snipes Athletic Fields	36	36														
Patterson Farm Available	38	35														
Woodside Road Multi-Use Bike Path											0.7					n/a
Community Trail Multi-Use Bike Path											0.6					n/a
<b>Park Area Totals</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>12.46</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1790</b>	
Five Mile Woods Preserve	295	292										4.5			50	No
Katharine Burke Nature Preserve	30	26										0.5				No
Penns Field Woods	20	19														
Jennings Open Space	3	3										0.1				
<b>Nature Area Totals</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Total Overall</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1840</b>	<b>0</b>

## Parks and Recreation Service Area

Lower Makefield Township's service area for the Master Plan is the 18 square miles surrounding Yardley and bordered by the Delaware River, Morrisville Borough, and the Townships of Upper Makefield, Newtown, Middletown, and Falls. It includes mostly residential development, along with some commercial and agricultural land uses.

## Parks

The map on the next page depicts the parks, schools, and open space. Lower Makefield Township has 857 acres of parkland. This equals 25 acres of parkland per 1,000 population, and 6.6% of the Township land area. The 22 parks range in size from 1.5 acres to 295 acres. Nine parks have six acres or less. They are designed to support active and passive recreation, preserve, and enhance natural resources, improve public health and strengthen our local economy. The sites collectively provide indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and a variety of amenities to support park use.

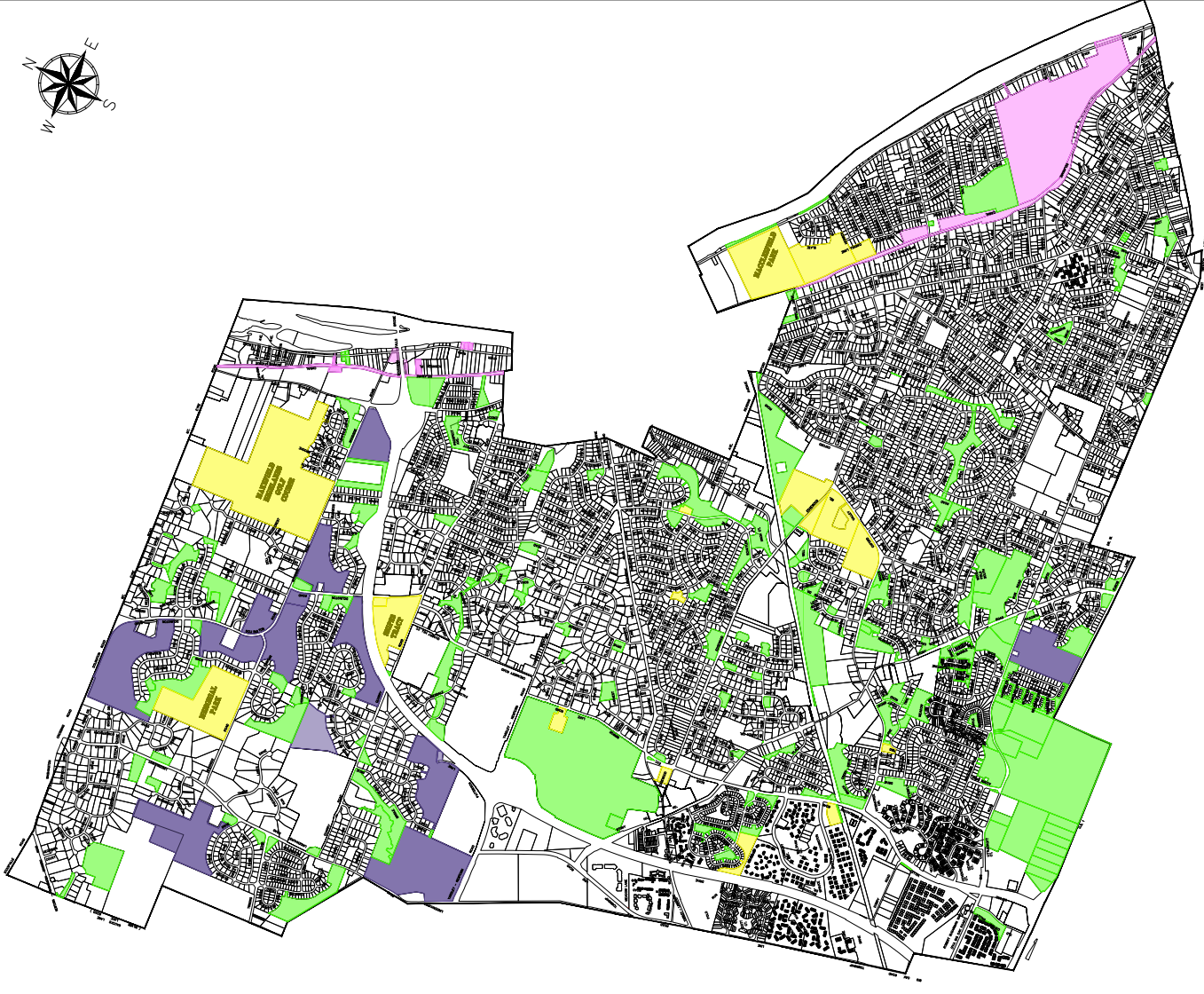
The Township has 26.4 miles of bike paths with another five miles planned. The system will ultimately be connected with safe places to walk and ride a bike. Bike paths are a priority of the public.

It is important to note that the cyclists do not have an organized constituency group, yet bike paths appeared in the public opinion planned. The system will ultimately be connected with safe places survey as a top preference.







## Township Property

Lower Makefield has a total of 1,765 acres of land designated as Township property, County property, and State property, which equals about 54 acres per 1,000 population, and 15.2% of the Township land area.



**LEGEND**

-  FARMLAND PRESERVATION
-  TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE
-  TOWNSHIP RECREATION FACILITIES
-  STATE & COUNTY PROPERTY

**MASTER PLAN 2022**  
**RECREATION & OPEN SPACE**  
**LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP**  
**BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**



**REMINGTON  
& VERNICK  
ENGINEERS**  
CORPORATION, PA. 18842  
922 JAVETTE STREET  
WEB SITE ADDRESS: WWW.RVE.COM  
ENGINEERING LICENSE:



## Open Space

About 1,100 acres of land in Lower Makefield remain unprotected and vulnerable to development. Given the current real estate climate and development pressure, there is little time left to preserve what open space remains. Complicating this problem is the escalating price of land.

## Pennsbury School District

The Pennsbury School District allows community recreational use of its land and sports facilities after the needs of the School District for its own programs are met. The School District is older with facilities that cannot meet all public needs, such as for athletic fields and others in need of revitalization, such as the indoor swimming pool.



## Recreation Facilities

In addition to its parkland, Lower Makefield Township also provides a variety of recreation facilities including sports fields and courts, play features, and picnic areas, as well as amenities that support park comfort and use, such as restrooms, pavilions, picnic tables, and seating. Five Mile Woods is a nature preserve. Trails are popular among the residents wanting to experience nature.

In addition to the customary facilities found in municipal parks, Lower Makefield has facilities that help define the character of this community. They include:



- **The *Garden of Reflection* 9-11 Memorial**, situated in Memorial Park, was created to remember and honor our loved ones and all 2,973 killed on September 11, 2001. This memorial journey leads from sorrowful reminders of tragedy and grief towards luminous symbols of hope, peace, and celebration of life.



- **The Pool at LMT** provides recreational, competitive, and aquatics programs in a beautiful setting where pool goes enjoy hours of time relaxing.
- **Community Center** is an indoor facility that is home to the LMT Seniors and serves as a year-round venue for recreation programs and activities.



- **Makefield Highlands** is the Township's award-winning golf course. In addition to top-notch golf, the public golf course helped to preserve open space.

## Park Classification

As a means of organizing the public open space facilities found in Lower Makefield Township, the park areas are classified according to a hierarchy that provides for a comprehensive system of interrelated parks. All parks can be placed into specific categories or classifications. Some parks that meet neighborhood needs and have specialized amenities could be placed into more than one classification but are placed in the classification that meets the broadest definition.

## Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks serve a variety of age groups within a limited area or neighborhood. They range in size from 1 to 15 acres and generally serve residents within a quarter- to half-mile radius. A neighborhood park typically includes areas for active recreation activities, such as field games, court games, and playgrounds. Passive recreation activities may include walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking. Facilities are generally unlit, not used for league play, and off-street parking is not recommended.

- Veteran’s Square
- Matrix Property
- Heacock Meadows
- Makefield Glen/Heacock Field
- Peake Farm
- Yardley Hund: Schuyler Drive and Revere Rd.

### Community Park

Community parks range in size from 16 to 99 acres and generally serve a user area of one to two miles in radius. These parks may contain significant athletic complexes, aquatic amenities, walking paths, picnic areas and various other active and passive amenities depending on community needs and site suitability. Ideally, they provide a mix of passive and active recreation facilities designed for broad outdoor recreation use and connecting to nature as a welcoming public space for all ages, genders, abilities, cultures, and ethnicities.

- Memorial Park

### Special Use Areas

Special use areas cover a broad range of specialized park and recreation facilities, often with a single major use. Golf courses, historical sites, community center sites, pools, and other facilities designed for unique

purposes fall into this category. These parks may also include neighborhood or community park elements, but with amenities that have an appeal to visitors Township wide. The NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) defines these parks as historical areas, nature centers, marinas, golf courses, zoos, conservatories, arboretums, arenas, amphitheaters, plazas, or community squares. There are no specific standards for size or acreage since each site will vary. Special use areas may carry a double classification.

- Community Center
- The Pool at LMT
- Makefield Highlands
- Dog Park

### Sports Complexes

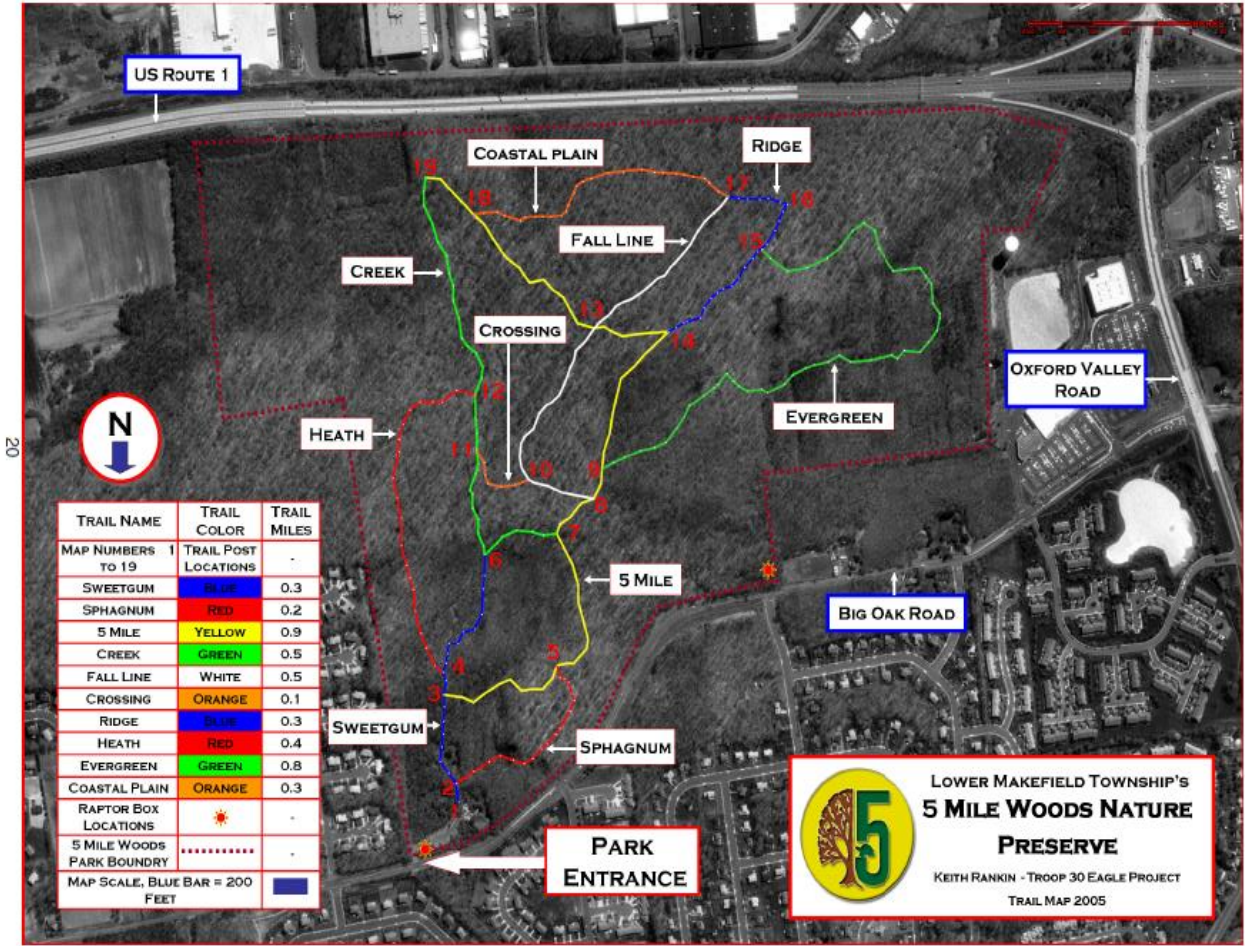
Sports complexes are facilities that are designed to include athletic fields and game courts with supporting facilities, such as parking, seating, concessions and storage for athletic competition, skill development and spectators.

- Macclesfield Park
- Greg Caiola Park
- Fred Allen Softball Complex

### Nature Preserves

Preserves are areas of high-quality plant or animal populations, natural communities, landscapes, or ecosystems that contribute to the biodiversity and environmental health of Lower Makefield Township and the region. Efforts should be made to protect and manage significant natural resources in the preserve through stewardship and best-practice management that do not degrade the resources present. Opportunities for the public enjoyment of natural resource-based recreation and environmental education may be provided that are compatible with the protection and enhancement of the Preserve and the nature experience.

- Five Mile Woods
- Katherine Burke Nature Preserve



## Bike Paths

Lower Makefield Township has 26.4 miles of paved bike paths along with five miles of unpaved trails with another five miles in the planning stage. A **bike path** is a **bikeway** separated from motorized traffic and dedicated to **cycling** or shared with pedestrians or other non-motorized users. The maps on the following pages present Lower Makefield Township's Bike and Sidewalk System. Bike paths are a priority of the public. It is important to note that the cyclists do not have an organized constituency group, yet bike paths appeared in the public opinion survey as a top preference.

