

DELMONT BOROUGH

COMPREHENSIVE PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, AND GREENWAYS PLAN

March 2024

2024-2034

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Delmont Borough Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan is a collaborative effort in elevating nature- and public health-based opportunities for residents of all ages.

This Plan's proposed actions build upon a drive to ensure proposed improvements to the Borough's civic infrastructure reflect the community's needs and elevating enjoyment of public spaces for all. The resulting plan is structured for the community's continued pursuits to expand ideas, implement enhancements, and pursue funding whether it be for site master planning, programming, facility management, design development, and, ultimately, sustainable system management, maintenance, and construction.

This project was financed in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation - DCNR Grant Agreement number BCR-TAG-26-257. The project's Steering Committee members include:

Tim Beadling, Delmont Recreation Board Member
Stan Cheyne, Delmont Recreation Board Member, Delmont Borough Council Vice President, and Project Coordinator
TJ Klobucar, Chief of Police, Delmont Police Department
Tim Schmida, Delmont Borough Planning Commission
Jeff Richards, Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation Department Planning Coordinator
Maria Fagan, Local Business Owner
Tom Fagan, Local Business Owner
Bill Grassel, Delmont Public Library and other Volunteer Groups
Annamarie Stackiewicz, Delmont Recreation Board Member and Delmont Visionary Committee Member

In addition to the care and thoughtfulness that residents serving on the project's Steering Committee members and Borough Council members have contributed to this effort, special thanks are given to Ashley Shultz and Adam Mattis of Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for their expertise and encouragement throughout the development of the Borough's Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUSTAINING AND ENHANCING

As the first chapter of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan, the Delmont Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan boldly sets direction for action. In the evolution of the Municipality's planning efforts, this chapter establishes why the community's public spaces are more than just "amenities" and what is needed to sustain them. Residents and visitors, far and wide, enjoy the Borough's system of parks as essential spaces - for the wellbeing of both humankind and the natural world.

> ***In taking action on the ideas and recommendations, the Borough is setting the course for future generations to strengthen community bonds, to pursue healthy lifestyles, and to reinforce that its public spaces are essential to resident and nature's wellbeing.***

The Borough seeks to provide its residents with a variety of outdoor spaces that can be well loved and well maintained. Each area of parkland, plaza space, as well as connection between neighborhoods and an expanding regional trail network serves a unique purpose. This system, as it is continued to be enhanced in coming years, will:

- Provide space for those of all ages and abilities to come together to enjoy
- Enrich the lives of the citizens of the Borough
- Establish a system of checks and balances where offerings can be managed in a professional manner
- Build upon responsible, responsive investments at levels that sustain and that enhance quality of life in the Borough.

In preparing its inaugural Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan, the Borough is working to guide future investments in its public amenities. This 10-year plan aims to guide Borough staff, committees, boards, and elected officials in their efforts to enhance community parks and recreation programs, services and facilities. Foremost, this chapter of civic infrastructure planning seeks to:

- Establish priorities for park development/redevelopment, recreation programs, and facilities;
- Enhance recreational facilities and programs;
- Inventory the available assets, conditions, and availability of recreation;

- Conserve open spaces and analyze the health of existing parks and green spaces;
- Connect existing parks and recreational facilities with greenways and trails, where possible;
- Preserve natural and environmentally sensitive areas within the Borough; and
- Consider mechanisms for safe, efficient and effective management and operation of the Borough's overall parks, recreation, and open space system.

Where opportunities exist, partnerships among the community, neighboring municipalities, regional recreation providers or the private sector can strengthen both the economic impact and the physical sustainability of this network of amenities.

What does "comprehensive" mean when it comes to park, recreation, open space, and greenway planning?

The word "park" commonly conjures images of the young and the young-at-heart having fun at a playground or on an athletic field. In this, parks are often narrowly categorized as one seemingly simple thing - a "facility." In reality, when it comes to planning for attractive, safe, and fun public spaces, "facilities" are only one of five equally significant topics that form the baseline for park, recreation, open space and greenway planning. In addition to facilities, planning for these public spaces incorporates necessary administration, finance, operations/maintenance, and programming functions. These four other topics uphold how the system of the community's facilities can be healthy and sustainable in both the short- and the long-term.

