



PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND MASTER PLAN

Health. Environment. Community.

Lower Makefield Township

Lower Makefield Township Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment and Master Plan

PROPOSAL

Submitted April 2, 2021 by:



Ann M. Toole, CPRP, CPP
CEO, Toole Recreation Planning
6081 Honey Hollow Road Doylestown, Pennsylvania 18902
anntoole@comcast.net | 267-261-7989



April 2, 2021

Monica Tierney, Parks and Recreation Director
Lower Makefield Township
1550 Oxford Valley Road
Yardley, PA 19067

Dear Ms. Tierney:

Your timing on developing the Township's **Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment and Master Plan** could not be better. While the COVID-19 public health crisis cast uncertainty on just about everything related to government operations and how we live, it has also brought to light exactly how important parks, recreation, and trails are to our community. We may be unsure of all the changes ahead, but we know with certainty that residents are using parks, recreation facilities, and bicycle trails more than ever.

It is also most exciting to know that you are pursuing your CAPRA accreditation. Wow – you'd be the first department in the Commonwealth to achieve that distinction! There's nothing more that I'd love than to help you work toward that accomplishment. It's a lot of work yet totally worth the effort in establishing your own brand in the professionalism of your department. Having developed your **1996 Parks and Recreation Plan**, it gives me great joy to see all of your accomplishments in parks and recreation: Growth in programming. First class recreation facilities. Conservation of important lands. Makefield Highlands. Community Center. Significant investment and support of public parks and recreation as an essential service.

We understand that you wish to focus on a full **Needs Assessment** for all aspects of parks and recreation. You wish to advance your previous work with the Bucks County Planning Commission on facility use and needs oriented to constructing more facilities related to league sports. The **2019 Lower Makefield Township Comprehensive Plan** provides a solid basis and foundation to launch the **Needs Assessment and Master Plan** you are now undertaking. Along with the work you have already done for CAPRA, your budget will enable you to zero in on this important planning project that will help to guide informed decision-making about parks amenities, programs, and services.

Our robust public engagement process will help you to increase the likelihood that vision, projects and solutions will be widely accepted in the community. We have found that citizens who participate in these processes show significant commitment to implementing our parks and recreation plans. Drawing on local knowledge from a diverse group creates solutions that are practical and effective. Our process is

designed not only to collect information but also to increase public awareness about real issues and opportunities as well as to build consensus and support for implementation of your **Master Plan** even on the most challenging considerations.

We pride ourselves in being available and easily accessible to you. I live minutes away and am in Lower Makefield Township five to six days a week where I work out - near your dog park. We would be happy to discuss tailoring our scope and price to meet your needs. Please feel free to contact me at by phone or text at 267-261-7989 or via email at anntoole@comcast.net.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Toole, CPRP

Ann M. Toole, CPRP, CPP



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Lower Makefield Township Needs Assessment and Park Master Plan Project Proposal Summary

Toole Recreation Planning is proposing to work with the Parks and Recreation Department on developing the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment and Master Plan.

Purpose

We will focus on the Needs Assessment to include residents from every demographic on their satisfaction and use of the Township's parks and recreation system, their needs and interests, priorities for the future, and their level of support.

Methods

We will work closely with the Parks and Recreation Director in developing the outreach and engagement program and facility assessment. Public engagement will include an Advisory Committee, Interviews, Focus Groups, coordination with Township's website and social media, Public Opinion survey, and Public Meetings whether virtual or in person. We go to where the people are rather than on traditional meeting settings.

Scope of Work

We will build upon the work that has been done for the **Comprehensive Plan**, related municipal and regional plans, and the CAPRA preparation. We will: organize the planning approach and process at launch; focus the public engagement strategy and timing; collect readily available information to build upon so that we can focus on strategy moving forward; identify needs, issues and opportunities; ascertain priorities; create the vision, mission and goals for the Master Plan; identify the strategy for the plan implementation; create the recommendations; establish the implementation schedule and methods; and create the "Jump Start" first year action plan.

Schedule

One Year with draft plan produced by month nine. This leaves a desirable amount of time for township consideration and action prior to adoption.

Fee

\$25,000 in accordance with your budget.

A. Firm Profile

Who is Toole Recreation Planning?

Toole Recreation Planning, founded in 1992, is a small firm with a large presence in parks and recreation. We are based minutes away from Lower Makefield in Solebury.

Toole Recreation Planning has worked with Lower Makefield Township on the Parks and Recreation Plan of 1996 and a park master plan for the ball fields at Oxford Valley and Roelof's Roads.

We are one of the few firms nationwide dedicated to parks and recreation planning with experience in the parks and recreation field as practitioners at the municipal, county, state, and national levels of government as well in the private sector .

In this work, we have helped to shape and transform parks and recreation systems in more than 1,000 projects. Many of those projects were in Bucks County including:

- Bucks County Bicycle Plan, Destination Doylestown and the Tri-Municipal Regional Bicycle Trail in Central Bucks County
- Needs assessments and plans with Warrington, Doylestown Township, Doylestown Borough, Chalfont, New Britain Borough, New Britain Township, Falls, Lower Southampton, Upper Southampton, Middletown, Northampton, Warminster, Perkasio, New Hope, Springfield and Upper Makefield.
- Park master plans for the new Kids Mountain at Lions Pride Park, Warrington; Falls Community Park; New Hope's rivers edge parks and pathway; Springfield's Peppermint Road Park; Middletown's Spring Valley Farm; Bucks County's Playwicki Farm; Helen Randle Park, Newtown; Brownsburg and

Wilkes-Barre, PA

Bridgeport, CT



Lookout Parks, Upper Makefield; and the award-winning Park Master plan for Washington Crossing Historic Park for the Bureau of State Parks.

Firm Organization and Staffing

Toole Recreation Planning operates through strategic relationships with a host of landscape architecture, architecture, engineering, planning, and technology firms in the United States and Canada. This ensures that we organize a team with state of the art expertise tailored for each and every project.

Firm Personnel

Toole Recreation Planning has two principles: Ann M. Toole, CPRP, CPP, Parks and Recreation Planning Director, and Monica Gagliardi, Planning, Design, and Communications Director. Ann is a parks and recreation planner. Monica is a Landscape Architect with a master's degree from Temple University. They will be the professionals dedicated to working with Lower Makefield Township on

the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment and Master Plan.

Ann and Monica have worked together since 2015 on parks, recreation,

and trail projects

including extensive

public

outreach, social media, and communication strategies. Ann

is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional

(CPRP). As a landscape

architect with a master's degree from Temple University,

Monica's training is planning and ecology. We will be the two

people that Lower Makefield

will work with. We will be with you every step of the way!



Working with stakeholders in Chester

TooLe Recreation Planning



Roberto Clemente Jr. cutting the ribbon in Roberto Clemente Park. Ann Toole won the EPA's Phoenix Award for community impact through park and recreation planning

ROBERTO CLEMENTE PARK, LANCASTER, PA
COMMUNITY IMPACT PHOENIX AWARD WINNER

PRIMARY REASON FOR REDEVELOPMENT

Approximately 40 years ago Roberto Clemente Park came into being as part of an urban renewal project in the City of Lancaster (PA). The project resulted in the demolition of neighborhood homes and businesses to make way for a linear park, a wider thoroughfare, an elementary school and combination playground/ballfield (Roberto Clemente Park). Years later, the unintended consequences of urban renewal became evident. Neglect, poor management, and an increasing concentration of poverty and blight in the surrounding neighborhood, turned this 3.5 acre park into a neighborhood liability rather than an asset.