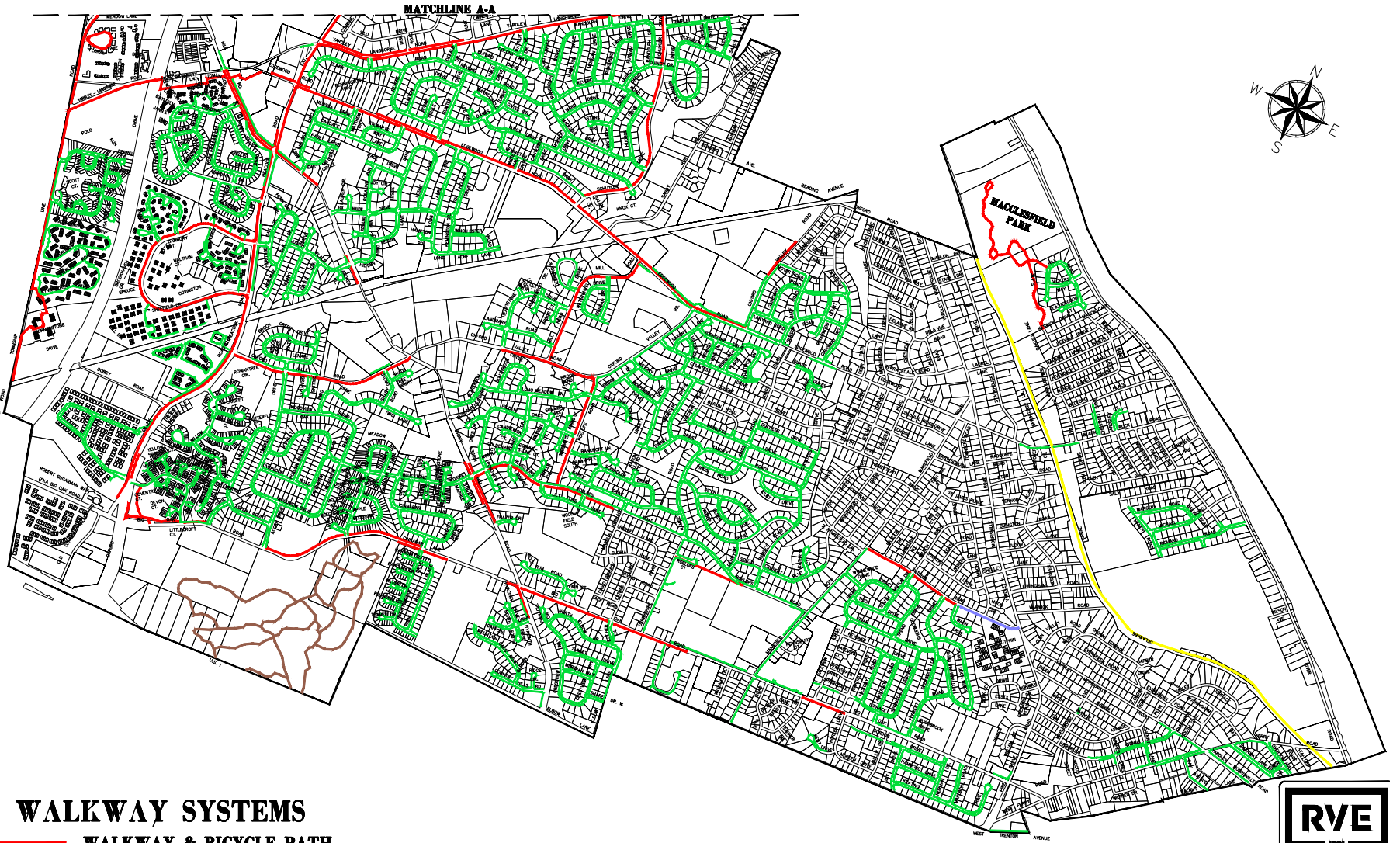


### WALKWAY SYSTEMS

- WALKWAY & BICYCLE PATH
- WALKWAY & BICYCLE LANE
- DELAWARE & LEHIGH NATIONAL CORRIDOR
- HIKING TRAIL
- NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK

MASTER PLAN 2022  
WALKWAY SYSTEMS  
LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP  
BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA





## WALKWAY SYSTEMS

- WALKWAY & BICYCLE PATH
- WALKWAY & BICYCLE LANE
- DELAWARE & LEHIGH NATIONAL CORRIDOR
- HIKING TRAIL
- NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK

MASTER PLAN 2022  
 LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP  
 BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RVE

1984

REMINGTON  
& VERNICK  
ENGINEERS

922 FAVETTE STREET  
 CONSHOHOCKEN, PA 19342B  
 (610) 940-1050, FAX (610) 940-3161  
 WEB SITE ADDRESS : WWW.RVE.COM

## Level of Service (LOS)

Successful Parks and Recreation Departments tailor their offerings to meet the needs and demands of all members of their communities. Knowing the characteristics of the residents who use the Township's resources — as well as the characteristics of those who may use those resources in the future (including age, race, and income trends) — is a factor when shaping the optimal mix of facilities and services that the Parks and Recreation Department offers.

NRPA replaced their single set of standards with the creation of the nationwide benchmarking tool for parks and recreation. Level of Service (LOS) is now the standard evaluation of park type and acreage across all park agencies based on what they offer their residents<sup>1</sup> The LOS is typically defined in Parks and Recreation Plans as a ratio representing the minimum amount of parkland needed to meet the recreation demands of the community. The NRPA recognizes the importance of the level of service as:

- An expression of minimum acceptable facilities for citizens of every community.
- A guideline to determine land requirements for various kinds of park and recreation areas and facilities.
- A basis for relating recreational needs to spatial analysis within a community-wide system of parks and recreation areas.

NRPA also states that each community should be considered on an individual basis to tailor the most appropriate range, quantity, and quality of recreational facilities within the Department's fiscal limits. Acreage of parkland per 1,000 residents remains the most common technique of expressing equal opportunity, even though conditions and needs vary greatly between areas.

### Lower Makefield Township LOS

Although Lower Makefield Township has 857 acres of parkland, the configuration and size of the parks presents a challenge in meeting the

---

<sup>1</sup> Mertes, James and Hall, James 1996. Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. NRRPA; Arlington, VA. p

needs of the community. With additional athletic fields and game courts called for, the rehabilitation of Macclesfield Park, and the connection to nature within parks, the Township needs more parkland. To solve this problem, another community park of about 80 to 100 acres optimally is needed. This amount of land could be configured as several smaller parcels if available but should be a minimum of 55 acres in size each to accommodate the types of facilities needed. The additional 100 acres would raise the standard of parkland to 28 acres per 1,000 population. This would also include the standard of creating true community parks with a mix of active and passive facilities, including access to nature, places to walk, play areas, hubs for socializing and celebrating with pavilions and support facilities, seating, restrooms, parking, lighting, and storage where appropriate.

## **Recreation Programming**

Lower Makefield Township has been increasing public recreation programming for the last four years. The public rates the quality of the programs as good to excellent. The Department offers three large







community events annually, provides 156 recreation programs or classes, manages the LMT Seniors in partners with group leaders, provides pavilion and facility rentals, and collaborates the six community-based sports leagues and the Pennsbury School District. The Township offers several hundred program sessions in core areas of classes, camps, and facility rentals. These programs provide opportunities for all ages. Current programs emphasize camps, special events, sports, and fitness, which in past years accounted for nearly all program participation.

Programs also focus on the needs of older adults and seniors, youth, and families. Participation in the Township's programs, classes, camps, community center, special events and the pool totals more than 15,000 participants annually. A participant is defined as a person in attendance at each program session or event. This may include the same individuals participating in more than one event, activity, or program. Based on professional program discussions in NRPA forums, it is estimated that this represents 20% of parks and recreation service with the other 80% coming from individuals in self-directed park, recreation facility, and trail use.

The Township also provides indoor and outdoor facilities available by reservation to facilitate recreation opportunities organized by others. These rooms and pavilions serve more than 10,000 people each year. In addition, the Township provides sports fields and space leagues including:

- YMS (Yardley Makefield Soccer)
- PAA (Pennsbury Athletic Association)
- MLL (Morrisville Little League)
- LBSA (Lower Bucks Softball Association)
- LBLL Lower Bucks Lacrosse League
- Yardley Makefield Rookie Rugby-USA
- LMT Swim & Dive Team
- Penn Aquatics
- Yardley Makefield Tennis

Although yet to be formally organized, a pickleball group is forming and already has a volunteer who coordinates pickleball in the Township.

Sports leagues also own and rent facilities both indoor and outdoor in other locations due to the level of participation and the lack of availability of fields.



The sports groups combined have more than 3,500 participants playing year-round. When family members are considered, it is also estimated that 10,000+ residents are involved in community sports as participants, volunteers, and spectators.

## Programming Directions

Lower Makefield Township programs have been growing in leaps and bounds since 2018. Now at a crossroads due to staff capacity, space limitations, and increasing community demands for expanded programming services, the Township needs both more staff and administrative space to house them. Future programming directions include establishment of core program areas of health and fitness, nature and environmental programs, and expanded services for tweens and high school students during after school and summer vacation hours.

One of the major opportunities that emerged in this planning process was a new partnership with the Pennsbury School District and neighboring municipalities. Moving forward, they are planning to collaborate on serving tweens and high school students during the after-school hours. Potential programs could encompass recreational fun sports and beyond into music, drama, the arts, bicycle clubs, and more. The School District Superintendent has reported that less than 30% of students participate in after-school activities.

## Organization, Management and Maintenance

The following Organizational Structure Chart shows the four major divisions within the Parks and Recreation Department.

- Maintenance and Operations
- Aquatics
- Programming
- Administration

Lower Makefield Township has a unified system with parks and recreation combined under the Director of Parks and Recreation, an optimal way to organize for meeting community goals.

The Organizational Chart also depicts the six boards and committees that contribute to the successful collaboration among key stakeholders in advancing public recreation services and facilities. They include:

- Parks and Recreation Board
- Environmental Advisory Council
- LMT Seniors

- LMT Youth
- Special Events Committee
- Disability Advisory Board

## Management and Staffing

The Lower Makefield Parks and Recreation Department is highly professional. The Township decided to professionalize this Department in 2018 by hiring a Director. The evolution, growth, and improvement in the system validates this decision. Led by a Certified Parks and Recreation Executive (CPRE) with an MBA and an M.Ed.

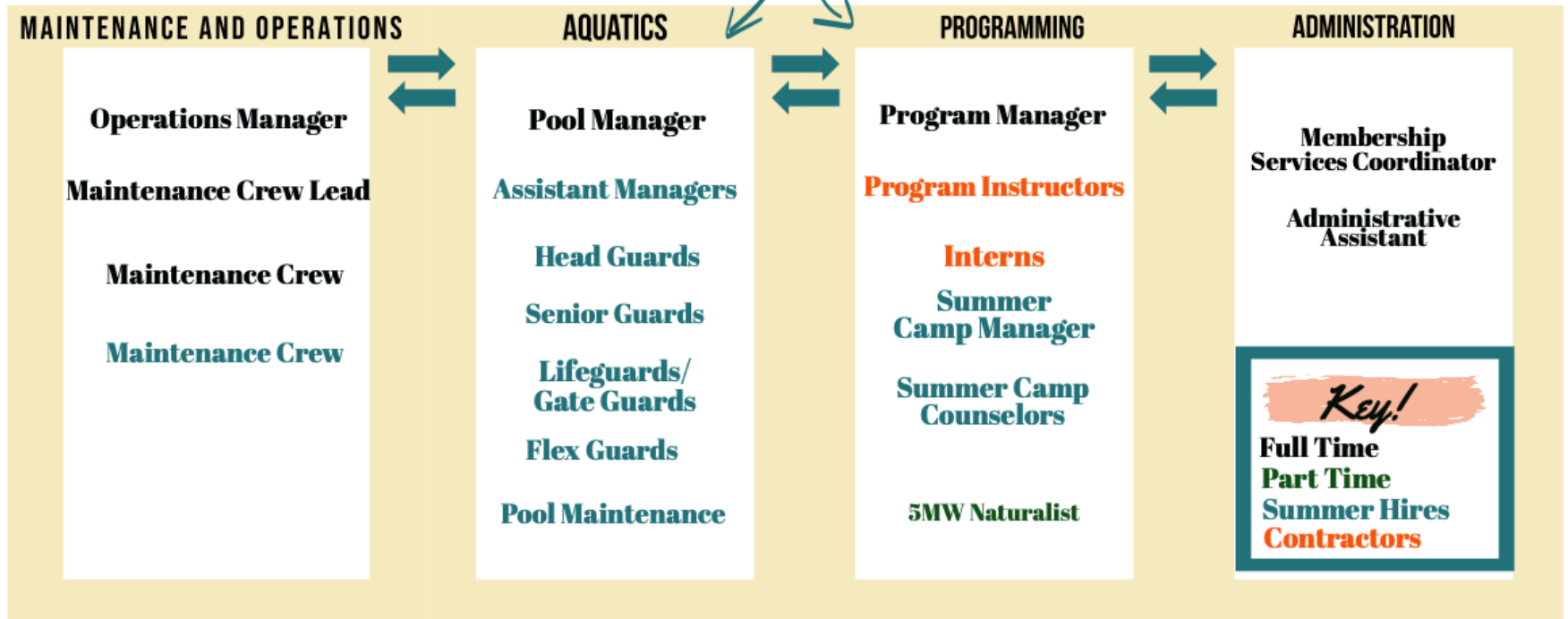
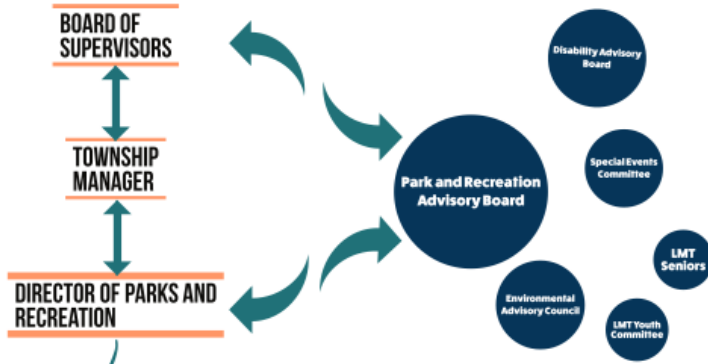
The Operations Manager is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP). The Program Manager is a Certified Youth Sports Administrator (CYSA).

The Department operates with 11 full-time and 130 part-time employees. The Township regularly approves additional staff when needed. In 2022, the Township added a full-time pool manager and an administrative assistant for the Department. In 2021, an additional maintenance worker was hired. With more than 600 acres of parkland that requires routine maintenance of active recreation facilities, the Department has five maintenance workers for a ratio of 1:100+ acres when the ideal ratio is 1:18 acres.



For the Department to provide expanded programs and services in which the public has expressed interest, additional space is needed to accommodate the additional staff members. An additional program management specialist is needed to free the Director to undertake the level of partnership building and revenue generation that would be needed to implement the recommendations of this plan, satisfy the trends of growing public demands for more services and facilities, and explore programming partnerships with the School District and neighboring municipalities.

# LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION ORGANIZATION CHART



## Park Maintenance

Park maintenance is the single most expensive part of public parks and recreation facilities. About 75% of the lifetime cost of a park is in maintenance. The Parks and Recreation Department maintains more than 600 acres of parkland and 81 facilities, such as athletic fields, game courts and support facilities ranging from a simple pavilion up to a major aquatics center, community center, an official state memorial, and 26.4 miles of trails.