A Call to Action (Key Actions)

In laying the groundwork for future recreation, park, open space, and greenway successes, the Borough has opportunity to pursue five immediate complementing key actions:

Administration – Work with community stakeholders to establish a Friends of the Park Organization that can assist the Borough in long-term planning initiatives and funding strategies.

Operation / Maintenance – Update the Borough's Public Spaces Risk Management Plan

Finance – Optimize service delivery and time efficiencies through establishing an electronic-based cost tracking system

Programs – Target to host 1 to 2 multi-municipal/multi-district program offerings per year

Facilities – Conduct Accessibility Assessments of each public spaces and prepare updated master site plans of each facility incorporating Assessment findings

Administration

Parks and recreation management requires interdisciplinary skills which focus on the care and maintenance of facilities and programs. It is an important role to coordinate and oversee the safe, secure and environmentally-sound operation of the Borough's recreation assets in a cost-effective manner aimed at long-term preservation and enhancement. One municipal duty is to make sure the day-to-day delivery of parks and recreation services and facilities are satisfactory to the end users and provide an optimal environment for recreation functions. Recreation management incorporates all activities related to keeping a park system running.

Core Recommendation
Work with community stakeholders to establish a Friends of the Park Organization that assists in long-term planning initiatives and funding strategies.

Priorities

1. Align administrative capabilities with needs to enhance the functionality of programs, facilities, maintenance operations, finance, and project management

2. Organize administration roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes

3. Utilize strategic management systems to plan and implement policies, procedures, and projects

Operation / Maintenance

Park maintenance is essential to providing safe, clean, functional, and attractive Borough parks through implementation of an efficient and effective management program. A formal policy sets standards for how maintenance will be performed now and in the future. Key elements include staffing, training and cost-benefit analysis.

Core Recommendation
Update the Borough's Public Spaces Risk Management Plan

Priorities

1. Establish formal responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department

2. Provide specialized training for park maintenance through employee development programs

3. Develop a formal management system for maintaining parks and recreation infrastructure

Financing

The purpose of financial management in parks and recreation is the judicious use of capital resources and the careful selection of capital projects to enable Borough spending to advance parks and recreation goals.

Core Recommendation
Optimize service delivery and time efficiencies through establishing an electronic-based cost tracking system. The exploration should examine the system's vitality and ability to sustain for future generations.

Priorities
1. Optimize efficiency and increase revenues through cost tracking
2. Organize data and conduct regularly occurring Financial Management Practices audits
3. Continue to support parks and recreation through a mix of Borough and non-tax resources

Programs

Programming is a complex component of parks and recreation management. Activities range from special community and family events to team sports to individuals' leisure time pursuits. To effectively involve residents in program offerings, the Borough needs to identify what various target audiences want and then determine the proper balance between programs it sponsors and those provided by other organizations. Partnerships and cooperation with private and non-profit recreation providers are keys to programming success.

Core Recommendation
Target to host 1 to 2 multi-municipal/multi-district program offerings per year as part of formalizing park and recreation programming with other Borough activities, potential multi-municipal partners, other public and private sector entities as well as partner with School Districts to realize time and cost savings.

Priorities
1. Have seasonally scheduled work sessions with all programming partners to ensure range of age-appropriate activities are strategically scheduled throughout the year
2. Expand programming from special events to regularly occurring activities

Facilities

Facilities are the building blocks of a parks and recreation system. They are the places where people can go to enjoy themselves. Delmont's overall recreation system strives to provide facilities which residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy for active sports,

socializing, and quiet reflection. Facilities require ongoing evaluation to ensure safety, optimal function and sustainability.

Core Recommendation

Institute enhancements to Borough facilities that would update them and enrich users' experience. These updates would help bring up to code, and thereby set the stage for spaces to be renovated and establish Newhouse as the premier park in the community.