PLANNING FOR REDEVELOPMENT

The neighborhood surrounding Roberto Clemente Park was one of four key areas addressed in a citywide plan to stimulate economic revitalization. The plan

was initially focused on expanding the commercial base and rehabilitating the aging housing stock along the corridor. Streetscape and park improvements were only included as amenities in support of commercial expansion and housing revitalization. However, as the Inner City Group (Lead Project Participant) began working with the multi-ethnic neighborhood to create a more detailed neighborhood revitalization plan, residents clearly stated that the **revitalization of Roberto Clemente Park was the key to improving the neighborhood**. The park became a critical component in the larger \$4.5 million South Duke Street revitalization project.

APPROACH

To facilitate redevelopment, the Inner City Group secured a long-term lease for the property from the School District of Lancaster (owner). After three years focused on planning and raising the funds needed to improve the Park, the Inner City Group was finally ready to start construction. However, while doing soil borings in advance of regrading the site, historic fill was discovered raising concerns about contamination. The Inner City Group approached the Lancaster County Planning Commission for assistance through its Land Recycling Program. Over the course of the next two years, the County used its US EPA Brownfield Assessment Pilot grant to conduct assessments and develop cleanup plans for the site.

INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES

Several innovative brownfield techniques were employed in the Roberto Clemente Park project, including:

1. The use of public-private partnerships to facilitate and finance redevelopment.
2. Use of EPA Brownfield Assessment Demonstration Pilot grant funds in coordination with Pennsylvania's Act 2 program for assessment and remediation planning.
3. Use of a site-specific Human Health Risk Assessment to address (scattered) arsenic contamination in soils, and
4. Use of innovative management approaches to the ongoing maintenance of the park.

CHALLENGES

There were two primary challenges associated with this project. The first was working with the multi-ethnic community to develop a neighborhood consensus regarding redevelopment, particularly as it pertained to Roberto Clemente Park. The second challenge was of a technical nature. The broad variety of prior property uses including a dry cleaner, junk yard, and umbrella handle manufacturer created the need to cost-effectively evaluate a wide range of potential chemicals of concern, while also focusing sampling efforts to ensure a cost-effective cleanup.

BENEFITS

The revitalization of Roberto Clemente Park has enhanced the civic and community pride in the neighborhood and has led to economic growth and an improved quality of life for this multi-ethnic community. There has been over 5 million dollars of public and private investment in the neighborhood in the form of commercial and residential property improvements, construction of new single family homes, the relocation of five new businesses to serve the neighborhood (credit union, beauty salon, insurance company, restaurant, retail shoe store) and streetscape enhancements to promote greater pedestrian and vehicular safety.

KEY PROJECT LESSON: A good plan that is supported by and involves the community in a meaningful way is the key to a successful urban revitalization effort.

1994 Bankers meet showing land use prior to urban renewal, including a dry cleaner, junk yard, and umbrella handle manufacturer.

Top Left: Roberto Clemente, Jr. at the ribbon cutting for the park. **Top Center:** Participants at Youth Day in Roberto Clemente Park. **Top Right:** Façade improvements underway on the residential street bordering the park. **Bottom Left:** Grand opening of a local credit union near the park. **Bottom Right:** The Inner City Group Board accept funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Roberto Clemente Park today, featuring a community-built playground.

FEATURED PARTNERS

- Inner City Group
- County of Lancaster/ Lancaster County Planning Commission
- Environmental Standards, Inc.
- South Duke Street/Roberto Clemente Park Neighborhood Advisory Committee
- School District of Lancaster
- Lancaster Weed & Seed
- Rep. Mike Sturtis, Pennsylvania House of Representatives
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III
- Toole Recreation Planning
- YSM Site Design and Planning
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- High Industries, Inc.
- Wachovia Regional Foundation
- State Farm Insurance Foundation
- M & T Bank
- City of Lancaster

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized Ann Toole for her community involvement on Roberto Clemente Park in Lancaster. She earned the Phoenix Award for Community Impact saying that they created a “Good Plan that is supported by and involves the community in a meaningful way is the key to successful community revitalization effort.”



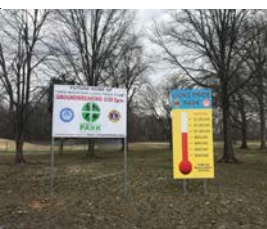
Fifth graders' design Charrette



Team translated kids design into playground master plan



Team connected with community group, created a “how-to” fundraiser project, and launched it!



The Payoff: fundraising \$1,800,000+ and going!



Ribbon cutting October 2, 2020.



Warrington Township Playground for All Project

Toole Recreation Planning developed a Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan for Warrington Township. Photos show the park master plan in conjunction with the project that featured teaching the community how to fundraise, playground design by youth, extensive community involvement, in addition to a trail plan, open space acquisition with one of DCNR's largest grants, conservation planning, and a PRPS award to the Township for environmental education programming.

Consultant Qualifications

The following five qualifications for parks and recreation consultants are used as the standard by PA DCNR. They directly relate to the expertise that Lower Makefield needs for a successful needs assessment and master plan.

- A. Leadership
- B. Development of public participation processes
- C. Development of planning documents and design of public parks and recreation facilities
- D. Development of policies and procedures for operation, management and maintenance of public park and recreation facilities.
- E. Effective communication of recommendations and implementation strategies.

We present our qualifications in these areas below.

received the Thought Leader in Action Award for leadership in developing and carrying out every major statewide parks and recreation initiative in Pennsylvania over a decade including the Pennsylvania Urban Parks & Recreation Alliance, the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute and the Good for You branding and promotional campaign for parks and recreation. She serves as a Regent for the National Recreation & Park Association's Park Maintenance Management School and teaches park maintenance under North Carolina State University's auspices. Ann received a Phoenix Award from the United States Environmental Protection Agency in

recognition of her community engagement work in using a park master plan for build a sense of community that was worthy of national recognition.

B. Similar Projects – Our award-winning team has developed more than 1,000 similar projects, many funded by grants. However, each is unique. Now circumstances are changing due to the Covid 19 pandemic. We are working diligently and creatively in adapting parks, recreation and open space planning to the “new normal” in light of the crisis and the return of public service to follow. We are working with our extensive network of parks and recreation colleagues across the country in gathering real time information on practices underway and being created to position parks and recreation as guidelines evolve. We have largely re-written a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan that we were completing as the Covid 19 crisis hit **pro bono** for the municipality to

help the community to move ahead. We were happy to do that for them!

C. Development of Public

Participation Processes –

Community engagement is our calling card.

Our team has



Toole Recreation planning motto: Go to where the people are!



won awards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society,

the American Academy of Parks & Recreation Administrators, and several cities for our public involvement processes and their positive impact on the community. We have collaborated





with PA DCNR in formulating methods for public outreach including surveys, focus groups, and methodology that gets communities past “check list” kind of planning into more meaningful community engagement. We are now working with the Bureau of State Parks on public engagement to develop strategies for managing overcrowding and protecting resources in state parks.

DEI - We work in highly diverse environments and strive to bring diversity, equity and inclusion to every community. Our plans in places like Chester, Reading, Allentown, Coatesville, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C have helped us in newly diversifying communities. Most of our DEI work involves non-traditional methods such as partnerships with faith based institutions, community based organizations. Our work nearing completion in Media, PA, involves working on a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan with emerging groups such as FARE (Family Alliance for Respect and Equity), Black

Parents Group, and diversity groups in fifth and twelfth grades.

Ann serves as the Regent responsible for the development of the DEI course work for the students in the NRPA Park Maintenance Management School. PRPS featured her article on DEI in the workplace on its current magazine cover.