As the Township continues to add land, facilities, and trails, maintenance should be a major consideration in planning and design. The maintenance staff should be involved in facility planning and design. A maintenance plan should be included in all major facility improvement projects.

Additional space is needed for maintenance staff and equipment storage. Public Works and the Parks and Recreation Department could work together to create an equipment barn large enough to support maintenance staff and house maintenance equipment.

## Township Park and Recreation Planning

Lower Makefield Township has a long and successful history of developing plans that the Township implements. They include projects

plans for Township parks and programming:

- [Macclesfield Park Master Plan, August, 1987](#)
- [Parks and Recreation Open Space, 1990](#)
- [Recreation Fee Districts, March, 1990](#)
- [Parks and Recreation Plan of Action, September, 1995](#)
- [Recreational Survey Results, 1996](#)
- [Parks and Recreation Action Plan Update, 1997](#)
- [Open Space Plan, May, 1998. Update 2009](#)
- [Township Recreation Assessment, October, 2018](#)

## [Community Trail Plan](#)

The project proposes to connect gaps in the existing multiuse trail network along the southern side of Edgewood Road in front of the baseball fields that are across the street from the Lower Makefield Township Building. The project also proposes an extension of the trail network along the western side of Oxford Valley Road, from Edgewood Road to the parking lot by the softball fields, opposite Roelofs Road. The existing pedestrian crossing at Edgewood Road and Oxford Valley Road will be improved. A proposed pedestrian crossing of Oxford Valley Road at Roelofs Road will connect the

neighborhood on the eastern side of the road to the athletic fields on the western side. Approximately 3,300 linear feet (0.63 miles) of trail will be constructed through this project. The project includes approximately 20 curb ramps which will be upgraded to comply with current ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards. The project improvements will include trails, signal equipment, pedestrian crossings, ADA curb ramps, and any signing, pavement marking, stormwater management, and drainage modifications that are necessary to implement the proposed improvements

#### [Community Trail Construction Plan](#)

This plan provides construction drawings for the Oxford Valley Road shared use path. It serves as an example of trail planning in Lower Makefield Township.

#### [Memorial Park Expansion Plan](#)

This is the master plan for expanding and phasing in improvements to Memorial Park.

#### Site Plans

Lower Makefield Township has site plans that guide the use of existing parks and the development of future areas and facilities. They include the following:

- [Long Range Tree Planting Plan, June, 2016](#)
- [Community Center Site Plan](#)
- [Community Center Floor Plan](#)
- [Dog Park Site Plan](#)
- [Samoset Tract Athletic fields Layout Plan](#)
- [Memorial Park - Complete Plan](#)

#### Feasibility Studies

Lower Makefield Township conducts studies to determine the feasibility of proposed facilities. They include the following:

- [Lower Makefield Township Community Pool Feasibility Study, 2019](#)
- [A Case for A Dog Park, 1999](#)

#### Operations and Policy Plans

The Parks and Recreation Department has a very positive public ratings,

a high percentage of cost recovery, and enterprise funds that generate positive cash flow. The Parks and Recreation Department operates in a transparent, accountable, and highly professional manner. Its management systems ensure optimal efficiency and effectiveness. The Department has developed and adopted the following plans to guide operations and management:

### Marketing Plan, 2021

This plan establishes the strategy for all external communications for the Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Department. All marketing and community relation efforts will be created to meet the needs of the Parks and Recreation vision of cultivating health, happiness, and community. Goals include:

- Create a key message that is shared with the public in a united voice.
- Continue to manage transparency.
- Provide timely information to residents and community partners.
- Develop and maintain a positive relationship with the community.
- Gain community support and engagement for future projects.

- Promote special events and upcoming programming.
- Communicate emergency information.
- Spread awareness of the Township's available amenities, resources, and services.
- Highlight features of the Township that make Lower Makefield a great place to live, work and play.
- Further support the Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Department's Mission to provide top-notch parks and recreation facilities and services for all residents via three key themes: health, environment, and building a sense of community.

### **Community Involvement**

Lower Makefield Township carries out ongoing and systematic outreach to include the entire community. Outreach cultivates diversity of individuals (i.e., all cultures, ages, and abilities) and local, regional, and national nongovernmental community organizations, agencies, businesses, and service providers. They include the Red Cross, Sierra Club, Trust for Public Land, YMCA/YWCA, Boys and Girls Club. Local foundations and employers are also afforded opportunities for input.



- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Public Opinion Survey for this Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- [Community Pool Survey Results, August, 2006](#)
- [Recreational Development Survey Results, April, 1996](#)

### ADA Transition Plan

The Township has developed, adopted, and is implementing a phased plan for the removal of barriers at existing recreation facilities, parks, and amenities pursuant to the requirements of the US Department of Justice Title II regulation issued September 14, 2010, and effective March 15, 2012, as follows:

- [ADA Transition Plan](#)

### Public Information Policy and Procedure

The Parks and Recreation Department has approved policies that govern what information is released, when it should be released, and by whom it should be released, and that demonstrate the agency's commitment to inform the community and news media of events

involving the agency. The following supports this policy and our procedures:

- [Right to Know Request Form](#)
- [Pennsylvania's New Right to Know Law](#)

### Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and Procedures

Our established records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures protect records, storing them and recovering critical information after a disaster.

- [Risk Management and Emergency Action Plan Section 4.8 Securing Property and Equipment](#)

### Personnel

#### Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual

Our personnel policies and procedures govern the administration of personnel procedures for professional and nonprofessional employees as shown in the contract and manuals below:

- [Public Works Non-Uniform Employee Contract](#)
- [Standard Operating Procedures - Pool](#)
- [Employee Handbook - Pool](#)
- [Camp LMT Employment Manual, 2021](#)

## Code of Ethics

Our formal ethical principles for agency personnel provide a clear understanding of ethical responsibility involving issues related to the Park and Recreation System, business dealings with other entities, interrelationships with other organizations and agencies, and interactions with participants.

- [ICMA Code of Ethics, June, 2020](#)

## Equal Opportunity Employment and Workforce Diversity

We established a policy regarding diversity with evidence of implementation that assures equal opportunities for employment, promotion, and equity in employment working conditions that complies with the ADA (Americans Disabilities Act).

- [Employment Provisions of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act of 1955](#)

## Selection Process

We use comprehensive procedures for hiring personnel and have a

role in determining skills and personal attributes required for positions.

- [Employment Application – Seasonal Staff](#)
- [Pool Interview Form](#)
- [Camp Interview Form](#)

## Background Investigation

Our process for hiring personnel includes procedures for a national background investigation prior to appointment, including verification of a candidate's qualifying credentials, review of a candidate's civil and criminal record, particular attention to drug and child/adult-abuse records, and driving record for employees assigned to operate motor vehicles.

- [Applicant Statement](#)
- [Pool Employee Paperwork Checklist](#)

## Employee Benefits

Lower Makefield Township has an established employee benefits plan.

- [Non-Uniformed Defined Benefit Pension Summary](#)

- [Non-Uniform Ordinance 394 Defined Contribution Plan](#)
- [Open Enrollment Benefits Guide - 2020](#)
- [Resolution No. 904 - Vacation Policy for Administration, 4/3/95](#)
- [Police Defined Benefit Pension Summary](#)

## Supervision

The Parks and Recreation Department provides constructive and effective supervision of all personnel to help them grow professionally and improve programs and services.

- [Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

## Performance Evaluation

We conduct fair and systematic procedures for annual or periodic appraisal of job performance. We use personnel evaluation for the development and improved quality of the individual's performance on the job, as well as a basis for promotion, monetary increments, and dismissal.

- [Employee Performance Evaluation Form](#)
- [Probationary Employee Performance Evaluation Form](#)

## Disciplinary System

The Department's established disciplinary system is based on the code of conduct and performance and specifies the conduct expected of employees as follows:

- [Employee Discipline Form](#)

## Social Media Policies Regarding Staff Use

The Department has established policies and procedures regarding the use of social media by staff.

- [Social Media Policy](#)



## Job Descriptions

The Department established job descriptions for all positions:

### Full Time Staff

- [Director of Parks & Recreation](#)
- [Operations Manager](#)
- [Year-Round Pool Manager](#)
- [Recreation Program Manager](#)
- [Membership Coordinator](#)
- [Administrative Assistant](#)

### Summer Hires

- [Assistant Pool Manager](#)
- [Head Lifeguard](#)
- [Lifeguard](#)
- [Swim Instructor](#)
- [Maintenance](#)
- [Gate Attendant](#)
- [Camp Manager](#)
- [Camp Counselor](#)

## Leadership Succession Procedure

The Department established a procedure to ensure that leadership is available when the Director is incapacitated, off duty, out of town, or otherwise unable to act as follows:

- [Parks and Recreation Department Leadership Succession Plan](#)

## Orientation Programs



The Department's orientation program for all personnel can be found in the document below.

## Employee Training and Development Program

The Department's program of employee development is available to our employees. It is based on needs of individual employees, future organizational needs, and is evaluated and updated periodically. The following materials describe our program:

- [Pool Staff Training Plan, 2021](#)
- [Respect and Awareness Training, 2021](#)
- [Coronavirus Training for Aquatic Facility Employees, 2021](#)
- [Dealing with Difficult People Training Handouts, 2021](#)

## Professional Certification and Organization Membership

Our professional staff serve as active members of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and pursue professional certifications within their respective disciplines. They include:

- Monica Tierney, [CPRE](#)
- Lynn Todd, [CPRP](#), [CPO](#)
- Elizabeth Lawson, [CYSA](#)

## Volunteer Management

The Department's volunteer management function is shown in our comprehensive volunteer management manual as follows:

- [Volunteer Manual](#)

## Financing Grants Procedures

The Department regularly seeks and secures regional, state, federal and/or other applicable grants as reflected in the journal below:

- [Detail Journal for Grants, 2017 - 2021](#)

## Purchasing Procedures

The Department has established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services.

- [Advertising Requirements for Townships](#)

## Fiscal Control and Monitoring Procedures

The Department has established procedures for collecting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds as shown in the following documents:

- [Balance Sheet, September 2021](#)
- [Treasurer's Report, September 2021](#)
- [Trial Balance, September 2021](#)
- [Fraud Risk Questionnaire Management Level, 2/31/2020](#)
- [Internal Controls Memo dated 12/1/2020](#)

## Independent Audit

The Township conducts an independent audit of the Department's fiscal activities conducted as stipulated by applicable statutes. Our audit reports can be found below:

- [Annual Reports and Due Dates](#)

## Annual Budget

Our annual operating and capital improvements budgets, including both revenues and expenditures:

- [Capital Asset Policy](#)

## Inventory and Fixed Assets Control

The Department has established procedures for inventory control of property, equipment, and other assets to prevent losses and unauthorized use, and to avoid both inventory excesses and shortages. This includes a complete and current listing of departmental assets:

- [Park Property & Building Inventory](#)
- [Fixed Asset Detail, 2018](#)
- [Asset Additions and Deletions - Government Funds, 2021](#)
- [Asset List Government Funds FYE 2021](#)
- [Asset Additions and Deletions - Proprietary Funds, 2021](#)
- [Asset List Proprietary Funds FYE 2021](#)

## Maintenance

### Maintenance and Operations Management Standards

The Department has maintenance and operations standards for all facilities as shown in our Maintenance and Operations Manual:

- [Maintenance and Operations Manual](#)

## Facility Legal Requirements

The Department regularly reviews legal requirements related to facilities, such as licenses, sanitary regulations, fire laws, and safety measures, and inspections. Special attention should be given to the following:

### Pool

- [Bucks County Department of Health Rules and Regulations Governing Public Bathing Places](#)
- [2021 Certificate of Operation to Operate a Public Bathing Place Facility](#)
- [2021 Public Bathing Place Inspection Report](#)
- [Analytical Labs Water Testing Report - 8/29/21](#)
- [2020-2021 Food Facility Inspection Report - Snack Bar](#)
- [2022 Pesticide Application Business License](#)
- [2022 Storage Tank Registration/Permit Certificate](#)
- [2022 Registration - PA Department of Agriculture Bureau of Amusement Rides and Attractions](#)

### Community Center

- Bucks County Department of Health License to Operate as a Food Facility
- [2021 Food Facility Inspection Report](#)
- [Food Safety Manager Certification - Monica Tierney](#)
- [Food Safety Manager Certification - Lynn Todd](#)
- [January 2022 Semi-Annual Alarm Inspection Report - Community Center](#)



## Risk Management and Safety

### Risk Management Policy

The Department has a policy for risk management that sets direction and gives appropriate authority for implementing operational practices and procedures that is approved by the proper authority.

- [Risk Management Policy](#)

### Accident and Incident Report Procedures

The Department established procedures for accident and incident reporting and analysis of accident and incident reports with accident/incident report forms available to all employees.

- [ADA compliant entry to Community Center](#)
- [Intercom System at Community Center](#)
- [AED located at side entry of Community Center](#)
- [Fire Extinguisher located in Community Center](#)
- [First Aid Station in Community Center](#)





## Budget

The budget for Parks and Recreation falls into two categories:

Operating and Capital Improvements. The Operating budget covers the revenues and expenditures to perform routine daily functions. This includes salaries and wages, benefits, materials, supplies utilities, contractual services, and others. The Capital Improvement Program supports major expenditures for purchases and projects that are more than \$10,000, last for at least seven years, and are beyond normal maintenance expenses.

### Parks and Recreation Operating Budget

The Lower Makefield Parks and Recreation Operating Budget is complex. Masterfully organized as Parks and Recreation operations for general services as well as Enterprise Funds for the operation of specialized facilities. These include: Makefield Highlands Golf Course, The Pool at LMT, and the Garden of Reflection. The budget is further separated into cost centers. This breakdown into cost centers facilitates planning, decision-making, and policies for use and fees and charges. The cost centers document the operating costs for each of these areas and include:

- General Parks and Recreation
- Memorial Park
- Macclesfield Park
- Fred Allen Softball Complex,
- Dog Park
- Community Center
- Five Mile Woods

Line items are established that will include future facility operations for the Snipes Tract

Table 1. Parks & Recreation Department Revenues 2020-2022			
	2020 Actual	2021 Projected	2022 Budget
Real estate Taxes	1,286,092	1,284,936	1,308,280
Interest	2,664	2,000	1,500
Rents	24,602	50,800	57,500
Program & Camp Fees	48,711	200,659	240,500
Misc. Revenues	1,981	19,644	17,400
Interfund Transfers	250,000	0	0
Rebates	5,272	2,335	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,619,322</b>	<b>1,560,374</b>	<b>1,625,180</b>
Fees-In-Lieu of Dedication	94,533	40,750	500

The important revenues trend to notice in Table 1 is the increase in program and camp revenues, rents, and miscellaneous revenues from community celebration events and park donations.

Table 2 presents the expenditures for general operations of programs and services as well as for cost centers for eight parks.