Priorities

1. Initiate, update and develop implementation strategies for Master Site Plans and Resource Management Plans in conjunction with active transportation efforts

2. Implement physical, aesthetic and safety improvements according to the availability of staff, volunteers and financial resources

PART I: PLAN PURPOSE, GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PARTICIPATION

DEVELOPING THE "BLUEPRINT"

Emerging from community visioning, this Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan presents an informed and forward-thinking set of pursuits built upon inventory and assessment of existing facilities, public participation and feedback, as well as a deeper understanding of conditions and trends. It is with these things that the community's leaders, staff, and stakeholders are able to promote responsive updates and actions to its physical, fiscal, and policy resources.

The Delmont Borough Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Plan builds upon 1) the evaluation and considerations of socio-economic patterns, 2) public input, 3) technical assessment of existing facilities, and 4) the perennial value of responsible resource spending (both time and finances). These factors influence the solidity and success of programming, park maintenance and development, financing, promotion and public awareness, and partnership recommendations found within this Plan.

PLANNING PROCESS

In addition to observations and technical analyses included within this document, the Comprehensive Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan reflects feedback gained through a number of community participation opportunities. The participation strategy was designed to respond to specific community needs and capacities. The use of various forms of public input, including Study Committee discussions, Citizen Survey responses, Public Meeting comments, and key person interviews, highlighted and assisted in shaping several of the Plan's areas of focus.

a. Study Committee
   Through a citizen volunteer group, the Borough involved interested residents in the synthesis and evaluation of key study topics. The Committee, meeting 7 times between March and October 2022, guided the study's direction as well as evaluated planning data, alternatives, and trade-offs.

b. Citizens Survey
   The Borough released a 2022 Citizen Survey in paper and electronic format via the Borough's website and social media avenues. The Citizen Survey was

designed to both educate the public regarding parks and recreation and to solicit feedback regarding use of current recreation facilities, potential program elements, future park needs as well as the community's commitment to funding future improvements to the park system. As part of this effort, 130 households participated in written project survey opportunities. Frequent words found in survey comments include:



80% of survey respondents lived in Delmont Borough. The other 20% lived near or frequented the Borough and its parks. The most common non-resident responses were from those living in Salem Township, Murrysville, or Export Borough.

Among responses, households with those aged 30–49-year-olds (30%) and 5–12-year-olds (19%) were the largest demographics participating. (Surveyed Ages report - 0-4yo 10%, 5-12yo 19%, 13-18yo 8%, 19-29yo 8%, 30-39yo 14%, 40-49yo 16%, 50-59yo 10%, 60-69yo 7%, 70+yo 8%).

The park most frequently visited weekly (33%) and monthly (43%) is Newhouse while annually is Shield's Farm (47%). Park Drive Park and Valley Stream Park were least visited (81% of surveyors have never visited).

90% of respondents primarily use a car to travel to park amenities and 48% walk on occasion.

Activities that bring residents to the Borough's parks include:

- Community Festivals/events (86% of responses)
- Opportunities for walking/hiking (66% of responses)
- Enjoying nature (64% of responses)
- Farmers Markets and Children's Playground (Both were 58% of responses)

Improvement of existing facilities was the top first and second choice for residents followed by maintaining existing facilities as the third most requested action.

c. Public Meeting Outreach

The Study Committee and the Borough Council hosted outreach opportunities during Spring, Summer and Fall 2022 community-wide events including Family Fun Nights, the Apple 'n Arts Festival weekend and Council Meeting

agenda discussion. Attendees contributed their preferences for future priorities during these multi-day events.

These events allowed opportunity for community residents as well as those visiting to provide feedback relating to the existing recreational facilities; during the Spring and Summer, the survey being circulated throughout the Borough. The sessions provided opportunity to share specific information regarding the planning process. In the Fall, additional thoughts and comments were gathered as a follow-up to and affirmation of the feedback gained during the Citizen Survey and Key Person Interviews.

d. Key Person Interviews

Over the course of 2 months in 2022, 29 residents and local business owners representing various recreational and civic interests, were contacted and participated in the interviewing process. Feedback received reflects overall attitudes, preferences, and ideas for the municipality's public spaces. Interviewees' responses highlight both successes and continued areas for focus. Delmont's successes include:

- Events hosted at Delmont parks are widely enjoyed
- Safe and relaxed atmosphere of the parks, and lack of crowds
- Cleanliness, absence of litter
- Well maintained facilities
- Amount of open space, both in Newhouse and Shield's Farm
- Ample number of volunteers for events
- People like to bring their children or grandchildren to the parks and play. Or go for personal exercise such as walking along the trail or walking tracks

Delmont can continue to:

- Increase accessibility to the Westmoreland Trail specifically, an alternative to the hill along Athena Drive that bikers generally avoid because of grade/elevation change (many interviewees expressed their shared interest in enhancing the experience at the Westmorland Heritage Trailhead adjacent to Delmont.)
- Create a central community platform to advertise or give out information to the community for upcoming events or news
- Restore play structures and park amenities
- Improve the parking capacity at Shield's Farm, especially during the Apples 'n Arts Festival
- Improve walkability and bike access to the Borough's parks
- Work toward replacing paved surfaces/trails at Newhouse
- Improve pedestrian experience at Shield's Farm

Part II: BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Delmont Borough is a community with a variety of park and recreation experiences. The Borough has established its foundation with these resources and is now weighing the options for the future, evidenced by the community's public support of public spaces.

In context of additional technical observations and analyses, the Plan recommends improvements to the quality of park, recreation, open spaces and greenway connectivity within the community. In addition to analyzing leisure assets, ideas consider the community's existing physical, natural, and socio-economic resources.

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Delmont Borough's beginnings evolved as a crossroads and, being surveyed first in 1784, remains one of the oldest towns in Westmoreland County. A brief history highlights the Borough's evolution of employment and land use. This evolution has shaped Delmont's current character and its recreational needs and opportunities.

The Borough's general geographic location within Westmoreland County, its community adjacencies, connectivity to a system of locally and regionally significant corridors, and its established residential and non-residential development patterns create a powerful combination of opportunity and challenge that residents and business owners encounter daily.

Borne from the Township of Huntingdon founded on April 6, 1773, Delmont Borough was divided from Huntingdon's boundary. The first commercial establishment, focused on transporting water from a spring to what is now the center of town, was established in 1810 and prosperity grew with the community's location established as a freight and passenger transportation center. In 1871, the Post Office took on the Delmont name; the municipality adopted the name in 1967.

The Delmont Historical Preservation Society identifies "Delmont was originally known as Salem Crossroads. An early settler, William Wilson, acquired about 300 acres around 1785 and named the area after Salem, Massachusetts, his home state. The north-south Greensburg Road was built through the area around 1800 and the east-west Northern Turnpike was completed in 1819, forming the crossroads. The town quickly became a popular and bustling stagecoach stop, hosting as many as five stagecoach lines. In 1814,

Wilson's son, Thomas, laid out and sold 48 lots around the crossroads. Delmont was incorporated as New Salem Borough in 1833. It remained as such until 1967 when voters changed the name to 'Delmont,' which means 'a valley in the hills.' In 1978, the Salem Crossroads (Delmont) Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places."

As a Borough form of government, a Council structure leads the community's decision making efforts including those related to parks, recreation, open spaces, and greenway connectivity efforts. A Council-appointed Recreation Committee assists generating and evaluation ideas for recreation programming and community building activities. Staff fulfilled assigned duties in caring for the Borough's physical resources.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PATTERNS

As of the US Census 2020-2021's data collection and assessment efforts, nearly 2,600 people of all ages and interests contribute to the Borough's sustaining vibrancy. Within this approximate 1 square mile, considerations for household composition as well as spending patterns provide insight into potential for future park user interests and opportunities for support. Throughout a 100-year span of time, Delmont's population grew for eight of those decades (671 residents in 1920 to 2,497 residents in 2000). As the community nears its build-out (the point in time where land in a community has reached its capacity of development), the two most recent decades have been ones of population retention (2,600± residents). Further, given build-out, current Borough population totals are anticipated to be logical for evaluation and consideration in calculating future population projections.