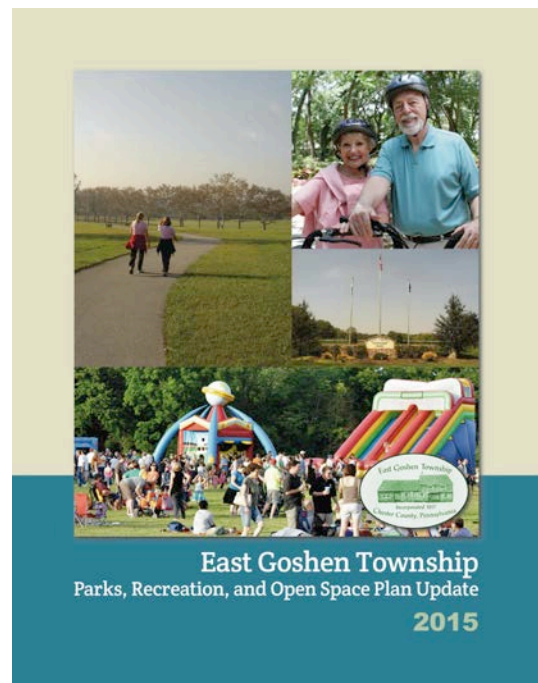
Summer Camp: Parks and Recreation Planning Workshops engaging Youth and Recreation Leaders on a community needs assessment.

D. Development of Planning Documents and Design for Public Parks and Recreation Facilities – Among the 1,000+ projects that we have undertaken, all include planning documents and design of public parks and recreation facilities. This includes planning and design for

municipal, county, state and national parks. Examples of the diverse range of our recent work include a strategic plan for the Appalachian Trail Museum, the Visitor Management and Resource Protection Study for the Bureau of State Parks, a master plan for a new National Park, a fundraising project with Warrington, and re-visioning the 20 year old Greater Plymouth Community Center. Our projects focus heavily on inclusion not only addressing physical barriers but also the full range of services to ensure inclusion of people of all ages with a wide variety of needs beyond physical challenges alone. serving people on the autism spectrum, reducing the isolation of the aging, cultural inclusion, economic disadvantages, and other opportunities to engage and serve people specific to the community.

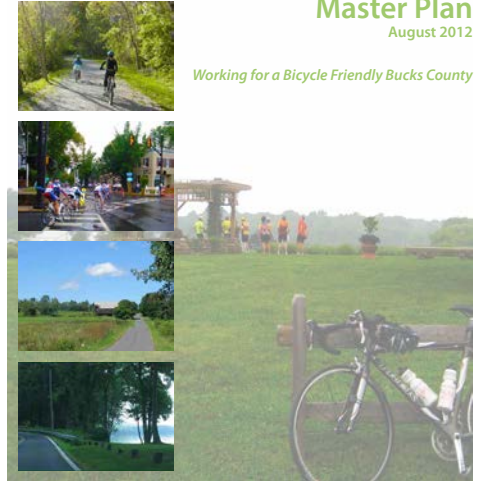
National Gold Medal Finalist

Our Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan for East Goshen Township resulted in successful implementation of recommendations that enabled the Township to be Pennsylvania's first finalist for a national Gold Medal Award as one of the finest parks and recreation systems for a municipality of its size in the USA. East Goshen was a finalist in 2019 and 2020.





Bucks County
BICYCLE
Master Plan
August 2012



E. Development of Policies and Procedures for Management, Maintenance and Operation of Public Parks and Recreation.

With our expertise rooted in our experience as practitioners in the field, policies, procedures, and policies figure prominently in our work.

Toole Recreation Planning regularly develops policies and procedures collaboratively with clients in municipal, county, state and national parks organizations. This includes the development and

advancement of the Good for You, Good for All statewide marketing campaign for public parks and recreation, the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute including securing funding and partnerships for it, and the NRPA Park Maintenance



PENNSYLVANIA
PARK MAINTENANCE
INSTITUTE

Management program. Our work in this area has the value of generating partnerships, sponsorships, revenues, cost savings, more efficient allocation of resources, and significant improvements in maintenance of facilities and the delivery of programs and services. Our polices have been used by PRPS and PA DNCR as models to assist parks and recreation departments statewide.

F. Effective Communication of Recommendations and Implementation Strategies to officials, non-profits and stakeholders. This is a core value of our work. One of the reasons that we have long-term relationships with our municipal clients is that we communicate effectively to ensure that our plans are implemented through creative, practical means with a mix of public and private support. We provide monthly progress reports, meet with our clients at strategic times and when the client wishes, and are pursuing new means of communicating on dedicated platforms to enable people to access documents appropriate to their role on the project.



B. Unique Experience

While we have been involved with more than 1,000 parks, recreation, open space and trail projects, a few examples of our recent accomplishments and unique experience includes:

- **Bureau of State Parks Visitor Management Study (2018/2020) –**



Therapy dog we used in a contentious state park public meeting.

The purpose of this project is to develop a needs assessment, community engagement, and plan of action to ensure the protection of natural and recreation

resources while providing optimal recreational experiences for park visitors. This project is the result of severe overcrowding in our state parks and will serve as a management model. The Bureau retained Toole Recreation Planning to lead its community engagement process.

- **Coatesville Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan and Three Park Master Plans with Implementation and Private Sector Support (2016 - Current),**



In our effort known as the “Greening of Coatesville” we developed a community needs assessment, two park revitalization projects, a regional parks and recreation partnership and plan, and a park master plan now underway. In a partnership with the Brandywine Health Foundation and Natural Lands, Toole Recreation Planning generated significant outcomes through the planning process including the development of a community build playground funded by KaBoom complete with the establishment of a park friends group for maintenance; the revitalization of Palmer Park via national grants through NRPA from American Water and

Coatesville Parks & Recreation Plan Client's Comment

I am beyond impressed with how thorough and well organized this plan is. I particularly like how focused your recommendations are. Kudos and thanks to all of you - I'm very excited to see how we can make all of this happen!

Frances M. Sheehan, President and CEO
Brandywine Health Foundation

the Disney company; and a strong partnership with the Brandywine Health Foundation who funded our planning work along with support from the William Penn Foundation. Disney recently traveled to Coatesville to film the Palmer Park revitalization based upon our park master plan. During our planning process, we recruited managers from the Minneapolis Recreation Commission (the top-rated public parks and recreation system in the United States) to come to Coatesville to work with us in developing "Street Reach", a recreation programming and community partnership program. This led to our further the development of a regional parks and recreation plan including the

provision of sports facilities and park revitalization.

- **Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute** – Toole Recreation Planning conceived, planned, developed, and launch the the Institute, one of PA DCNR and PRPS's major initiative to deal with the most pressing problems in public parks and recreation systems: insufficient park maintenance. We developed a business plan that has already generated funding and the Institute is expected to be self-sustaining in five years. Toole Recreation planning secured funding from TORO and private foundations for multi-year support.
- **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plans** recently completed or nearing completion include:
 - Warrington Township
 - Media Borough
 - East Whiteland Township
 - Plymouth Township
 - Whitpain Township





- Westtown Township

These projects all included extensive community engagement, new survey methodology, needs assessments, and strategic actions plans. Toole Recreation Planning has done needs assessments and parks,

recreation and open space plans with their updates and park master plans for Plymouth and Whitpain for nearly 30 years.

Firm Profiles, resumes and projects sheets are in the Appendix.

References

1. Warrington Township

Barry Luber, Township Manager
852 Easton Rd.
Warrington, PA 18976
215-343-9350
bluber@warringtontownship.org

Projects

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan
Kids Mountain at Lions Pride Park
Grants: PA DCNR, DCED and RecTAP
Fundraising

2. Media Borough

Karen Taussig-Lux, Administrator
301 North Jackson Street
Media, PA 19063
karen.taussig-lux@mediaborough.com
610-566-5210;ext.239

Project

Media Borough Open Space, Parks and Recreation Plan, including Trail Plan

3. Plymouth Township

Karen Franck, CPRP, Parks and Recreation Director
Greater Plymouth Community Center
2910 Jolly Road
Plymouth Meeting, Pa 19462
610-277-4312
kfranck@plymouthtownship.org

Projects

Parks and Recreation Plan 1992
Open Space Plan 1995
Three Updates: Parks, Recreation and Open Space including trails through 2020
Park Master Plans, implementation and updates for all eight township parks
Greater Plymouth Community Center, Planning, Management and Updates 1993-2021.