Table 2. Parks & Recreation Department Expenditures 2020-2022			
	2020 Actual	2021 Projected	2022 Budget
Parks & Recreation	733,100	896,426	1,230,464
Memorial Park	22,230	26,000	30,500
Macclesfield Park	73,806	93,047	104,340
Fred Allen Softball Complex	13,982	16,574	21,000
Dog Park	9,484	12,747	17,652
Samost	0	0	0
Snipes	0	0	0
Community Center	47,134	83,804	90,493
Five Mile Woods	27,972	28,240	26,988
Interfund Operating Transfer	654,322	529,899	638,156
Total	1,582,030	1,686,737	2,159,593

The next series of tables show the revenues and expenditures of Lower Makefield Township's Parks and Recreation Facility Enterprise Funds. An enterprise fund is a self-supporting, government fund that sells goods and services to the public for a fee.

Table 3. The Pool at LMT Revenues and Operating Budget 2020 - 2022			
	2020 Actual	2021 Projected	2022 Budget
Total Revenues	504,289	993,952	1,172,856
Expenditures	613,746	1,008,745	1,175,900

Table 3 presents the operating budget for the Community Pool with both revenues and expenditures, The Township developed a new price structure for the pool in 2022 to ensure that the pool recovers its costs.

Table 4. Makefield Highlands Golf Course Revenues and Operating Budget 2020 - 2022			
	2020 Actual	2021 Projected	2022 Budget
Total Revenues	3,221,215	3,505,696	3,421,700
Expenditures	3,138,462	3,588,449	3,421,700

Table 4 contains the budget for Makefield Highlands Golf Course. The Township intends to pay the course debt with the proceeds from the sewer sale. Once this debt is paid, golf course revenues will be dedicated to parks and recreation operations. In 2022, the Golf Course will have \$700,000 in positive cash flow.

Table 5. Garden of Reflection Revenues and Operating Budget 2020 - 2022			
	2020 Actual	2021 Projected	2022 Budget
Total Revenues	26,766	40,070	58,025
Expenditures	35,682	47,400	61,300

Fundraising for Memorial Park continues to be successful as shown in Table 5.

Table 6. Patterson Farm Revenues and Operating Budget 2020 - 2022			
	2020 Actual	2021 Projected	2022 Budget
Total Revenues	68,090	66,480	66,500
Expenditures	42,939	64,399	68,399

Patterson Farm generates revenues through rents that exceed operating expenditures.

### Capital Improvement Budget

The Township's Capital Reserve Fund for 2022 includes funds for the Woodside Bike Path. The sources of these funds are two grants and Interfund Transfers totaling \$405,00 and \$205,000 from the positive cash flow from the Golf Course.

### Trail Maintenance Expenditures

Lower Makefield Township budgets for trail maintenance in three-year cycles. This is a progressive practice to ensure that trails are safe and functional. The budget will be for trail improvements to include:

- 2022-Mirror Lake Road (2,870 linear feet)-\$62,256
- 2023-Edgewood Road (2,149 linear feet)-\$25,240
- 2024-Lindenhurst Road (3.373 linear feet) and Dolington Road (709 linear feet)-\$42,680

### Benchmarks

Lower Makefield Township's commitment to parks and recreation is evident in its annual investment in the Department's operating budget. The Township dedicates 2.43 mills in real estate taxes to the Parks and Recreation Department, which provides \$1,308,280 of the Department's 2022 budget of \$2,159,593. This is about 12.7% of the Township's general operating budget. The Township invests about \$65 per capita in general operating expenses for parks and recreation. The national average is about \$88 while the average municipal per capita investment in Pennsylvania is about \$38.

Just as the Township's investment is noteworthy, so is the Parks and Recreation Department's cost recovery. The Department generates 75% of its general operating budget through nontax fees, rentals, and fundraising. This is quite remarkable compared with the national average of 22.9%<sup>2</sup>. Lower Makefield Township has fewer employees in the Department at about 21 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) workers than the national average of about 27 FTEs for a population this size.

In addition to the general fund, the Parks and Recreation Department has six enterprise funds. These are planned, designed, and managed to recover their operating costs. They do that and more by producing positive cash flow that goes back into parks and recreation system improvements.

## **Conclusion**

The Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Department is well-used, well-respected, and well-managed.

With fewer staff than the national average, the Department generates more than three times the national average in cost recovery for general parks and recreation services. It has also established six enterprise funds that completely recover their costs. The Township expresses its commitment to parks and recreation in its ongoing funding to support community recreation. A strong cadre of community-based organizations provide support and public services that would be impossible for the Township to do on its own. The biggest challenge is accommodating the increasing levels of participation as well as meeting the needs that go unserved. This is primarily due to insufficient outdoor and indoor recreation and administrative space. More parkland is needed to meet the needs for additional sports fields, game courts, play areas, places to socialize and connect with nature, and trail connections to complete the Township's bicycle network. Indoor space is needed for both recreational use and administrative space to house more staff to support expanded recreation programming.

---

<sup>2</sup> National Recreation and Park Association. 2021 National Agency Performance Review p.5. [https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2021-agency-performance-review\\_final.pdf](https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2021-agency-performance-review_final.pdf) Accessed March 8, 2022.

The Township is renowned for taking innovative and important measures to create facilities such as the Pool, and Lower Makefield Community Center and Makefield Highlands Golf Course. As the Township completes its development, there is a small window of opportunity left to secure the parkland needed as well as completion of the bike path network. Completion of the bike path network requires securing the linkages to fill in trail gaps and extend the 26.4 miles of trail throughout the community and to regional connections beyond.



This parks and recreation inventory, analysis, and community needs assessment found that it is now the opportune time to move ahead with taking the Lower Makefield Parks and Recreation system up to the next level: facilities, programs and services that will provide “Play for All.”





# Community Needs Assessment and Vision

---

## About Lower Makefield Township

Lower Makefield Township, located in Bucks County, is one of the most attractive places to live in Pennsylvania. Gently rolling hills, flat lowlands, and farmland that flank the Delaware River characterize the community and contributes to its scenic beauty.

The Township covers approximately 18.3 square miles that includes about 15.3% in open space, parks, and public lands. The 2020 population estimate of the U.S. Census is 33,180. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission projects population to cap at 35,500 by 2045.

Approximately 25 miles northeast of Philadelphia, Lower Makefield is bordered by Falls Township on the south, Middletown and Newtown Townships on the west, Upper Makefield Township on the north, and the Borough of Yardley on the east. With easy access to I-95, Amtrak and



SEPTA lines, and two airports in Philadelphia and Trenton, the workforce can reach jobs and businesses in Philadelphia, Princeton, King of Prussia, and New York City.



Economically, the Township is residential and agricultural in nature. It consists of large estates, attractive housing developments, and operational farms.

The many reasons for choosing Lower Makefield Township as home, for living and working, include:

- Beautiful parks and recreation – including the Delaware River with its canal and towpath, 9-11 Garden of Reflection and inclusion playground, the Pool at LMT, Makefield Highlands Public Golf Course, playgrounds, tennis courts, pickleball, many sports fields, and bike path system.
- Open space, preserved farmland, and historic properties
- Award-winning Pennsbury School District
- Community safety with low crime rate
- Convenience to major metropolitan areas (30 miles from Philadelphia, 70 miles from New York City) and vacation locations (90 miles to the Poconos, 50 miles to the Jersey shore).

### **Who Lives in Lower Makefield Township?**

The Demographic Analysis describes Lower Makefield Township's population. This assessment is a snapshot in time representing the 2020 Decennial Census and 2016–2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year data retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau. It is reflective of the

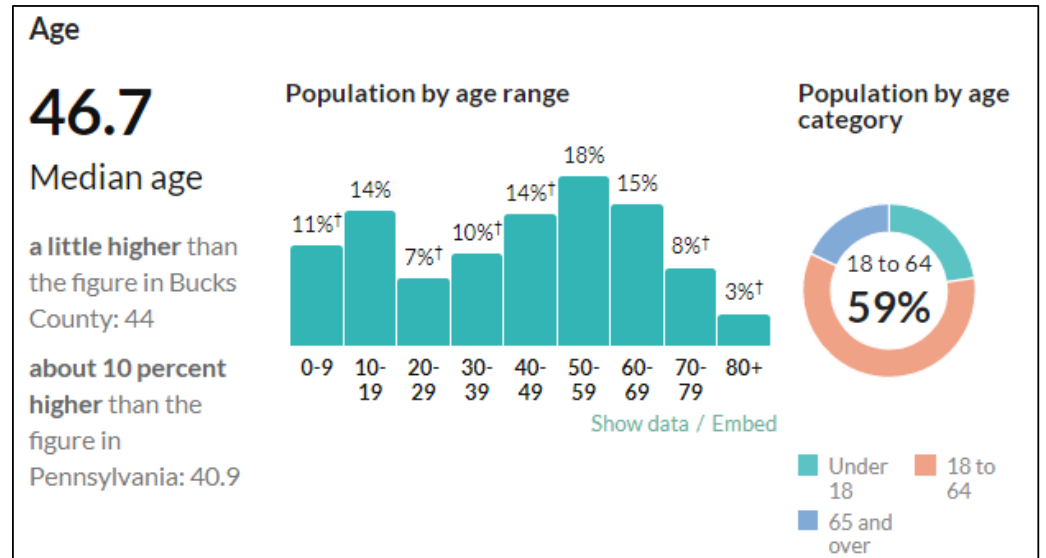


Township's total population and its key characteristics, such as age segments, race, ethnicity, and income levels. It is important to note that future projections developed by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission are based on historical patterns. Unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the analysis could have a significant bearing on the validity of the projected figures.

Overall, the population is relatively affluent, well-educated, aging, and diversifying. Even so, care needs to be taken in addressing the needs of the less fortunate.

## The Populace

Since 1970, the Township's population has more than doubled. Peak growth years were from 1980 to 2000, at which time the population increased by almost 75% over 1970 figures. The 1980s brought the greatest change with a population increase of almost 45%. Growth has since flattened out at about 33,180 residents. With only about 1,100 acres



of open space vulnerable to development remaining, projections estimate an additional 2,320 residents by 2045 for a total of 35,500. The population includes:

- 12,083 households
- 2.7 people per household
- One in four households with one or more members over 65
- 39.5% with children under 18

## Age

The Township's population has been aging, a trend expected to continue.

The median age increased from 33.7 years

in 1970 to 46.7 years in 2020 which is a 13-year increase. As the Township's population continues to age, the demand for specialized parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities will likely heighten. The explosion of interest in pickleball is an excellent example of changes in serving the population over 60.

Concurrently, the number of young adults has diminished. From 2000 to 2010, the number of young adults between the ages of 18 and 34 years reduced to 4,063. There was a resurgence by 2017, but the numbers are still not to the level they were in 2000.

## Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

Lower Makefield's population was mostly White and born in America as indicated in the 2016–2020 American Community Survey 5-Year

Estimates. The share of white (not Hispanic or Latino) township residents was 85%, and 90% native born. The largest single minority group was

**The Brain Drain**

Part of the challenge is rising real estate values making housing unaffordable, especially for first time buyers. This decrease is consistent with regional trends and is known as the "Brain Drain". This is the trend of young professionals moving to other areas that offer more options for employment and housing.

Asian who represented 7.3% of the population. African Americans represented 2.1% of the population, and Hispanic of any race, 3.6%. Approximately 1.4% of residents identified as two or more races and 0.6% as other. The percentages of minorities increased slightly between 2010 and 2020. About 88.5% of the residents are White. The population was 50.4% female and 49.6% male<sup>1</sup>. Although not documented, anecdotally it

is apparent the Indian population is growing in Lower Makefield Township as this population is become increasingly interested in programming specific to the Indian culture.

## Income and Poverty

According to the American Community Survey of 2020, the estimate for Median Household Income in Lower Makefield was \$150,621 plus or minus \$12,253.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census 2019. Accessed February 26, 2022.

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Lower%20Makefield%20Township&t=Income%20and%20Poverty&tid=ACSSST5Y2019.S1701>

The Median Household Income in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was \$93,181 plus or minus \$1,534. The Median Household Income in Pennsylvania is \$63,627.

About 9% of Township residents are at 150% of the poverty level. To qualify for the school lunch program, income guidelines range from 1.30 to 1.85 of the poverty level based on household size<sup>2</sup>. As defined by the United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index, the weighted average poverty threshold for a family of four in 2020 was \$26,496.<sup>3</sup>

## Education

The residents of Lower Makefield are well educated. Almost 97.4% of residents were at least high school graduates, and 69.3% held bachelor's degrees or higher. Almost a third of residents (35.5%), aged 25 and over, hold graduate degrees or higher. This is more than double the county average of 17.1%.

## Community Directions

As Lower Makefield Township completes its development over the next few years, it is important to optimize existing parks and recreation facilities, secure any other parkland before the remaining open space is lost to development, and connect the bike path system by filling in the gaps and adding trail segments.

Through the master plan process, more than 2,500 community members shared their preferences and priorities for parks, recreation, natural areas, trails, and programs. From this feedback, the Planning Team, advisory groups, elected and appointed officials, identified key needs. It then used the needs identified to craft the core values, vision, mission, and goals that form the framework for this Master Plan.

---

<sup>2</sup> USDA. 2021. Accessed February 26, 2022. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/03/04/2021-04452/child-nutrition-programs-income-eligibility-guidelines><https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/03/04/2021-04452/child-nutrition-programs-income-eligibility-guidelines>

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census. 2021. Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States. Accessed March 15, 2022. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/income-poverty-health-insurance-coverage.html>

## Community Priorities and Needs

A variety of factors influence parks and recreation needs and priorities.

Age, income, education, cultural background, and children in the household all come into play. Not surprisingly, individual and organized group priorities and preferences differ. Taken collectively, however, they form the picture of the Lower Makefield's vision and needs for different types of parks and recreation opportunities.

Common desires and needs did emerge. Most of the community values and uses the Township's parks and recreation system with highest visitation at Macclesfield Park, the bike paths, LMT Pool, and Makefield Highlands. With improvements at Memorial Park, increased visitation is increasing there too. While survey respondents reported regular use of the parks, many residents reported they do not know enough about parks and programs despite the excellent marketing program of the Parks and Recreation Department. More importantly, residents report they are going to parks in other townships for better facilities, such as playgrounds, use of pools in spring, winter, and fall, and cold weather training centers for sports.

Through community outreach, the Master Planning process identified top

priorities for the parks and recreation system. The top priorities and needs from this analysis include:

**Sports.** Focus on sports facilities. Provide more athletic fields. Advance plans for the Snipes Tract. Revitalize Macclesfield Park.

**Green Space.** Protect green space and provide stewardship for these treasured spaces.

**Bike Paths.** Expand trail access, fill in trail gaps, and connect the bicycle and pedestrian system.

**Indoor Recreation.** Increase indoor recreation space to accommodate residents winter sport needs and to eliminate/decrease program waiting lists.

**Maintenance.** Maintain facilities to the quality desired by Lower Makefield Township residents through sufficient staffing, budget, and training. Achieve a balance between active recreation and nature-based facilities. Any future development and improvement of facilities needs to be based upon the motto "Play for All" that is consistent with features of the site and community needs.

**Programming.** Diversify and expand programming with a broad range of

recreational interests for all ages and abilities, especially middle schoolers, teens, adults, seniors, and cultures.