4. Westtown Township

Jon Altshul, Township Manager
Westtown Township
1039 Wilmington Pike
West Chester, PA 19382
(610) 692-1930

Projects

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan 2016
Oakbourne Park Master Plan including needs assessment, funding and management plan 2021
Grant Applications

I downloaded the draft Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan. All I can say is AWESOME.

Shirley Yannich, PP, AICP,
Warrington Township
Chair, Board of Supervisors



5. East Whiteland Township

Steven Brown, Assistant Township Manager, Parks and Recreation Manager
 209 Conestoga Road
 Frazer, PA 19355
 610-648-0600
 sbrown@eastwhiteland.org

Projects

East Whiteland Township Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
 Bacton Hill Park Master Plan, including grants and maintenance planning
 Down East Park Master Plan

6. **City of Chester:** Ann and Monica
 Lisa R. Gaffney, Deputy Director
 Chester Economic Development Authority
 1 Fourth Street
 P.O. Box 407
 Chester, PA 19016
 610-447-7861
 lrg@ceda.cc

I just want to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication in developing the Plan. It was great working with all of you.
 Lisa Gaffney
 Deputy Director
 Chester Economic Development Authority

Projects

City of Chester Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trail Plan (1992) and Update (2019)
 Six park master plans including a waterfront plan

7. City of Coatesville, PA

Linda Lavender-Norris, President, City Council,
 One City Hall Place
 Coatesville, PA 19320
 610-384-0300 ext. 4618 lavendernorris@coatesville.org

We just want all of you to move here! Great job. You listened to us.

Linda Lavender-Norris
 Council President

Projects

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
 Patton Park Playground Planning, Funding, Design, Construction and Friends Group for Maintenance
 Palmer Park Revitalization Planning, Design, Construction, Funding from two national grants and private sector

8. Whitpain Township

Kurt Baker, Parks & Recreation Director
 960 Wentz Road
 Blue Bell, PA 19422
 610-277-2400 ext. 381
 kbaker@whitpaintownship.org

Projects

Parks and Recreation Plan 2003
 Parks and Recreation Plan Update 2021



C. Project Approach: Methods and Procedures

Lower Makefield has a strong commitment to deliver high quality parks, recreation facilities, programs and services that will serve residents of all ages and abilities. This is no more evident than in the Township's current pursuit of CAPRA certification for the Parks and Recreation Department. As such, the Township wishes to retain a professional consulting team with proven expertise in developing a Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment and Master Plan

This Plan can be transformative in setting forth the vision for the next ten years. It will accommodate current and future park, recreation, trail and open space needs and interests of the community. Major emphasis will be on close-to-home recreation opportunities, creating community connections with safe places to walk and bicycle.

Our Understanding of the Project

Toole Recreation Planning worked with Lower Makefield Township on its original needs assessment in 1996. This project will expand the needs

assessment conducted in 2018. The project will serve as a framework for future planning decisions and resource allocation regarding amenities, services and programs.

The project will be built upon the work that has been completed since including work by the Bucks County Planning Commission in 2018 on an inventory and needs assessment of the existing recreation facilities owned and operated by the Township. The purpose of this work was to assist the Township in understanding current use and determine if there is a need to construct additional recreational facilities. The Bucks County Planning Commission also surveyed current league and user groups and potential users including field hockey, lacrosse and rugby. However this assessment did not include all recreation amenities. In 2019 and 2020, the Board of Supervisors, the Park and Recreation Board and the Parks and Recreation Department were unified in wanting to move ahead with a full needs assessment combined with a

strategic master plan. Our goal is to produce an implementable plan, rooted in robust community engagement, that will enhance the quality of life in the Township and be environmentally and financially sustainable long-term. The plan will include the following:

- Community inventory: expand on the 2018 needs assessment to include other amenities such as: the dog park, trail system, community center, volleyball courts, tennis courts, pool, etc.
- Expand on the 2018 needs assessment to include residents from every demographic assessing their satisfaction, interests, needs,

ideas, concerns, and level of support.

- Implementation plan will be practical yet visionary and include the community: surveys, community forums, focus groups and involvement of our advisory boards. It will also include all data analytics and reports.
- Final report and presentation.

The planning process will build upon the work that the has done by the Township in other planning efforts. Implementation of the recommendations will enable the Township to advance its mission and goals. The plan will:

Lower Makefield Township Needs Assessment and Master Plan Proposed Plan Phasing





Ramping Up Post-Pandemic

Our team has been diligently researching and networking with colleagues nationwide about ramping up parks and recreation from the Covid 19 Pandemic. While we are living in a time of uncertainty, this public health crisis is demonstrating that parks and public spaces are more important than ever. This is the optimal time for Lower Makefield Township to be undertaking this Needs Assessment and Master Plan. The collaboration of our team with Parks and Recreation Department, Township Management, Public Works Department, and elected and appointed officials affords all the opportunity of exploring, imagining and creating the kind of community we want to have here in Lower Makefield through parks and recreation. As so many things are changing, this plan will be empowering by enabling key stakeholders to have discussions informed by our planning team about future possibilities. We have already largely re-written a municipal Parks,

Recreation and Open Space Plan that was nearly finished in February pro bono for the municipality so that they will be able to begin to roll out parks and recreation working toward the “new normal”.

3. Scope of Work

The Scope of Work will build upon work that has been completed as described in the RFP melded with emerging post-pandemic trends and guidelines, public sentiments, and our experience. This affects all aspects of parks and recreation from facilities to programs and very significantly for this project: community engagement. We have been running public outreach on Zoom, GotoMeeting, Teams and social media for a while and are already beefing best forms of social media and technology in all of our work on parks and recreation planning. While challenges are evolving, the silver lining is that we are seeing virtual work to be a positive means of reaching people who traditionally are difficult to engage. New technology is enabling effective means of communication not possible

in the past. Since we still prefer gathering with community groups, we continue to monitor public health guidelines and offer virtual outreach when possible and use alternative online ways of communicating as well as on-the-ground means that are within Covid 19 guidelines.

Phase 1 Inventory and Assessment of Existing Resources

Strategic Kick-Off and Determination of Goals and Success Factors

Upon selection, we will provide a detailed work plan within two weeks based upon discussion with the core Township team who need and want to be involved in this meeting. This will include:

- Task processes
- Meetings
- Public engagement process
- Deliverables
- Strategies and timelines for one year from kickoff
- Project coordination
- Critical success factors

Background Information and Trends

We will review all relevant planning documents and reports on parks and recreation operations, financing, maintenance, planning, and management. This would include all policies and operations manuals and process if available.

Identify and assess trends affecting Lower Makefield, the region, and parks, recreation, open space, and trails.



Parks, Recreation, Open , and Trails Analysis

Conduct a SWOT analysis of the following proposed components to be adjusted per any Township preferences:

1. **Land, Facilities, and Connections.**

Maximizing parks and recreation facilities, connecting the community with safe places to walk and bicycle, protecting natural resources, advancing trails, parkland, and exploring new recreational facilities to meet changing needs and interests.

2. **Organization, Administration, Staffing and Management.**

This includes a review of the current level of service and identification of future potential directions in providing services and maintaining facilities while balancing workloads and responsibilities. This will include policies and procedures, training, and employee development.

3. **Financial Sustainability.**

Capacity and future conditions necessary to financially manage and maintain park, trails and recreation facilities, conserve natural resources and

open space, and provide programs and services. Review of public and private revenues and opportunities to structure pricing and

Top Parks & Recreation Processes to Assess

- Needs Assessment
- Recreation Program Development
- Recreation Catalog Production
- Budgeting & Budget Control
- Marketing: USP & Branding
- Finances
- Website Design & Production
- Contract Training
- Registration
- Instructor Recruitment & Support
- Communication Systems
- Customer Service
- Facilities Management
- Strategic Planning
- Staff Development
- Creating Recreation Culture
- Integrated Promotion
- Data Analysis & Reporting
- Staff Evaluation
- Meetings
- Staff Onboarding (Recreation and Maintenance)

partnerships.