**Financing.** Continue to invest in parks and recreation to bring the greatest benefit to the community overall and to maintain the high quality of life in Lower Makefield Township.

### **Priority 1: Add Sports Facilities**

Sports participation and interest is high in Lower Makefield Township. About 3,500 league participants play on Township ballfields at any given time between Yardley Makefield Soccer, Pennsbury Athletic Association, and Lower Makefield Football Association between March–November. This number does not include smaller programs and sports camps. Providing more sports fields was the most popular funding priority in the community survey. Current facility design and conditions could be improved to reflect the caliber of this community. The issue, as discussed extensively in the Sports Forum and echoed in other outreach, is that the condition of existing facilities is not only the result of overuse. Despite the efforts of the Township and league volunteers to maintain the fields at the quality desired, no level of maintenance can restore highly overused fields that have construction issues to optimal condition. It is also the need for more



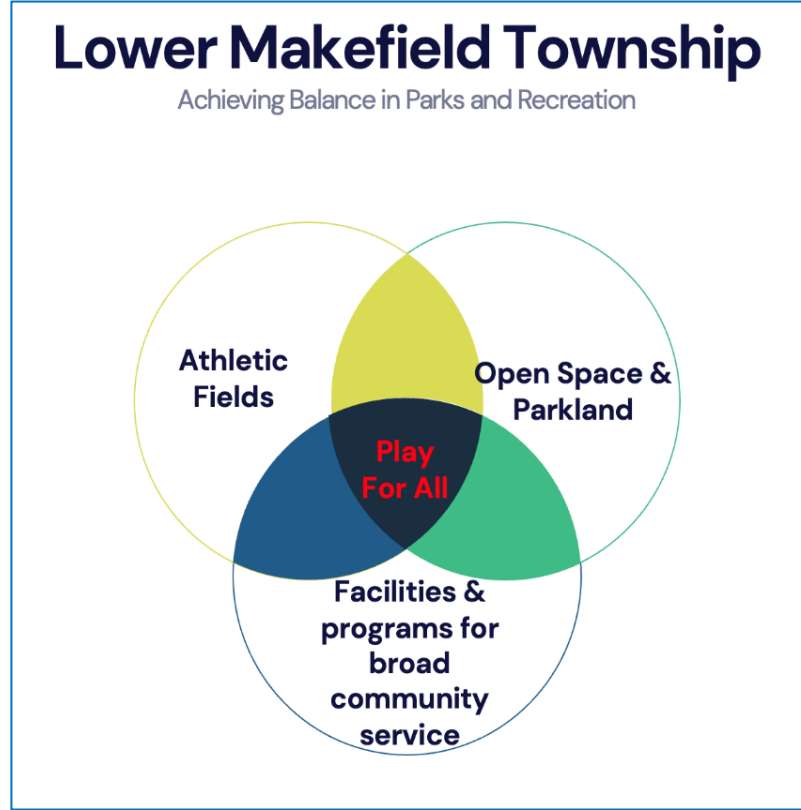
sports facilities to support organized league play for recreation, competitive, and school sports as well as informal pick-up games. Also needed for field enhancements are:

- Parking and structural improvements for drainage
- Lighting, seating, shade, and restroom improvements

The addition of sports facilities for new and expanding interests such as field hockey, cricket, pickleball, basketball, ultimate Frisbee, and rugby.



Policies, such as game scheduling, to facilitate transition of players and spectators, equitable coordination among leagues and the Township, and partnerships that provide the foundation for cost sharing investments on land owned by all the people of Lower Makefield Township.



Development and implementation of sports turf and game court maintenance management plans is crucial. This includes the training of volunteers to ensure that fields are maintained to the standard of care desired.

### Strategic Solution for Balancing Public Recreation Needs

Lower Makefield Township needs more athletic fields, facilities that serve a wide range of interests beyond sports, and to preserve the rural agrarian charm of the community via open space and parkland.

- The Township has worked over the years to provide solutions for these top needs. This Parks and Recreation Plan is calling on the Township to once again take bold and exciting steps to meet community needs just as it did successfully in years past. Previous successes were the preservation of farmland, creation of the LMT pool, development of the award-winning Makefield Highlands Golf Club, the Community Center, and carrying out the vision of the bike path system long before any other community did in the entire Delaware Valley. None of these accomplishments were easy. They required thought, expertise, collaboration, funding, and public support. The solution to the current need for more facilities for all requires that same level of consideration.
- Simply put, there is not enough space to accommodate the need

for more ball fields and other outdoor and indoor facilities to serve a broad range of interests and age groups year-round:

- Macclesfield Park is overdeveloped, has insufficient parking, poor circulation, drainage and irrigation issues, and policy issues regarding use and improvements.
- Greg Caiola Baseball Park does not have lights. So, PAA uses Macclesfield Park Baseball Fields so practice can extend past dusk.
- The Snipes tract has been in the works for 18 years. Public sentiment for the site lies in two camps: athletic fields vs preservation as open space or nature-based facilities. Snipes alone is insufficient to meet current and anticipated public recreation needs.
- Patterson Farm is a community treasure that is an icon for the rural agrarian charm so treasured by the residents. While 38 acres could be developed for active recreation, that does not appear to be in the best interest of preserving and celebrating the heritage of our community. Patterson Farm needs a master plan to solidify future direction and conservation of this important site.

- The 7,600 square foot Community Center is too small. Thus, programs have waiting lists. The Center also lacks space for staff. Programs cannot grow in accordance with public needs and desires due to lack of administrative space to house staff.

Past solutions have not been carried out when ball fields were removed for establishment of other facilities. To build the Lower Makefield Township Dog Park, a soccer field was removed and not replaced as intended. It is important for the Township to carry out actions that will result in the replacement of these fields and the addition of others to accommodate the level of public use.

Given these issues and their complexity, the following alternative approaches should be considered.

### Optimal Solution:

- Move ahead with the improvement of Snipes based on a revised plan in which the site would be developed as a community park for all with a mix of ball fields, trails, pavilions, restrooms, parking, and natural features. Evaluate Memorial Park to determine if the grounds could be lined for athletic games.
- Undertake a study of Macclesfield Park that includes site capacity

for ball fields with proper parking and circulation for optimal safety and use, ball field revitalization, and support facilities, such as pavilions, restrooms, seating, concessions, and lighting.

Rehabilitate Macclesfield for optimal use and safety.



- Add lights to the Greg Caiola Baseball Fields to provide more practice time.
- Since more land will be needed to accommodate likely changes



recommended for Macclesfield Park, the Township will need to acquire more parkland. The Grey Nun Academy site could be considered as an optimal location for a park. The 88.5 acres is now owned by Holy Redeemer Hospital. A partnership with the Hospital could be pursued that would benefit both the Hospital and the Township. Or the Township could consider purchasing the site if the Hospital's plans have changed for the former school. The site offers the potential to house both outdoor and indoor recreation facilities as well as serve to conserve open space and the character of the community.

#### Alternative Solution A:

The second alternative is to sell Snipes to generate funds to help offset the cost of acquisition and development of a larger park site, such as the Grey Nun Academy property.

#### Alternative Solution B

Move ahead with the development of Snipes. However, this development alone will not provide all the facilities needed in Lower Makefield Township. The problem with Macclesfield Park as an overdeveloped and overused site would remain. Little time remains in this community to secure additional parkland before the land that remains is developed. Yes, land is

expensive, but it is an investment, not a cost, that will benefit residents now and far into the future.

### **Priority 2: Activate the parks with new and improved facilities to serve all interests, ages, and abilities. This would include active and passive recreation facilities via additional athletic fields, game courts, walking paths, playgrounds, pavilions, and amenities seating and landscaping.**

Achieving a balance of developing active recreation facilities, protecting open space, and connecting residents with nature close to home would succeed in creating the kind of parks and recreation system that the residents appear to want. Achieving a balanced parks and recreation system that serves a broad range of interests will unify the community and spark a significant sense of community.

### **Priority 3: Protecting green space and providing stewardship for these treasured spaces.**

With only 1,100 acres of open space remaining in the Township, consideration of its protection is important. Community members strongly

value the Township's open space and natural resources. They want access to natural features for recreation, education, and interpretation. Given the funding limitations that limit the Township's staffing capacity to maintain and steward its natural resources in parkland, questionnaire respondents were specifically asked about investment in parks and recreation. Survey participants indicated that their top two preferred ways to spend their money was on athletic fields and conservation and sustainability with maintenance as their third highest priority. In other outreach activities, participants noted that access is important. In addition to improving restrooms and building trails, participants prioritized open space and access to nature as their third most preferred improvement. There is a solid opportunity to expand nature based programming and environmental education in Five Mile Woods. This park is a hidden gem that could become one of the Township's crown jewels with a master plan for site and program improvements. The Township also owns Katherine Burke Nature Preserve, located behind the pool and tennis courts. Under the Bucks County Natural Areas easement, the site is unimproved. However, residents use the site for walking. Other Township owned open spaces could be improved with walking trails and signage to facilitate passive recreation opportunities close to where people live.

#### **Priority 4: Expanding trail access, filling in trail gaps, and creating a connected bicycle and pedestrian system.**

The connectivity of the Township via more trails is a clear priority for outreach participants. Expansion of the trail system was the second highest



priority of the participants. Through different findings across outreach activities, trails were valued broadly. Trail related activities appealed to people of all different ages. They are valued for recreation, transportation, and improved access to the Delaware River and the Delaware Canal State

Park, Township parks, public facilities, neighborhoods, and commercial areas especially in Yardley. Respondents noted that trails provide health benefits associated with exercise and being outdoors. Because of their multifaceted benefits, a variety of trail types are sought. Trails that link with other existing trails, multi-purpose paved trails for walking, biking, running, and strollers; nature trails; and trails that link neighborhoods with community destinations are all important. Building out the planned local pedestrian and bicycle trail system would require significant funding. However, the Township has been successful in securing grant funds. Federal funding for infrastructure improvements is optimal in the post pandemic funding programs. To achieve this vision, the Township is focusing on:

- **Lower Makefield Township Community Trail Project (2022)**– A Transportation Alternatives Program Grant of \$700,000 will cover the cost of extending the existing bike path on the south side of Edgewood Road, across from the Township Building, and past the baseball fields to Oxford Valley Road. The path would then continue the west side of Oxford Valley Road past the baseball fields, Community Center, and softball fields to the intersection of Roelofs Road. It will include an upgraded pedestrian crossing at

Edgewood/Oxford Valley Road, a new pedestrian crossing at Roelofs/Oxford Valley Road, and a relocated pedestrian crossing at the Pool/Baseball driveway.

- **Woodside Road Bike Path (2022–2023)**– A PA DCED MTP (Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Fund) Grant of \$353,000 along with a \$52,000 DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Grant will pay for extending the existing bike path on the south side of Woodside Road, provide a pedestrian crossing at the Merrick Road intersection to the north side of Woodside Road, and continue the path along the north side of Woodside Road past the Makefield Highlands Golf Club to Taylorsville Road. It will also provide pedestrian crossings on Taylorsville Road and then cross Woodside Road to connect to a new path to be constructed by the DRJTBC (Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission) on the south Woodside Road. The bike path will ultimately provide bicycle and pedestrian access to the Scudder Falls Bridge for cyclists to cross to New Jersey.
- **Snipes Tract Bike Path (Not scheduled)** is planned to extend the

bike path from the north side of the I-295 overpass on the west side of Dolington Road, continue along Dolington Road past the proposed Snipes recreational facility. This will continue along the north side of Quarry Road and provide a pedestrian crossing at Quarry Hill Elementary School to the south side of Quarry Road. This will connect to the existing bikepath that runs past Afton Elementary School.

**Priority 5: Increase indoor recreation and administrative space to accommodate both residents for programming and additional staff.**

Township residents love their Community Center. The Community Center is in demand for programs serving youth, older adults and seniors through activities, programs, summer camp, community meetings, and special events. However, this facility is too small to provide social gathering space, meeting rooms, activity and program areas to support the types of recreational and educational programs desired.

**Priority 6: Maintaining facilities as clean, functional, and attractive for visitor enjoyment, safety, community pride, and**

**protection of the municipal investment.**

The success of Lower Makefield Township's park and recreation system depends on ensuring that parks and facilities are safe, clean, and in good condition. The Parks and Recreation Department maintenance staff takes care of parkland, recreation facilities, trails, and buildings. The focus of maintenance tasks is on mowing, trash and litter removal, and athletic fields. Helping to preserve a variety of historical, cultural, and natural assets is done when possible. Although most of the outreach participants rated Township parks and facilities as good or excellent, they indicated that maintenance is their third highest priority among their choices for how they would spend their money on parks and recreation. This is a very significant finding as typically citizens do not put maintenance high on their list for receiving funds. Township staff agree with these residents as there are only five maintenance staff for more than 500 acres of parkland. Overall, the parks and recreation system is in good shape. However, many park features are aging and overused and in need of rehabilitation or replacement. Deferred maintenance is an issue in most public park systems. Natural resources have not received as much attention as needed because of limited resources. Given the demand to increase programming and add more facilities, more maintenance funding will be

needed. This should include training for stewardship and natural resource management.

**Priority 7: Achieving a balance between active recreation and nature-based facilities. Any future development and improvement of facilities needs to be based on “Play for All” that is consistent with features of the site and community needs.**

The Snipes Tract project brought to light the different recreation needs and perceptions of the residents. These can be synthesized as two main



viewpoints the need for more athletic fields and the need to conserve open space and natural resources and connect people with nature close to home. The common ground of these diverse perspectives is the love of



this Township, the ubiquitous pride in living here, and the recognition that parks and recreation is a key factor in the high quality of life in Lower Makefield. The reality is that the Township can meet the needs of both groups through a continued public engagement process, the addition of more parkland, and the planning, development, and maintenance of all parks and recreation facilities via excellence in design.

**Priority 8: Diversifying and expanding recreation opportunities for all ages and cultures, especially middle schoolers, teens, and adults.**

Lower Makefield Township residents want a greater variety of recreation activities and programs. Programs garner high ratings—enough to generate waiting lists for many programs. Across all outreach activities, participants expressed a desire for multigenerational opportunities, year-round recreation opportunities, more challenging activities for adults including pickleball, and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. Seniors and older adults note that Lower Makefield Township needs fitness opportunities designed for themselves as well as all age groups given the prevalence of Online activity and screen time.

Based on a work session with the Pennsbury School District, the need for after-school programs for middle-schoolers and teens was deemed important. District-wide, less than 30% of the student body participates in after-school programs with no further breakdown for Lower Makefield students. Further discussions with parks and recreation key stakeholders in the other municipalities comprising the Pennsbury School District found

interest in discussing collaboration among the municipalities and the School District to determine the possible ways to provide youth recreation services during after school hours. The municipalities can seek a PA DCNR grant to use in facilitating these discussions and developing a plan to move forward if a partnership emerges among two or more participating entities.



For Lower Makefield Township to expand programs, additional staff will be needed. This can be part-time or full-time staff. However, to accommodate such staff, office space is needed. This is tied to the discussion about expanded indoor recreation facilities that would include both programming and administrative space.