4. **Partnerships.**

Sustaining, expanding and creating new public and private partnerships to

enhance and enrich the opportunities and facilities.

5. **Communication.** Advancing the ongoing program of communication with stakeholders, elected and appointed officials, and the residents to disseminate information on park and recreational opportunities, programs and facilities available in the region. Communication is a critical factor in making the case for parks and recreation as essential public service. As municipal resources are taking a bit hit from the pandemic, parks and recreation needs to have a strong case for continued support.
6. **Planning, Coordination, and Security.** Ensuring that safety and security meet changing social conditions is the foundation for all parks and recreation functions. We are able to translate visionary ideas into business planning to work toward achieving the vision. We look for the low hanging fruit as every small success builds momentum and support for bigger undertakings.
7. **Maintenance.** Our maintenance component will address planning,

implementing, controlling, and evaluating maintenance as it is the key to success and, long term, the most expensive part of public recreation facilities. With a formal organized planned system, parks and recreation facilities will be safe, clean, functional, attract park users, and be a community jewel. We would like to have a work session with the maintenance staff and will figure out how to do that with emerging public health guidelines. We usually make this an enjoyable event over lunch that we provide for everyone such as our recent workshop with the Northampton County Parks Maintenance staff and management.



Our Maintenance Workshop in Northampton County Parks and Recreation

9. **Programming** – Ann Toole is a Certified Program Planner. We will



work with you on programming. Lower Makefield's Parks and Recreation Department is well-known in the area for its high caliber programming.

Phase 2. Conclusions, Options, and Directions

The synthesis of our findings is the critical thought piece. *It is the single most important element of the planning process.* While our team will have studied each element of the parks, recreation, open space, trails, and the Township's system unilaterally, putting the pieces together to arrive at the values, vision, mission, opportunities, and issues to be addressed is the guiding force for the plan recommendations. This will generate the options for achieving the Lower Makefield's vision and goals in a practical, sustainable manner that the public will celebrate. We will produce a summary narrative that sets the stage for developing the action plan. We will be focusing on about five key areas with very specific action steps rather than a generic laundry list of recommendations that you could probably guess before you even started

this process. Our team is known for plan implementation based upon the concrete practical conclusions that we formulate in collaboration with our clients. We present ways to optimize existing conditions with limited resources, methods to improve with new or emerging resources that we have identified, and visionary ideas for when resources such as funding, partnerships, and new grant sources are available. Our recommendations to get started focus on "low hanging fruit" to build momentum, often when we are undertaking the planning process itself. Building the framework for success will enable the Township to show results quickly that will spark more support and build capacity for more improvements,

Phase 3. Action Planning

We will work with the Study Committee to develop core values, vision, and mission for parks, recreation, open space, and trails. Our ultimate goal is to use parks, recreation, open space, and trail improvements as the strategy to move Lower Makefield toward a green and

connected community where residents can safely walk and bicycle for transportation, fitness & health, and recreation

With the values, vision, and mission in place, we will formulate recommendations with a concrete set of action steps that can be achieved in an orderly and practical manner. While our emphasis is on building momentum to make practical achievable improvements, we will also offer visionary recommendations that are more "stretch" strategies. We have found these stretch strategies to be accomplished in pleasantly surprising ways. We believe that it is important to think big and act practically.

Our recommendations will:

- Be holistic, formulated to establish an enviable system of parks and recreation facilities connected with safe places to walk and bicycle so that the Township feels and looks like a "community in a park".
- Focus on sustainability both environmental and financial. The Township must be able to sustain improvements through effective management, programming, maintenance, and support from the public and private sectors.
- Provide recreation program recommendations to serve the community based upon demographics, and lifestyles. This will include a mix of organized scheduled program areas and self-directed opportunities.
- Identify organizational improvements for programming and maintenance that will fold in support from other providers and partners.
- Benchmark investment and budget to develop targets for revenue generation and the means to do so. This will include a four part-revenue strategy with a mix of public and private funding.
- Provide a first-year work plan so that the Township can continue momentum on the plan with specific actions, responsible parties, resources needed and sources.
- Explore a Capital Improvement Program in line with Township preferences for years and format.
- Address the need for promoting parks, recreation, and trails as well as their benefits. The goal



should be to make the case that parks and recreation is an essential public service.

Phase 4. Report Production

The plan will be developed as a succinct easy-to-read concise document. Reports for future reference will be in the appendix to keep the plan itself tight and focused. A graphics design professional develops the final plan with photos and graphics to keep it interesting, readable and Lower Makefield Township centered. As discussed in the Public Participation section below, the Study Committee will be central to the process throughout and play a chief role in setting forth the vision, recommendations, and the action plan.

We advise that the Study Committee create a method to keep The Board of

Supervisors apprised of the process and ongoing considerations. The Board of Supervisors would review the draft and meet with us to provide their comments. We'll revise the draft accordingly and post it for public comment. After the public gets a chance to review the document, the Township will hold a public meeting about the plan. The Board of Supervisors would set the schedule for plan adoption, including their review and comment before it is released to the public for their review.

Toole Recreation Planning developed the Implementation Schedule format as follows. It is commonly used in many plans for the overall plan framework. We will also be providing the strategic plan and the one year business plan

Implementation Schedule						
GOAL:						
Years 1-3	Years 4-7	Years 8+	Recommendation	Responsible Party	Potential Cost	Potential Revenue Sources



Deliverables

We will provide an electronic version and a print ready copy. The electronic version will be set up for ease of reading online. The plan will be full-color and include 11 X 17-inch maps. The plan is usually 8 1/2 by 11 inches as that is the most economical for people to copy sections or pages on their own..

Executive Summary

An attractive plan summary will be the hallmark of the plan. We find that this is the most important piece in terms of public consumption. We will provide 50 copies and an electronic version.

Public Participation Process We will need to work closely with you in an ongoing manner about public participation to anticipate best practices in light of evolving guidelines for public gathering and touching. Our approach to recreation planning is collaborative. We develop plans *with* communities, not *for* them. By orchestrating a successful public participation process, the planning

process sets the stage for implementation. This element includes the Plan Advisory Committee, Focus Groups, Key Person Interviews, Forums, Public Meetings, pop up opportunities, and online public commenting. To engage the public in this time of uncertainty, we are already finding that technology is our “new best friend”. We are using an array of platforms to optimize public engagement virtually. Paper flipcharts, Post-it notes, and Sticky Dots are becoming the analog tools of nearly outdated meeting methodology.

Plan Advisory Committee (PAC)



Stroud Region PAC Work Session

The Steering Committee will play a vital role in the plan, meeting up to six times during the plan’s development to give input to the needs assessment and functional areas of parks and trails, programs and services,

operations and financing, and the draft plan regarding preliminary recommendations, and final recommendations and implementation plan. Our Study Committee meetings are designed to maximize public engagement. All sessions will be conducted as a focus group type of work session. The meetings will work as follows:

Study Committee Meeting 1 – Project launch. Project launch serves to focus the participants on the project goals, timelines, methods, opportunities, challenges, roles and responsibilities. It is designed to generate positive feelings of working collaboratively for the good of the community. It helps us to set the tone that this will be a fun and enjoyable process where everyone is heard, we build consensus through meaningful discussions and processes designed to foster support. We acknowledge that unanimity is rarely possible but solutions that work for the community as a whole are.

Study Committee Meeting 2 – Inventory, Outreach and Findings work session

Study Committee Meeting 3 – Future Directions and Options for moving forward. Stakeholders such as Township committees and staff and others identified by the Township would be invited for this Study Committee meeting,

Study Committee Meeting 4 – Recommendations. The Study Committee will have a work session on the recommendations for action steps for moving forward over the next ten years.