**Priority 9: Continuing operational excellence and investment in parks and recreation to bring the greatest benefit to the community overall and to maintain the high quality of life in Lower Makefield Township.**

Master Plan participants agreed almost unanimously that parks, recreation programs, and trails are important to Lower Makefield Township's quality of life. They affirmed that parks and recreation offer important benefits for themselves and their families. They suggested many ways to enhance or expand recreation activities and provided more than 1,200 comments about the types of improvements desired. When faced with the reality that enhancing and expanding the system would require a larger investment, outreach participants identified these improvement and spending priorities: athletic fields, trails, conservation areas, and maintenance.

Continue to carry out the Capital Improvement Program. Complete the LMT Pool improvements. Add ball field lights in Caiola Park. Revitalize the Schuyler Road tennis courts. Carry out the Memorial Park improvements. Expand the bike path system. Additional capital improvements to consider are parkland acquisition, development of a larger community center, lighted pickleball courts, and master plans for Five Mile Woods and Patterson Farm's 38 acres with implementation schedules for site improvements, stewardship, and programming.

**Values, Vision, Mission, and Goals**

The priorities and needs of the general citizenry and community-based organizations helped identify Lower Makefield Township's core values, vision, and mission for the future, as well as Master Plan goals. Aligned with the Township's Comprehensive Plan's Vision, these elements are described below.

## Core Values

Nine core values emerged from the community outreach process. These shared beliefs will guide the Township's parks and recreation operations and services:

1. **Innovation and Creativity**—"Out of the box" thinking and practices to devise effective ways of establishing an optimal parks and recreation system
2. **Health and Wellness**—Mental and physical health, activity, stress reduction
3. **Conservation and Stewardship**—Sustainability, natural resource protection, facility and equipment management, green infrastructure, resource conservation
4. **Inclusiveness and Equity**—Welcoming all residents via fairness in resource allocation, opportunities, and services for people of different ages, cultures, interests, and abilities
5. **Diversity**—Respect for different cultures and people, variety in recreation opportunities to respond to diverse community needs
6. **Accessibility & Connectivity**—Accessible facilities and services to people of different abilities, interconnected trails and sidewalks, and walkable/bikeable neighborhoods
7. **Community Engagement**—Informed and engaged residents, organizations, and schools.
8. **Sense of Community**—Social cohesion through community events, programs, public gathering spaces integration of arts, culture, and history, attractive open space, and civic pride. Friendliness with opportunities for youth development, lifelong learning, and multi-generational activities
9. **Economic Vitality**—Sound business-like practices, transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility demonstrating that parks and recreation is an investment not a cost





## Vision

“**Play for All**” is our vision.

“**Play for All**” describes Lower Makefield Township’s aspirations for parks and recreation. It is based on public input for this plan. Most of all this community wants to have a parks and recreation system that enables all residents to enjoy and benefit from a diverse range of experiences—from the quiet solitude of connecting with nature to the excitement of playing sports in premiere athletic facilities and accessing these opportunities via a connected bike path system.

### Lower Makefield Township’s Vision

The Township has a responsibility to protect the public health, public safety, and public welfare.

The Township’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan envisions the continuation and improvement of the quality of life in Lower Makefield.

Elements of this quality of life include protecting community aesthetics, preserving aspects of the natural and historic environment, accommodating expected growth without adversely affecting residents, and creating and supporting necessary community services that enhance life in the Township.



## Mission

The mission describes the approach that the Parks & Recreation Department staff will take in providing parks, recreation facilities, trails, natural areas, and programs for Lower Makefield Township. The Department is committed to providing top-notch parks and recreation facilities and services for all residents via three key themes:

**HEALTH:** Improve physical health, mental health, and overall quality of life by offering safe and accessible facilities and open space.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Act as environmental stewards through responsible use of the natural environment and protect and maintain Parks and Recreation assets.

**COMMUNITY:** Create opportunities for the community to connect through a wide variety of partnerships, programs, events, and classes.

## Goals

To advance the vision of “**Play for All**,” five goals emerged to provide direction for significant change and improvement. The community priorities and needs, along with the values, vision, mission, and goals, provide the

planning framework for the Master Plan recommendations, presented in the next chapter.

Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Goals	
Goal 1.	Protect green space and provide stewardship.
Goal 2.	<b>Play For All</b> — Continue to improve parks, recreation, and nature-based facilities that serve residents of all ages, interests, and abilities.
Goal 3.	Connect the Township with safe places to walk and bicycle.
Goal 4.	Engage residents in active living through recreation opportunities for all ages, abilities, and interests that focus on fun, health, nature, self-improvement, and building a sense of community.
Goal 5.	Continue to provide excellence in operations, management, and financing to yield the greatest public benefit.



# Goals and Recommendations

---

Lower Makefield Township's aspirations for parks, recreation facilities, bicycle and sidewalk system, natural areas, and recreation programs are the guiding forces for the Master Plan. This chapter fleshes out the goals for the park and recreation system that the Township will implement to achieve the community's vision. Together, the goals, objectives, and recommendations provide overarching direction for the development, improvement, programming, and management of the park and recreation system.

## **Goal 1: Protect green space and provide a plan for stewardship.**

### **1.1 Explore the acquisition of additional parkland.**

Seek a site of at least 60+ acres, preferably closer to 80 to 100 acres to accommodate the development of a community park that would provide a

mix of active recreation facilities. These could include ball fields and game courts as well as a mix of passive facilities that would serve a broad range of ages, interests, and abilities. Pathways, playgrounds, pavilions, seating, restrooms, nature-based facilities, parking, and safe circulation all make community parks welcoming destinations for all.

### **1.2 Update the Open Space Plan.**

Continue a joint effort of Parks and Recreation Department, Township



Planning Department, the EAC, and the Board of Supervisors in preserving vulnerable remaining open space.

### 1.3 Develop a stewardship plan.

Create a plan for conservation, maintenance, and management of protected open space.

### 1.4 Naturalize retention basins.

Continue the Township's program to naturalize retention basins where appropriate.

## **Goal 2: “Play for All”—Continue to improve parks, recreation, and nature-based facilities that serve residents of all ages, interests, and abilities.**

### 2.1 Provide more athletic fields.

- **Move forward with park improvements on the Snipes Tract.**  
Improvements may be influenced by exploration of additional parkland acquisition. Consider the use and potential for the Snipes Tract if the Township decides on acquiring another site. Snipes alone will not have the capacity to house all the fields needed.
- **Update the current design.** Update the site evaluation for its current condition and natural resources. Adapt the design based on the concept of “**Play for All**” to include a mix of ball fields, game courts, pathways, pavilions, playground, restrooms, and other facilities woven with natural features so that it is configured as a true community park.
  - Once the master plan is updated, engage the public in discussions about the proposed improvements.
  - Hold two open houses: one with the proposed master plan and the second after the master plan is revised in accordance with comments received.
- Conduct interviews with key stakeholders.
- Hold a formal public meeting in which the Board of Supervisors would adopt the plan.
- Move forward with seeking grant funds. This would help to leverage Township funds with state or federal funds. Consider time frame as well since securing grant funds takes time.
- Add lighting to the athletic fields in Caiola Park.



- Assess Memorial Park to determine if these sites could accommodate additional athletic fields through simple lining of fields, perhaps as practice spaces. If these sites are not constructed as athletic facilities and such measures would be temporary yet useful fixes. Consider this in conjunction with the assessment of Macclesfield Park recommended below.

## 2.2 Integrate the planning for Macclesfield Park improvements with related Township planning efforts.

Planning and decision-making for Macclesfield improvements hinge on

the decision about parkland acquisition. Include Macclesfield Park in:

- Discussions about potential parkland acquisition.
- Maintenance management planning
- Sustainability planning

## 2.3 Assess Macclesfield Park.

- Since Macclesfield Park is overdeveloped and overused, retain a team of transportation engineers, landscape architects, and sports field experts to assess conditions at Macclesfield Park. The purpose of this is to devise solutions for community and league needs for ball fields and support facilities such as parking and circulation. Strategies to make Macclesfield more parklike and welcoming should be established. Determine the capacity of the site for ballfields, parking, and circulation. Provide recommendations for improving the park for sports leagues, park use during nonorganized sports hours, and spectators and families accompanying those involved in organized sports.

- Include a stakeholder involvement component to the assessment to ensure that there is public engagement throughout the planning of Macclesfield and related improvements at other sites. Include consideration of proposals by community sports leagues to improve the park.

#### 2.4 Develop a plan to revitalize Macclesfield Park.

- Develop this plan considering other Township efforts to provide more ball fields, such as the acquisition of more parkland.
- Ensure that the plan includes provisions for park use beyond organized sports alone.
- Include innovative concepts that could support league goals, such as more practice areas.
- Address amenities, such as pavilions, restrooms, drinking fountains.

#### 2.5 Develop policies related to investment by community-based organizations on land owned by the community at large known as the Township of Lower Makefield.

- Determine parameters for investment in Township- owned property, ownership and control of improvements,



maintenance, and cyclic improvements.

- Set forth the design and construction guidelines.

## 2.6 Raise the bar for creative park planning and design.

- Add more creative play spaces
- Add nature-based play areas
- Integrate nature and natural resource management into park planning and operation.

## 2.7 Continue to carry out the Capital Improvement Program for parks and recreation.

- Field Lighting at Caiola Park
- Memorial Park Improvements
- Improvements at LMT Pool

## 2.8 Determine the potential and value of creating sports hubs.

- Explore the potential to create dedicated facilities for rectangular fields and diamond fields in specified parks. This would be based on multiple park sites designed to accommodate specific sports dedicated to rectangular fields, diamond fields or cricket fields. This would be in response to

caretaker/parent requests to provide conveniently located facilities to help limit driving to disparate sites for practices and games.

## 2.9 Diversify sports opportunities.

- Collaborate with the Pennsbury School District to develop multiuse sports fields.
- Develop more lighted, multiuse fields with synthetic turf that can be lined for several sports to diversify and increase play.
- Add more space for relatively new, emerging, or underserved sports, such as lacrosse, cricket, field hockey, and ultimate frisbee.
- Integrate more sports courts in parks, including pickleball, basketball, volleyball, futsal (an emerging sport), as well as unique courts that respond to trends, such as badminton, bocce, and outdoor table tennis where appropriate.

## 2.10 Provide or improve support amenities commensurate with the scale of the site and level of use.

- Restrooms
- Parking



- Dog waste stations
- Benches
- Recycling receptacles
- Refillable bottled water stations

### 2.11 Enhance park appearance.

Assess all park areas to determine how to best improve their use and appearance as great public spaces.

### 2.12 Develop Park Master Plans.

Establish a design philosophy that is rooted in the design of great public spaces. Ensure that designers have a strong track record exhibiting success in creating top-notch creative and innovative projects. The result would be optimal visitor experiences where residents of all ages want to spend time.

- Patterson Farm
- Five Mile Woods

### 2.13 Develop and install a park signage system.

- Name all the park sites. Consider open spaces and if it makes sense to name some or all of them.
- Tie the planning and design of the signage system to the

Parks and Recreation rebranding effort recommended in this plan.

- Include signage for park entrances, directions, facility names and numbers, interpretive, regulatory, and others to be determined.
- Implement the signage program over time as park improvements are made. It does not all need to be installed at once.

### 2.14 Explore potential ways to expand indoor recreation space.

- Assess existing Community Center for expansion potential.
- Explore potential for creating a community center elsewhere in conjunction with exploration of additional open space or in a partnership with another community-based organizations. Consider two gyms, competitive, leisure, and therapy pools, activity and meeting rooms, and multipurpose spaces.
- Reach out to the Pennsbury School District to explore potential partnerships on indoor recreation facilities including a pool, gyms, and other space.

### **Goal 3. Connect the Township with safe places to bicycle and walk.**

#### **3.1 Continue work on completing the Township's bike and walking path system**

- Lower Makefield Township Community Trail project - TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) Grant in the amount of \$700,000. Extend the existing bike path on the south side of Edgewood Road, across from the Township Building, past the baseball fields to Oxford Valley Road. Continue the path on the west side of Oxford Valley Road past the baseball fields, Community Center, and softball fields to the intersection of Roelofs Road. Include upgraded pedestrian crossings at Edgewood/Oxford Valley Road, new pedestrian crossing at Roelofs/Oxford Valley Road, and relocated pedestrian crossing at the Pool/Baseball driveway.
- Woodside Road Bikepath - \$610,000 construction cost includes funding by PA DCED MTF (PA Department of Community and Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Fund) Grant of \$353,000 + DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Grant of \$52,000, and the sale of the

park and Ride to DRJTBC to extend the existing bikepath on the south side of Woodside Road, provide a pedestrian



crossing at the Merrick Road intersection to the north side of Woodside Road, continue the path along the north side of Woodside Road past the Makefield Highlands Golf Course to Taylorsville Road, provide pedestrian crossings on Taylorsville Road and then across Woodside Road to connect to a new path to be constructed by the DRJTBC on south Woodside Road. The pathway ultimately provides bicycle and pedestrian access to Scudder Falls Bridge.

- Continue design and advance toward bidding for the Snipes Tract bike path to extend it from the north side of the I-295 overpass on the west side of Dolington Road. Continue along Dolington Road past the proposed Snipes recreational facility. Continue along the north side of Quarry Road and provide a pedestrian crossing at Quarry Hill Elementary School to the south side of Quarry Road to connect to the existing bike path that runs past Afton Elementary School.
- Move forward with the linkages recommended in the **Newtown to the D&L Canal - Trail Feasibility Study** issued by Bucks County Planning Commission in 2022 as follows:
  - Twining Road (between Township boundary line and Heather Ridge Drive)
  - Lindenhurst Road (between Heather Ridge Drive and Woodside Road)
  - Dolington Road bike lane (between Township boundary line and Woodside Road)

## **Goal 4. Engage residents in active living through recreation opportunities for all ages, abilities and interests that focus on fun, health, nature, self-improvement, and building a sense of community.**

### **4.1 Provide recreation programs in core areas to respond to community needs.**

Provide services in the core areas of Arts & Culture, Enrichment & Learning, Programs, Social Activities, Special Events, and Sports.

Adapt and modify core area programs to support all ages, cultures, and abilities, plus provide multigenerational opportunities. According to a poll from the National Alliance for Youth Sports, around 70% of kids in the United States stop playing organized sports by the age of 13 because “it’s just not fun anymore.”<sup>1</sup>

- Youth Programs—Continue to provide youth programs that include day camps, activities, and events. Add the arts, music, drama, dance, social gathering, STEM, and nature.

---

<sup>1</sup> Miner, Juliana. (2016) *Why 70% of kids quit youth sports by age 13*. **Washington Post**. Accessed March 29, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2016/06/01/why-70-percent-of-kids-quit-sports-by-age-13/>

- Increase programs for teens, young adults, and active adults.
- Use programs to support the Township's vision and values, including cultural diversity, inclusiveness, health and wellness, conservation and stewardship, the arts, and others.
- Increase programs for all demographics and populations, including the growing number of Hispanic and Indian residents. In the next three to five years, evaluate Lower Makefield's demographics and revisit whether Cultural Diversity should be added as a core service area. Culturally



diverse programming would include events, activities, classes, and bilingual programs that celebrate or promote all cultures.