Study Committee Meeting 5 – Draft and Action Plan. This Committee work session will focus on the Draft moving into the Action Plan and Implementation Schedule.



Enjoying the York County Rail Trail

Study Committee Meeting 6 – Final meeting to address major comments on the draft and complete the Action Plan and Implementation Schedule.



Focus Groups

We will conduct three focus group meetings/workshops. These focus groups would be organized around common interests and issues, such as sports organizations, senior adults, kids, families, special needs, businesses, school district or any other topics that we decide need to be involved in the process. We do questionnaires ahead for groups such as sports organizations to get the data collection out of the way to focus on meaningful topical issues and opportunities.

Key Person Interviews

We will conduct a minimum of 25 key person interviews. We use 25 interviews as a base and invariably conduct more to gather the information and input we need. We use the interviews to collect



Fifth graders helped us design a park for which we secured grants.

information, promote the planning effort, determine issues and opportunities, explore partnership potential, and seek out others who should be interviewed. The interviews will be conducted either in-person or via telephone early in the planning process. We will determine the list of interviewees with input from the Study Committee, Parks and Recreation Department, Township staff, and others

Public Forums/Open House/Pop-Up Outreach: Alternatives to Traditional Public Meetings

We will conduct two public workshops or forums for the general citizenry for this project. We will determine if these will be in person or virtual as public health policy unfolds. The first will be an interactive public forum in which we involve the participants in identifying opportunities, issues, needs, and ideas regarding parks, recreation, trails, and open space. We drill down into these ideas with them to establish the top five priorities approximately to work on in the planning process. The second set of public forums will be held when

the plan is in draft. People will have the opportunity to review the draft before the forum. The forum will focus on two things: getting feedback on the recommendations and facilitating how people can get involved in plan implementation. It is an excellent way to generate volunteers, plan champions, and engage fresh faces in parks and recreation.

Getting people to turn out to public meetings is a challenge . We work hard to generate a turnout for. We have been finding that attendance is going up with virtual type meetings by a factor of five to one.



About 175 people attended our public meeting in Coatesville.

It

The national average attendance at a public meeting is eight and we have been getting 40-50+ regularly in our virtual meetings. We believe that if you are going to have a public meeting, *have a public meeting!* To

that end, we develop a solid action plan for generating a turnout. This includes a range of actions from personal invitations, to postcard mail outs, Facebook “bumps”, enlisting people to recruit participants and other strategies that the local people can help identify.

We go out to public places and events where the people already are to seek their input. We conducted an “open house” for Northampton County’s park plan at the Easton Market. It was highly successful, generating more participation than a traditional public meeting. In Media, we recently conducted a series of “pop-up” focus groups with families, teens, musicians and cyclists in public parks and markets such as the popular Bubble Tea store.

Online Public Engagement

We are using a new platform for online public engagement in which we are conducting a public opinion survey but using that as a launch for ongoing online public engagement to address parks, recreation and trail topics. To experience this, click on



this link to a parks, recreation, open space and trails plan survey:

<http://metroquestsurvey.com/nb2y2e>

survey yesterday and got 136 responses in the first day. This platform is highly interactive, engaging, informative and fun.

Following this survey, we will be launching a survey for a park master plan in the community. We launched a

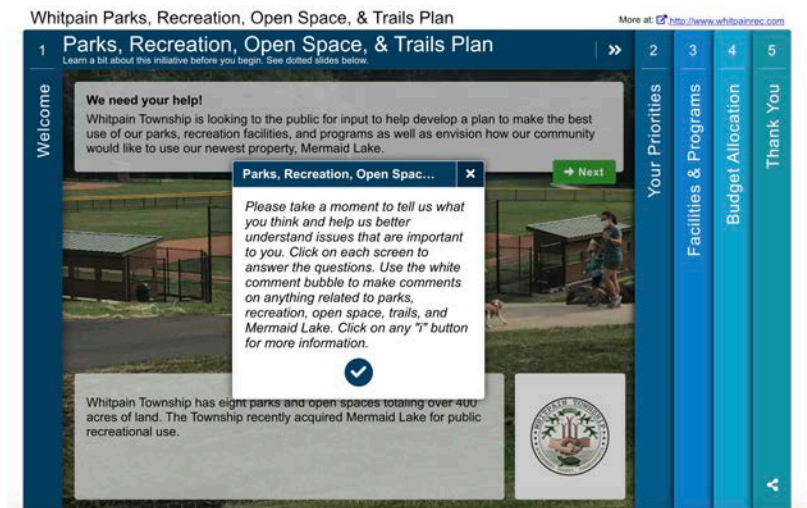


Image of our Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trail Plan Survey Underway

Project Budget

Professional Fee Schedule and Method of Billing

Our services are performed on a fixed lump sum fee basis. The fee and hourly rates for completing the **Lower Makefield Township Needs Assessment and Master Plan** are outlined below. The lump sum price is not to exceed \$25,000.00. We prefer to bill monthly and will work with the Director of Parks and Recreation on developing an optimal approach to billing.

Scope of Service Items	CPRP \$120/hr.	Communications & Design Director \$70	Total Hours
A. Project oversight	8	0	8
B. Public Participation	80	30	110
C. Mapping	2	10	12
D. Plan Development	0	0	0
Phase 1. Inventory & Assessment	12	0	12
Phase 2. Conclusions, Options & Direction	20	10	30
Phase 3. Plan Development	28	10	38
Phase 4: Report Production	16	13	29
Total Hours	166	73	239
TOTAL Fee	\$19,900	\$5,100	\$25,000



Toole Recreation Plan did the management, maintenance, program and financing plan for the Washington Crossing State Park Master Plan. Before this plan, the park was closed. Since our plan was implemented, park visitation and programming has dramatically increased, private fund raising largely supports operations and the state has increased its investment in the park.

Sustainable Future of Washington Crossing State Park Master Plan

*Congratulations on winning the **2015 Preservation Achievement Grand Jury Award** from the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia for the **Sustainable Future of Washington Crossing Historic State Park Master Plan**. I would like to commend Washington Crossing State Park on the exceptional work of **Toole Recreation Planning** on your achievement.*

Caroline Boyce,
Executive Director
Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia

Appendix



Toole Recreation Planning



Firm Profile

...A firm devoted exclusively to recreation planning

Toole Recreation Planning is serious about good recreation planning - planning that stirs the imagination as it meets community need and operates within tight resources.

In these increasingly challenging times, good recreation planning is crucial to the quality of life for both individuals and the community. **Toole Recreation Planning** offers a full range of professional planning services:

- Park, Recreation & Open Space Plans
- Park Master Plans
- Community Centers: Operation, Programming, and Management
- Consensus Building and Public Involvement Projects
- Alternatives to Traditional Operations & Management

Through an excellent network of local and national contacts, **Toole Recreation Planning** works with teams of landscape architects, architects, engineers, planners, and economic development specialists in fusing a multi-disciplinary approach to recreation and community-oriented projects. The firm's experience is rooted in over twenty-five years of experience in parks and recreation in local, county, state, and national park and recreation organizations. **Toole Recreation Planning** enjoys a record of successes in meeting the challenges posed by a variety of projects.

As a small firm, clients are guaranteed the services of a Certified Parks & Recreation Professional directly and fully involved in the project. Our approach is to go beyond the collection of data and the delivery of information. We help to devise approaches to position the parks and recreation organization as an essential service and move projects in the direction of implementation. With this entrepreneurial approach, we often find that the plans are being implemented as they are being developed. Our best work results from interaction with knowledgeable clients who challenge our thinking.

Toole Recreation Planning brings singular expertise and a common sense perspective to this professional discipline. From concepts to action plans, the firm proves its commitment to clients - and good recreation planning- by creating projects that work and producing results that matter.