#### 4.2 Explore partnerships in recreation programming to serve the high need for services for tweens and teens.

- Based on the positive response from neighboring municipalities and the Pennsbury School District regarding the need for after-school programs for middle schoolers and high school students, convene a meeting to discuss moving forward collaboratively.
- Consider applying for a PA DCNR Peer Grant. This is a \$10,000 grant with a \$1,000 match split among the participating organizations to study the potential for multi-municipal/school district partnership

#### 4.3 Implement the ADA Transition Plan for programs and services.

Ensure that:

- Programs and special events are accessible, including

those offered by other entities at parks and recreation facilities

- Information about the accessibility of parks, facilities, bike paths, programs, and events is readily available and easy to find by the residents.

#### 4.4 Monitor program data.

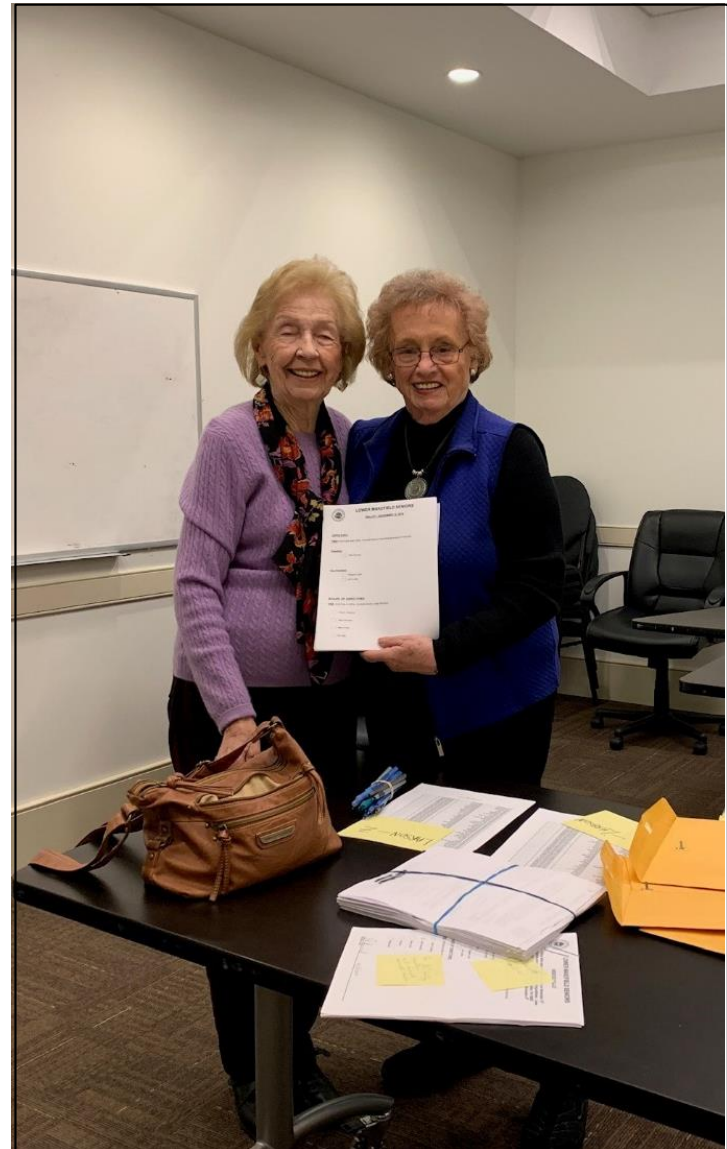
Track and use the numbers of participants in programs, activities, classes, and leagues that the Department directly provides, contracts, partners, and facilitates to support decision-making on programming planning, facilities, and maintenance.

#### 4.5 Serve the underserved.

Determine a method for respectfully identifying underserved residents in the community and supporting them through financial assistance for participation in programs and use of facilities, such as the Pool at LMT.

#### 4.6 Increase environmental, nature, and cultural programming.

- Use Five Mile Woods as the hub for environmental programming with spin-offs to other programs such as day camps, senior programming, and others.



- Increase public awareness about activities they can undertake on their own via the website and social media: self-guided activities, nature walks, self-guided bike tours, Delaware River access maps, and nature guides for key parks and open spaces as improvements add to the nature base of publicly owned spaces.
- Encourage trail-related recreation through walking groups, birding groups, and other trends, such as forest bathing.
- Explore potential partnerships with Washington Crossing State Park, Churchville Nature Center, Tyler State Park, and the Bucks County Parks and Recreation Department to determine potential areas for collaboration in history, nature, and environmental programs in Lower Makefield.

**Goal 5. Continue to provide excellence in operations, management, and financing to yield the greatest public benefit.**

**5.1 Maintain and operate parks efficiently and effectively to support protection of both visitors and public property.**

- Implement the Lower Makefield Township Maintenance Plan. Carry out recommendations for asset maintenance, replacement, reinvestment, and stewardship.
- Phase in maintenance staff to improve the ratio of staff to parkland from 1:110 acres closer to 1:20 acres. This will increase capacity of the Township to maintain natural resources, trails, and specialized facilities.
- Establish a formal park maintenance equipment replacement program.
- Adequately fund routine and preventative maintenance services to ensure park safety, make parks more attractive, provide a quality user experience, and avoid deferred maintenance.
- Invest additional funds in natural resource stewardship, including training and future employee recruiting with skills in this area.
- Invest in technology to conserve resources, enhance maintenance productivity and tracking, and reduce utility and water costs. Seek maintenance management software and the use of mobile devices for maintenance management.
- Involve the maintenance management team and staff in all park planning and design projects.
- Ensure that purchasing decisions include maintenance and future

design aspirations for high quality to be put into place in all future park planning and improvement projects.

- Develop an Urban Forestry Plan that provides direction for the maintenance and improvement of the Township's tree canopy and forested areas. Update the Plan annually before budget discussions.

### 5.2 Continue to support the existing staff and plan for expansion with the addition of administrative space.

- Expand staff to increase services in accordance with public needs as evident in waiting lists.
- Add a program specialist to expand programs, services, and customer service, including outreach.
- Addition of program staff would free the Director to work more on partnerships and long-range activities than on daily routine functions.

### 5.3 Continue the provision of high quality, responsive customer service.

- Provide an online contact option on the Parks and Recreation home page for residents to provide feedback to parks and recreation staff.
- Continue to provide high-quality services and support friendly, welcoming, and inclusive recreation environments.
- Update policies and programs as noted in the ADA Transition Plan.



- Improve and assess locations to add comfort amenities, such as trash receptacles, restrooms, shade, picnic tables, barbecues, drinking fountains, park lighting, benches, and doggie bag stations.

- Continue to provide park janitorial services, trash removal, and cleanup in high-use parks or during peak use times.
- For sustainability, work on developing policies, such as plastics in parks.
- Continue close coordination with the Lower Makefield Police Department on patrolling parks and connecting residents for help with park safety concerns. Ascertain if creating park ambassadors or park attendants would help with park operations and customer service.



#### 5.4 Improve information, communication, and relationships with park users, residents, and nonresidents.

- Conduct satisfaction surveys and post-program follow-up to track and measure park use, satisfaction, and the benefits that Township parks and programs provide.
- Implement ADA Transition Plan policy recommendations related to communication, accessible and inclusive documentation, and the provision of information on accessible facilities and trails to provide more inclusive community services.
- Continually update website pages, signage, and communication materials. Provide bilingual information, where warranted.
- Reach out to employees and businesses to identify employee-oriented program opportunities.

#### 5.5 Continue to be fiscally and financially far-sighted in supporting public parks and recreation needs.

- Continue to collaborate with Township management and officials in financial planning and management to support parkland and facilities, park and natural area maintenance and restoration, and recreation.
- Evaluate millage to determine how millage could be adjusted to support capital improvements, operations, and maintenance.



- Monitor and update as needed the Department's fees and charges philosophy and cost recovery expectations.
- Expand staff capacity, as resources allow, for grant writing, grant management, and the solicitation of sponsorships and donations.
- Set aside funding for capital reinvestment to remove, renovate, or replace aging and worn facilities at the end of their lifecycle. Strive to save 2 to 4% of capital improvement costs annually per facility for cyclic repairs and replacement.
- Review the Mandatory Dedication of Parkland Ordinance and the fees-in-lieu of dedication based on the level of service and current market values. Revise the fee to be at market value instead of a set amount.
- Leverage and expand resources by collaborating with partners, stakeholders, and volunteers.
- Develop and maintain relationships with targeted public and private organizations and entities to support Township objectives and standards, mutual goals, and responsibility to the public at large as owners of Township parks.





# Plan Implementation

---

## Putting the Pieces Together: Our Strategy

Our parks and open spaces can weave together all Lower Makefield Township residents through a system of green, connected parks, trails, and programs. Our parks, recreation facilities, and trails create a sense of community that our residents treasure. Our open space, parks, and



recreation system connected by safe places to walk and bicycle can provide access to natural, cultural, and historic assets. These are opportunities to be active and healthy as well as places to play and celebrate. Our green spaces protect things that we can't live without like clean air and water.

Lower Makefield is one of the best places to live in Pennsylvania. Our Township is completing its development. Optimizing open space, parks, and recreation calls for innovation, commitment, partnerships and balancing overall community needs with limited resources. Perhaps more than most municipalities, the residents love their community and have a deep and protective sense of the importance of protecting its rural agrarian charm, aesthetics, and quality of life here. The community has witnessed the forces of development that have changed southeastern Pennsylvania and resulted in the loss of open space. Our community wishes to stem the tide of more development. With about 1,100 acres of open space remaining

and vulnerable, the Township faces three major challenges—time urgency, limited financial resources, and competing Township needs that require funding.

## Play for All

Achieving balance in providing opportunities for all is our driving theme in the Township's Parks and Recreation Department over the next ten years and beyond. Our community needs more athletic fields and game courts, places to connect with nature, facilities to gather and celebrate life's big moments, and safe places to walk and bicycle for people of all ages, interests, cultures, and abilities. We need to come together as a community to improve our parks and recreation system for all.

Based on research, Township resources, public input, partnerships, and the assessment of existing facilities, the following implementation strategy was developed. It is designed to advance the vision and goals for improving the quality of life in Lower Makefield Township through parks, recreation, trails, and open space. The strategy requires time, funding, creativity, and a strong sense of collaboration and goodwill. The action steps for the strategy include the following:

## Protect as much of the remaining open space as possible.

- Determine the viability of securing additional open space, preferably in the 80 to 100—acre range for a community park with a mix of active and passive recreation facilities.
- Determine potential partnerships among willing landowners where the possibility exists to secure additional parkland.

### **Important Benefits of Parks and Recreation**

Great communities have great parks and recreation systems with well-designed facilities, outstanding natural features, and lively programs to engage residents of all ages and interests. Just viewing parks and open spaces whether people use them or not reduces stress levels. Direct interaction by using parks and recreation facilities yields even more benefits to people who live, work, and visit here. In providing input for this plan, the public stated that parks and recreation is a defining feature of the high quality of life in Lower Makefield. This was never more evident than in the past two years when our parks were even more heavily used during the public health crisis.

Source: New Scientist. (2021) Green spaces aren't just for nature – they boost our mental health too. Accessed March 17, 2021: <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24933270-800-green-spaces-arent-just-for-nature-they-boost-our-mental-health-too/>

Read more: <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24933270-800-green-spaces-arent-just-for-nature-they-boost-our-mental-health-too/#ixzz7QVFMndtL>

### Provide additional athletic facility capacity.

- Plan and develop the 38-acre Snipes site as a community park with a mix of active and passive recreation facilities and conservation of identified natural features worthy of protection.
- Update the master plan based on the findings of this **Parks and Recreation Plan** outreach process.
- Conduct a public outreach program to generate responses to the updated master plan and its revision based on public comment.
- Adopt the final master plan, develop construction documents, identify the funding sources, and proceed with construction of the site.
- Undertake an analysis of Macclesfield Park with a team of traffic engineers, landscape architects, and sports field specialists with a goal of determining the capacity of the 98 acres for sports fields, parking, and other facilities to optimize sports, public use, and safety in this park. Assess all potential solutions for

building more athletic fields for all sports including new and emerging sports like cricket, from securing more open space to alternatives such as turf fields and lighting. Develop an action plan to address this immediate need while recognizing that solutions can range from low hanging fruit to longer term measures. The discussion about securing additional open space is a critical part of creating solutions for more recreation facilities.

- Light the sports fields at Caiola Park.
- Explore potential to line the turf areas for additional sports use at Memorial Park and other tracts that may become available

### Upgrade existing parks and recreation facilities.

- Develop the remaining amenities designed for Memorial Park.
- Complete the pool improvements identified in the Pool Needs Assessment. The highest priority should be the restrooms and locker rooms.

- Assess and update policies on gifts and partnerships regarding the improvement, public/private investment, use, management maintenance, and control of publicly owned land and facilities.



### Continue to advance the Township's Bicycle and Sidewalk systems network.

- Continue with trails that are funded.
- Continue the Trail Maintenance Plan through 2024, adding more trails annually.
- Continue planning and designing trail segments with "shovel-ready" designs to capture grants from newly established federal funding programs. These include the Rescue Act, Federal Infrastructure Program, and the increased and now permanent Land and Water Conservation Fund which PA DCNR manages.

### Keep the parks safe, clean, functional, and aesthetically pleasing.

- As park improvements are made, provide for commensurate increase in maintenance support. Since one position was recently added, track and document park maintenance workload and add another worker. This worker should have expertise in landscape maintenance with ability to participate in a training program.
- Explore software for maintenance workload tracking and management.

## Expand recreation programming in accordance with capacity and partnerships.

- Follow through with outreach on this plan to involve the Pennsbury School District and neighboring municipalities to engage in a discussion on how to serve tweens and teens during non-school hours and with a variety of opportunities, including music, art, drama, dance, fitness, nature, STEM, and sports.
- Apply for a \$10,000 Peer grant with a \$1,000 split among the participating organizations to explore multi-municipal programming partnerships. The grant is to retain a parks and recreation professional to facilitate and support the process and project goals. Carry out this project starting in fiscal year to build on the interest and momentum of this **Parks and Recreation Plan**.
- Continue to support the partnering groups as the main providers of recreation programs and events.

Since this **Parks and Recreation Plan** lists a comprehensive set of

recommendations and improvements, the strategy above sets forth a plan to move ahead by using a mix of public and private funding and support.

As Lower Makefield Township evolves and the needs, interests, and lifestyles of our residents change, our parks, recreation, and bicycle network system must go forward, stay relevant, and be the best part of everyone's day. To ensure that our parks and recreation system remains environmentally and financially sustainable, our plan of action for the next ten years is set forth in the following table. This plan will ensure that present and future generations will have opportunities to connect with nature close-to-home, safely walk and bicycle, enjoy our top-notch parks, and participate in our programs that add years to our lives and life to our years.

This plan celebrates what the Township has already achieved and defines a path for making our natural and recreational assets even better.

Everyone who cares about Lower Makefield Township has a role to play in taking our parks and recreation system to its next level of excellence. The Township is committed to implementing this plan. We are hoping that our community will join us in carrying out the action steps in the following tables.

## Getting Started

The Township can seize the momentum generated during the process to create the **Parks and Recreation Plan**. The first year of implementation is important. Not everything can be achieved at once. Improvements can range in size from “no cost” changes that require only staff time to large ticket items, such as major park and athletic field revitalization. No matter how small the change, each one leads to great success and the support of

the public to keep on advancing “**Play for All.**” The following table presents the action plan for the first year of implementation, 2022–2023. The next set of tables present actions according to the goals of the plan. These recommendations are meant to be flexible and implemented as needs change, opportunities emerge, and funding becomes available.





Year 1 Action Plan						
In addition to the ongoing responsibilities of managing the parks and recreation system, carry out the following five recommendations. Each will take time, effort, creativity, and dedication.						
Recommendations	Priority	Years	Responsibility	Resources	Method	Outcomes
Carry out a discussion about the preservation of additional open space, particularly on securing 80-100 acres for a community park.	High	2022-2023	Board of Supervisors, Twp. Mgr., P&R Dir, Planning Dir.	Time of staff and elected officials	Identify the potential properties to be considered that would be based on partnership potential, willing sellers, Township resources and grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential partnership with a landowner for the public good and the benefit of all parties.</li> <li>• Preservation of open space.</li> </ul>
Address the need for more athletic facilities	High	2022-2025	P&R Dir to lead the project with support from Twp. Mgr., BOS, and P&R BD	Staff time. Consulting fees for mater planning and site evaluations. \$10,000–20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate Memorial Park for additional sports fields via field lining.</li> <li>• Retain a team of traffic engineers, landscape architects, and sports turf experts to provide solutions to the issues at Macclesfield regarding sports fields.</li> <li>• Include all Township-wide possibilities for more sports capacity via land the Township owns to lands needed, and partnership potential on other lands.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased capacity of the Township for athletic facilities.</li> <li>• Preservation of open space for recreational use and connection to nature through effective design.</li> </ul>
Convene a discussion with the Pennsbury School District and its municipalities to explore after school programming for the 70% of kids not engaged in after-school programs	High	2023	Planning Director, P&R Dir.	P&R Dir and Program Coordinator time	Carry out the planning and implementation of the discussion about programming. Consider applying for a \$10,000 grant for a parks and recreation facilitator for the group to explore multimunicipal & School District recreation partnerships. Divide the \$1,000 match among the participating organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of important services for youth.</li> <li>• Potential to create a state grant-funded recreation position for four years in programming.</li> </ul>
Carry out the CAPRA process	High	2022	P&R Dir with recreation staff	Staff time	Provide materials, resources, and information needed by the CAPRA Committee.	Effective management of natural resources, staff training, protection of our clean air and water.
Continue to implement planned park improvements	High	2022-2025	P&R Director, Planning Director	Township funds, Grants, Partnerships	Pool improvements, Caiola Park field lighting, trail segments, Memorial Park Phase 2, Schuyler Tennis Court rehabilitation.	Upgraded parks and recreation facilities to serve the public at the level they desire.

Goal 1 Protect Green Space and Provide a Plan for Stewardship						
Recommendations	Priority	Years	Responsibility	Resources	Method	Outcomes
Explore the acquisition of additional 80–100 acres of parkland, preferably in one location	High	2022	Board of Supervisors, Twp. Mgr., P&R Dir, Planning Dir.	Township funds, grants, and potential partnerships. Multimillions investment required.	Identify preferred property. Work with willing landowners. Pursue potential partnerships.	Preserves open space. Provides land for park and recreation needs. Creates <b>“Play for All”</b> Space for active and passive recreation.
<b>Green Space Conservation</b>						
Update the Open Space Plan	Medium	2024-2027	Planning Director, P&R Dir.	Township funds and PA DCNR grant.  \$45,000–\$55,000	Retain outside experts in open space planning.	Identification of open space, recommendations for conservation and stewardship pilot program for application to open space.
Develop a stewardship plan for conservation, maintenance, and management of protected open space	Medium	2024	P&R Dir with maintenance staff	Township funds  \$30,000	Retain land trust organization with training capacity and experience maintaining passive sites and natural resources.	Effective management of natural resources, staff training, protection of our clean air and water.
Continue program to naturalize retention basins where appropriate	Medium	Ongoing	P&R Maintenance	Township funds	Naturalize retention basins where appropriate. Base decisions on surrounding land use and other factors.	Reduced mowing costs and improved habitat.

**Goal 2 “Play for All” —Continue to improve parks, recreation, and nature-based facilities that serve all ages, abilities, cultures, and abilities.**

Recommendations	Priority	Years	Responsibility	Resources	Method	Outcomes
Provide more ballfields	High	2022-2023	Board of Supervisors, P&R Dir, Twp. Mgr.	Township funds, grants, and partnerships. Multimillions investment required based on potential solutions.	Address all sports— emerging, existing, and growing. Consider all factors in creating solutions to adding fields: more land, turf, lighting, and partnerships.	Being able to accommodate growing participation in existing and emerging sports teams. Improved safety for park visitors. Higher quality field conditions through maintenance.
Move forward with the development of the Snipes Tract as a community park with a mix of active and passive recreation facilities, including athletic fields	High	2022-2023	P&R Dir.	Township funds and potential partnerships. PA DCNR and/or PA DCED grants.  \$4–\$5 million	Retain landscape architect skilled in park design to update master plan. Involve key stakeholders in the update. Engage the public in master plan review. Move forward with steps through construction.	Achieve balance between active and passive park uses sought by the public. Addresses need for more fields, trails, socializing play areas, and connections to nature. Resolves 18-year-old Township issue.
Rehabilitate and improve Macclesfield Park	High	2022-2023+	P&R Dir with maintenance staff, consultants, and leagues	Township funds, partnerships, grants. Cost to be determined but in the millions of dollars.	Retain landscape architect, traffic engineer, and sports field professionals to evaluate site and provide solutions. Involve stakeholders in process.	Improve field conditions, safety, and park visitor experiences. Solutions for more fields may involve other locations.
Develop policies for partnerships and donations regarding ownership, use, public access, and care	High	2022	P&R Dir and P&R Bd	Township staff and volunteer time. Involvement of partners and league reps.	Continue outreach on examples elsewhere. Set ground rules. Develop and discuss policies to adopt.	Fairness for public as owners. Access, understanding, supports and consensus among partners.
Explore potential to create sports hubs	High	Ongoing	P&R Dir, P&R Bd and leagues	Discuss creating destinations and hubs for rectangular fields and diamond fields	Part of planning and design process for Snipes and Macclesfield planning projects	Make league play more convenient for families. Support tournaments.
Diversify sports opportunities	Medium	2024 - 2027	P&R Dir, P&R Bd and leagues	Township staff and volunteer time	Work with emerging sports interests such as cricket, field hockey, ultimate frisbee reps.	Provides recommendations for facilities for emerging or underserved sports.
Provide or improve support amenities	High and Medium	2022-2027	P&R Dir. P&R Bd	Staff time plus funds for improvements	Parking and restrooms are the highest priority.	Improved safety. Responds to public needs.

Continued						
Goal 2	“Play for All_ - Continue to improve parks, recreation, and nature-based facilities that serve all ages, abilities, cultures, and abilities.					
Recommendations	Priority	Years	Responsibility	Resources	Method	Outcomes
Assess all parks considering “Play for All” and raising the bar on quality of design and construction.	Low	2028-2031	P&R Dir, P&R Bd	Township funds and grants.	Phase in assessment based on public interests and facility needs. Retain a consulting team with expertise in the design of great public spaces.	Improved facilities and protection of natural resources. Increased public pride in Township facilities and quality of life in Lower Makefield.
Develop or update park master plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five Mile Woods</li> <li>• Patterson Farm</li> </ul>	Low	2028 - 2031	P&R Dir, P&R Bd.	Township funds and potential partnerships. PA DCNR and/or PA DCED grants.  \$50,000 - \$100,000 per master plan.	Retain landscape architect skilled in park design to develop or update master plans. Involve key stakeholders in process. Engage the public in master plan review. Move forward with steps through construction.	Achieve balance between active and passive park uses sought by the public.
Develop and install park signage system	Low	2028-2031	P&R Dir, P&R Bd	Township funds and potential partnerships. PA DCNR and/or PA DCED grants.  \$50,000 - \$100,000 for design. Signage costs to be determined	Retain a park signage expert with specific experience in creating park signage systems. Tie the signage design to rebranding effort for Township Parks and Recreation. Phase in the sign installations in conjunction with park improvements	A signage system evokes public awareness of the greatness of the system, community pride, and information about what is available to increase public use and enjoyment.
Explore potential ways to increase indoor recreation space.	Medium to Low	2025 - 2031	P&R Director, P&R Bd, Bd of Supv.	P&R Dir, P&R Bd, Bd of Supv.	Work with School District on collaboration on indoor space, especially for a pool, gyms, and potentially a community center.	Collaboration on indoor facilities, especially a shared community center, could reduce costs and increase public benefit.

<b>Goal 3 Connect the Township with safe places to walk and bicycle.</b>						
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>Continue work on completing the Township's bike and walking path system</b>	High	Ongoing	Planning Dir with support from P&R Dir & maintenance	Township funds and grants: \$700,000 grant \$353,000 and \$52,000 grants.	Lower Makefield Community Trail. Woodside Road bike path. Snipes Tract bike path. Newtown to D&L Canal bike path.	Meeting the top need identified by Township residents as their most preferred improvement.
<b>Pursue funding for trails under the new federal infrastructure programs.</b>	High	2022-2023	Planning Dir.	Consider retaining a firm skilled in identifying and seeking grants.	Interview a few firms with solid track records in securing grants. The current staff capacity in LMT limits the work required to identify and secure grants.	Ability for LMT to fund more trails.
<b>Work on closing trail gaps.</b>	Medium	2028 - 2031	Planning Dir.	Staff and volunteer time	Identification of trail gaps with study of solutions to close the gaps.	Ability of the Township to create a connected bike path network with regional trail connections.

Goal 4. Engage residents in active living through recreation opportunities for all ages, abilities, cultures, and interests.						
Recommendations	Priority	Years	Responsibility	Resources	Method	Outcomes
Continue to offer programs within current core areas.	High	Ongoing	Program Mgr. Aquatics Mgr. Sports Leagues	Township support for program staff.	LMT recovers costs on programs and in all enterprise fund facilities.	Provides excellent public service and accrues benefits in health and wellness, environment, community building, and a thriving local economy.
Explore multi-municipal and school district recreation program partnership	High	2022-2023	P&R Dir., Program Mgr.	Staff time and DCNR grant	Negotiate participation by neighboring municipalities and the Pennsbury School District. Apply for Peer grant to retain a parks and recreation [professional to facilitate the process. Conduct discussions over the course of a year to determine how a program consortium could work.	More recreation opportunities for the groups identified as most in need: tweens and teens. Expanded opportunities in sports and beyond into other lifelong pursuits in music, art, drama, dance, STEM, and others.
Continue to implement the ADA Transition Plan.	High	Ongoing	P&R Dir. Program Mgr.	Staff time	P7R staff are working on making programs offered by LMYT and others accessible with convenient access to information about them.	A more inclusive and welcoming community in LMT.
As staff capacity increase with additional positions, add core areas of arts, enrichment, health, nature and services for older adults, tweens, and teens.	Medium	2024 - 2027	P&R Dir. Program Mgr.	Hire additional staff when funding and administrative space are available.	Explore adding administrative space in conjunction with indoor recreation space. Hire additional staff with job descriptions tailored to program focus areas.	Increased recreation opportunities for the community. Programs generate revenue.
Continue to track and monitor program data including the underserved	Medium	Ongoing	Program Mgr.	Staff time	Analyze data to plan and manage programs and allocate resources. Determine how to identify and respectfully support those in socioeconomic need.	Ability of the Township to improve customer service, programs, and resident satisfaction with public recreation.

<b>Goal 5. Continue to provide excellence in operations, management, and financing to bring the greatest benefit to the public.</b>						
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Maintain and operate parks, recreation facilities and trails efficiently and effectively	High	Ongoing	P&R Dir and Maintenance Staff	Township support and partnerships	Implement the LMT Park Maintenance & Operations Plan	Protection of Township investment in facilities and enhanced visitor experiences. Higher quality facilities especially those that are the most used.
Continue to provide high quality customer service.	High	ongoing	All Township employees.	Staff time and ongoing training and evaluation	Abide by the standards set forth by the P& R Department in serving customers, program participants, and park visitors.	Highly favorable Township approval ratings, and equally happy residents. A more active and engaged community.
Continue to be fiscally and financially far-sighted in supporting parks and recreation	High	Ongoing.	P&R Dir, P&R Bd, Twp. Mgr., Bd of Supv.	Continue to use a mix of public and private funds to support public recreation	Continue to use Enterprise funds for special use facilities to recover all costs. Continue to recover operating costs for general recreation at the level of 75%.	Recognition of LMT as the first nationally accredited parks and recreation system in PA. High level of public satisfaction. Ability of the Township to provide more and better services and facilities with this level of support.
Improve information and Communication about parks and recreation internally and externally.	Medium	2024-2027	P&R Dir and staff	Coordination with Township on website improvements	Surveys, evaluations, social media monitoring, and tracking of resident communications.	Improved community satisfaction, enhanced public service, increased participation, and more revenue generation.





# Moving Forward...

---

Lower Makefield Township is one of the best places in Pennsylvania in which to live, work, raise a family, and retire. Arguably, the Township is also one of the best places for recreation in the nation. Past visionaries dared to dream of establishing the 21 beloved parks with trails, nature preserves, an Aquatics Complex, community center, playgrounds, 9/11 Garden of Reflection, award winning golf course, and athletic facilities. **Play for All** will take the Township into the future.

Our parks and programs serve as a central gathering place, a point of local pride, and a source of health and wellness. As our community needs and interests evolve, our parks and recreation system must adapt, stay relevant, and continue to provide opportunities for all. So that our parks and recreation system remains environmentally and financially sustainable, this plan of action will ensure that present and future generations have opportunities to connect with nature close to home, safely walk and bicycle, enjoy our state-of-the-art parks. Our programs add years to our lives and life to our years.

**Play for All: Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Plan 2022–2031** celebrates the Township’s achievements and defines a path for making parks, recreation, trails, and open space even better for everyone. Everyone who cares about our community has a role to play in taking our parks and recreation system to its next level of excellence. Lower Makefield Township is committed to implementing this plan.

Contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 267-274-1110 to stay updated and to learn how to participate in future planning, and to



learn more about how to enjoy and improve our parks and recreation opportunities close to home.

# ALL FOR PLAY



Toole Recreation Planning

Ann M. Toole, CPRP, CPP

Certified Parks and Recreation Professional

+1(267)261-7989 | Doylestown, PA