Ann M. Toole, CPRP, CPP

CEO, Toole Recreation Planning

Expertise

Ann brings substantial expertise and career experience to parks, recreation, greenway, trail, and civic engagement projects in the northeastern United States. She managed the state and community planning program for the 14 northeastern states for the National Park Service for 10+ years. This also included work on special NPS projects such as developing policies on donations, development of friends groups maintenance management, She founded Toole Recreation Planning in 1992 and has been integral in the development of innovations that contribute to the advancement of the field of parks and recreation such as the establishment of the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute and the Urban Parks and Recreation Alliance. The Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks has retained Ann to work on developing a model Visitor Management and Resource Protection Plan. In addition to leading projects, Ann serves on NRPA's Board of Regents for the national Maintenance Management School, teaching under the auspices of the University of North Carolina, and the NRPA's Community of Practice on Drug Prevention. She has been invited to present at the International Urban Parks Conference in 2021.

Experience

- Toole Recreation Planning, (Founder and CEO): 1992 - Present
- National Park Service, Acting Division Chief, Community Planning 1979 - 1990
- Warminster Director of Parks and Recreation 1977-1979
- NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection, Outdoor Recreation Planner 1975-1977
- Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission 1974
- City of Wilkes-Barre Parks and Recreation Worker 1967-1973

Representative Projects

- Greenway and trail projects in 47 counties in PA, MD, and SC from less than a mile in length to the 500 mile long Susquehanna Heritage Greenway through 26 counties in PA from NY to MD. This includes several national heritage corridors.
- Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, Visitor Management and Resource Protection Plan, 2018 – 2020, underway. Focus is on community engagement.
- National Park Service, Buzzard Point Master Plan. 2017
- PA DCNR and PRPS – Planning, establishment and funding of the Pennsylvania Park Maintenance Institute. 2017 – current
- National Recreation and Park Association Board of Regents Park Maintenance Management School 2015 - current
- Faculty member of the Park Maintenance School under the auspices of the University of North Carolina in a park maintenance certification program 2015-current.
- Washington Crossing State Park Master Plan resulted in transforming a closed park into a thriving nationally significant historic park supported by legislative initiatives and a mix of public and private resources. 2015.

Education

- University of Maryland graduate studies (36) in parks & recreation .
- BA Misericordia University in Psychology.

Recognition

- PRPS - Pennsylvania's Thought Leader (2018) (See attached)
- Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia for exceptional work on the Sustainable Washington Crossing State Park Master Plan (2015).
- U.S. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) Phoenix Award: *"worthy of national recognition as our Community Impact Winner because the project shows that a good plan that is supported by and involves the community in a meaningful way is the key to a successful revitalization effort" on park master plan.*
- American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration for best article written over a three-year period.
- Commonwealth of PA: Green Park Awards (first award made) Wetherill Park and Palmer Park in 2020.
- Keys to two cities for improving them through parks: Bridgeport, CT and Wilkes-Barre, PA.
- Citations from the National Park Service.
- Outstanding Young Citizen of Bucks County Pennsylvania
- Presentations at national, regional and state conferences since 1977..



Thought Leader in Action Citation

November 14, 2018

I am extremely pleased to present the first-ever citation of its kind to one of our members who has, over an extended period of years, repeatedly initiated leadership in analytical thinking, connective collaborating, practical problem-solving, and exemplary actions.

The ability to absorb an inordinate amount of disparate information, distill and analyze its importance, and synthesize and lead an appropriately ambitious solution, is the sign of a valued thought leader.

Our recipient is a long-time member who works as a consultant in the profession, but whose **voluntary** contributions to PRPS and our profession are what we want to recognize today.

This member has been an initiator and vital contributor in every one of our most influential large ventures over the past decade. These statewide projects have done much to advance the standing and visibility of our profession among our members, our agencies and departments, our stakeholders and partners, our clients and customers, and the public at large – and include:

- The Urban Recreation Initiative, which matured into the Pennsylvania Urban Parks and Recreation Alliance.
- The *Good for You, Good for All* statewide marketing and branding campaign for Pennsylvania recreation and parks.
- Recognizing the value, and helping to develop the PRPS Agency of the Year Award.
- Presenting on a variety of topics of expertise at our Annual Conferences and other venues.
- Early grasping the extent and devastation of the opioid epidemic and how recreation can play a vital role in preventative treatment for drug abuse and other risky behaviors. Along with our Opioids Task Force, she spearheaded a new partnership with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the development of a recent foundation grant application to fund and create a Pennsylvania Youth Sports Opioids Education Program.
- Early recognizing the huge problem that park maintenance was becoming and has become. Voluntarily articulating both the challenges and a statewide response in a series of grant applications that eventually produced the funding to determine the Pennsylvania Parks Maintenance Institute.

As a park and recreation professional, she is an exemplary thinker, leader, planner and doer we would all do good to emulate. I am most happy to present Ann Toole with the very first Thought Leader in Action Citation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Herd".

Tim Herd, CPRE
Chief Executive Officer



Monica Gagliardi

Planning, Design & Communications Director

Expertise

Monica's background in education, fundraising, landscape architecture, and planning imparts a unique mix of skills and perspective to her work. She has experience working with a wide range of clients, communities, sites, and scales. She served as lead on the recently updated master plan for the City of Chester and the Society Hill Neighborhood of Philadelphia, while also assisting with the design for the Schuylkill River Trail connection at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education. Her experience managing marketing communications includes website modernization, social media, content, and forging new relationships to develop invested, action-oriented partnerships. She has also developed numerous brochures, fliers, and other marketing collateral for clients. As an independent consultant, Monica has led a range of businesses through strategic planning to help propel growth and success. Additionally, Monica enjoys serving her community as Chair for the Rose Valley Environmental Advisory Council — an active group that volunteers to improve trails and open space planning, community environmental education, volunteer stewardship, restoration, deer management, environmental ordinances, and beyond.

Experience

- Toole Recreation Planning, Planning, Design & Communications Director: 2020 – Present
- Rose Valley Environmental Advisory Council, Member 2012 – 2015, Chair 2015 – Present
- Grounded By Design Consulting, Design and Strategy Specialist: 2019 – 2020
- Viridian Landscape Studio, Landscape Designer: 2017 – 2019
- Jonathan Alderson Landscape Architects, Landscape Designer: 2016 – 2017
- Temple University, Sr. / Assoc. Director, Conwell Society + Gifts Officer: 2012 – 2016
- Temple University, Assistant Director, Stewardship Communications: 2008 – 2011

Representative Projects

- Rose Valley Road Safety Path Concept. Led community influence campaign, developed case for support; adopted by Borough Council September 2020.
- Plymouth Township Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan 2019 – 2029. Provided layout, graphics and marketing brochure. 2020.
- Chester Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan Update 2018-2027. Collaboratively worked on actionable, community driven design for six anchor parks to provide residents with *Resilience through Recreation*. 2018.
- Open Space Master Plan for Society Hill, Philadelphia, PA. Developed key recommendations with a toolkit to position Society Hill Civic Association as a national leader for open space planning within a historic urban context. 2017.
- Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education River Trail Entrance Design. Assisted with historic site appropriate design for Schuylkill River Trail connection. 2018.
- Multi-municipal Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan for Nether Providence Township and Boroughs of Swarthmore, Rutledge and Rose Valley. Advocated for connections, multimodal transport., and natural park space. 2018.
- Conwell Society, Temple University Leadership Giving Society. Spearheaded strategy to revamp \$200K yielding program to generate over \$4.2M annually. Led creative on Conwell marketing and branding, focus on building community.

Education

- MLArch. Temple University in Landscape Architecture and Ecological Restoration.
- BS James Madison University in Psychology.

Recognition

- 2018 American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) National Conference Welcome Booth, Winning Design.
- 2018 (Oct.) ASLA Landscape Architecture Magazine Feature Project: *Farm for the City*.
- 2017 Served as juror for Temple University MLArch Capstone Studio and Drexel University BArch Site Planning Studio.
- 2015 Honor Society of Sigma Lambda Alpha (SLA) Member.
- 2015 Winner of annual SLA National Travel Grant competition: Timelessness in the Landscape, Landschaftspark, Germany.
- 2015 Temple University Landscape Architecture Faculty Award for Academic Excellence.
- 2015 and 2014 PA-DE ASLA Student Honor Award, General Design: Oxford Wetland Mitigation and Cedarbrook Woodland Trail.
- 2015 and 2014 Society for Ecological Restoration Mid-Atlantic Poster Presenter: Relevance of Design in Ecological Restoration.

Ann Toole, CPRP, CPP

Needs Assessments for Parks and Recreation



Toole Recreation Planning conducts needs assessments regarding parks and recreation. The function of a needs assessment is to determine exactly the recreational needs and wants of the community. To do this, Toole Recreation Planning gathers information directly from the municipality and the public and subjects that information to analysis. The result of this process is a consensus, which can direct the municipality toward fulfilling expressed needs and, in effect, guide efficient, effective, and equitable parks and recreation land, facilities, and services. Toole Recreation Planning uses a Level of Service approach to needs assessments based on authentic community needs and municipal resources rather than outdated generic canned standards. Old standards looked only at land while a Level of Service approach includes an amalgam of public recreational needs, an array of facilities and services, and land sufficient to serve the recreational needs in a configuration of park types that can be supported by the municipality through public and private resources. The Level of Service approach yields a standard for parkland that is unique to each municipality. It also meets the requirements of the MPC regarding the provision of specific principles and standards for parks and recreation facilities to use in determining the proportion of a development to be dedicated for parkland or the fee to be paid in lieu of.

Results

- Needs assessments through the 14 Northeastern United States with more than 300 conducted. Selected examples:
- Hellam Township and Hallam Borough adopted a multimunicipal plan to improve parks and recreation based on our needs assessment.
- Springfield Township, Bucks County– Unique park classification system, location by residents' access, partnerships in recreation, & land standard for this small rural community.
- Jim Thorpe, Penn Forest, Lansford & Summit Hill. Unique park configuration, shared facilities, emphasis on community wide parks for three boroughs and a township. The boroughs are small and distressed with limited resources.



Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan Partnership & Private Fundraising Park Master Plan with Playground

Warrington Township used the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Planning process to build partnerships, launch new park master plans, and secure funding of more than \$3,000,000 through grants and private fundraising. The plan was based on a robust public outreach process that engaged people of all ages. Toole Recreation Planning lead the planning effort that resulted in the master planning and development of a state-of-the-art playground for all rooted in nature and intergenerational play, the acquisition of the last significant open space property, the development of a township wide trail system, and a partnership with a community based organization that has raised \$1.5 million for the new playground. The plan and park master plan culminated in a community celebration attended by several hundred people on a cold fall day that included a full range of citizenry from the children who helped design the playground through elected township officials, a congressman, the state senator and three state representatives. Local businesses pitched in with food and beverages for a mighty fine lunch.

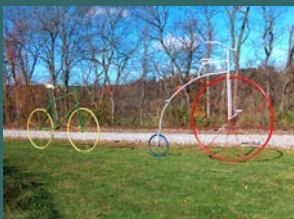
Results

- Cost of the master plan resulted in a financial return to the Township of 60 times over.
- New public private partnerships in parks and recreation will support park improvements and operations.
- The Township won statewide recognition in a PRPS award for the environmental aspects of the planning.
- Now under construction, the playground is non-traditional, accessible, designed for intergenerational play as a place where families will spend many hours.
- Increased capacity to manage parks and recreation.

Ann Toole, CPRP, CPP

East Goshen Township

East



Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Plan Update in conjunction with the East Goshen Township Comprehensive Plan

East Goshen Township's goal was to update their 1995 parks, recreation and open space plan with a strategy to revitalize their beloved but aging and worn recreation facilities, connect the community for safe bicycling and walking, and provide for the long-term sustainability of parks and open space with respect to municipal resources. The **Plan Update** was undertaken as part of the Townships' development of a **Comprehensive Plan**. By undertaking the two plans simultaneously, the Township was able to streamline the planning process more efficiently and effectively than undertaking the projects separately.

Results

- The implementable plan was already being carried out as the process was underway.
- Grant funding was secured for the main recommendation of a plan for the Paoli Pike Multi-Purpose Trail.
- The Paoli Pike Plan is nearing completion.
- A master plan for the community park was developed focusing on the playground as specified in the Plan Update. Grant funding was secured for the playground, which is a rousing success.
- Organizational changes were implemented to give priority to park planning, design and sustainable maintenance.
- New programs and services are serving citizens of all ages and interests.
- NRPA named East Goshen Township as a finalist for the Gold Medal Award for best park system in the USA. This is the first Pennsylvania community to achieve this recognition.

Ann Toole, CPRP, CPP

Visitor Management & Natural Resource Protection Plan

Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks



Department of Conservation and Natural Resources officials and legislators commissioned a study related to the local community and visitor experience at the 3,002-acre Beltzville State Park in Carbon County to serve as a model for managing visitation related to overcrowding and natural resource protection in state parks. On holiday weekends, crowds often exceed the capacity of the park's parking lots and other facilities.

"With the help of a contractor, DCNR is talking with different stakeholders who live and work around, and visit the park, about the challenges that the park's popularity presents, and about whether they have any suggested solutions," DCNR Director of the Bureau of State Parks John Hallas said. **The Bureau of State Parks commissioned Toole Recreation Planning to take the lead on public engagement, operations and maintenance, programming, policies, and organization. With Penn State University conducted a visitor survey using state of the art technology and multi-cultural interviewing.**

Plan Initiatives

Plan initiatives include:

- Robust public participation with key stakeholders including the local community as well as park visitors who travel several hours to enjoy the park.
- Collaboration with local communities and citizen based organizations as they are heavily impacted by park visitation
- Maintenance planning
- Involvement and coordination of 11 state and federal agencies with responsibilities related to the park ranging from wildlife management to law enforcement.
- Outreach to community based organizations and working with them "where they are".
- Partnership development via Friends of Beltzville State Park..
- Strategies underway to secure the long-term sustainability of the park in harmony with the local communities.

Ann Toole, CPRP, CPP

City of Coatesville



Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan. Palmer Park Master Plan. Patton Park Playground Project. Regional Parks & Recreation Plan. Park Safety Project. Grants. Public-Private Partnerships.

What did the Brandywine Health Foundation do to help the City of Coatesville to revitalize, improve public health, and make the community safe? The Foundation hired Natural Lands and Toole Recreation Planning to work with the City to create an action plan to achieve these goals through parks and recreation. With little funding but a lot of imagination, heart and know-how, our team worked closely with the community to forge common bonds that brought about remarkable changes in the community.

Plan Accomplishments

- Created plan to revitalize a deteriorated park based upon stormwater management and water quality. Pennsylvania American Water and the National Recreation & Park Association funded it in 2017, *one of only two projects funded nationwide*, the other one in California. Disney funded a “Meet Me in the Park” project, one of only 16 nationwide.
- Created a plan and secured funding to revitalize a park by building a new playground and organizing a Park Friends Group to help build, maintain and program it.
- Orchestrated a regional multi-municipal partnership of five municipalities and the school district to collaborate in parks and recreation.
- Formed a partnership with the City of Minneapolis to launch a “Street Reach” program in Coatesville in response the number one public need identified here: make the parks safe. Secured grant funding to hire staff for the program and obtain training from Minneapolis.
- NRPA featured this work in its **Parks & Recreation** magazine.

- Palmer Park won PADCNR/PRPS's **Green Park Award in 2020**