As the Delmont parks and open space system serves both local and regional population bases, it is critical to examine the extent to which the two audiences have interest and/or capacity in supporting public space efforts. Comparative demographic data, available through the US Census' American Community Survey and ESRI, highlights that, between 2010 and 2020, population trends within the 10-, 15-, and 30-minute drive times from the Borough's center all declined very slightly (less than ½ percent). Notably, the population within the smallest radius (10-minute drive time) has the greatest median household income, per capital income, median net worth, and median disposable income. In consideration of other key facts, the Borough's most immediate audience has the lowest unemployment rate (3.0%) but the greatest median age (50 years old). 50% of these individuals were born between 1946 and 1980.

The following chart outlines each drive time's key characteristics for the Borough's potential park and recreation audience.

Characteristic	Drive Time		
	10-minute	15-minute	30-minute
Population	15,977	71,026	466,223
Households	6,988	30,828	206,755
Avg Size Household	2.27	2.26	2.22
Median Age	50	48	47
Median Household Income	$78,779	$70,032	$65,454
Median Home Value	$260,810	$248,864	$206,231

Among this immediate population, approximately 1 in 3 residents notes participating in one or more of the following recreation-oriented activities: walking for exercise, watching football, baking, barbequing, and/or attending a movie a few times a year. The insight that this type of evaluation provides could be launch points for continued idea evolution for recreation programming-oriented events.

The spending patterns within each Drive Time's households provide insight into recreation-related programs and efforts will likely more readily support. Closest to home, residents gravitate to watching sporting events, water-related activities and social interactions such as casual games and arts/crafts.

BOROUGH CHARACTERISTICS AND EXISTING PLANNING

Existing Planning

Historic and Cultural Significance

As part of the 2018 Westmoreland County Comprehensive Plan's Core Objective 2: Discover Westmoreland, Delmont Borough is recognized for the community's cultural contributions to the County's overall landscape – both as a Cultural Destination and for the Salem Crossroads National Register of Historic Places status. Of significant note in future open space planning, of the Borough's five parks and open spaces, the Rose Wigfield Parklet site is one block south of the 1978-designated Historic District. Future park and open space planning and enhancement efforts of this space should seek to align with the District's parameters as may be appropriate in respecting the adjacent historic context.

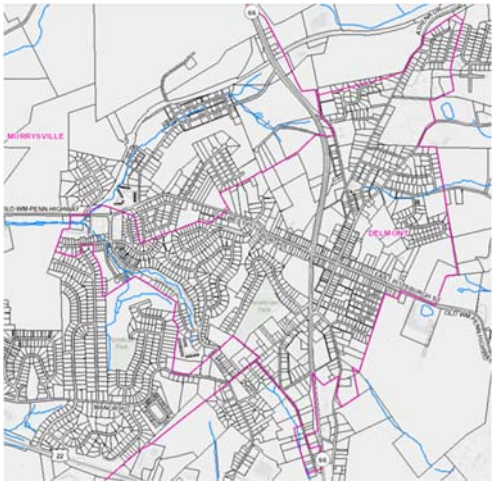
Open Space-Oriented County and Regional Planning Coordination

In addition to cultural amenity highlights included within the Westmoreland County Comprehensive Plan, the 2018 document and the subsequent 2021 Annual Report highlight the regional significance of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail located generally parallel to Delmont's northern boundary line. As land acquisition along with former railline has continued so has public investment (local organizational, County, and State) for additional trailbed construction and trailhead enhancement. The continuing evolution of this regional pedestrian network provides opportunity for the Borough to further evaluate and subsequently plan, as feasible, to make direct trail connection(s) between Borough parcels and/or rights-of-ways to the trail in adjacent communities.

In 2021, the Borough initiated a PA WalkWorks-funded Active Transportation Plan effort. The Project Steering Committee and Borough Council's 2023 report presents high priority recommendations for 2.43 miles of sidewalk improvements, four areas for crosswalk and intersection improvements, 0.2 miles of transit-related connection improvements, and 6.57 miles of pedestrian and bicycle improvements of which some overlaps exist with 9.08 miles of identified multi-use paths within and beyond the Borough's boundary. A series of these improvements are slated to develop connections to the Westmoreland Heritage Trail. The Active Transportation Plan's detailed network of pedestrian-focused civic infrastructure improvements provides an intricate system of connectivity with varying levels of challenge and accessibility throughout the community including those between the Borough's parks and open spaces.

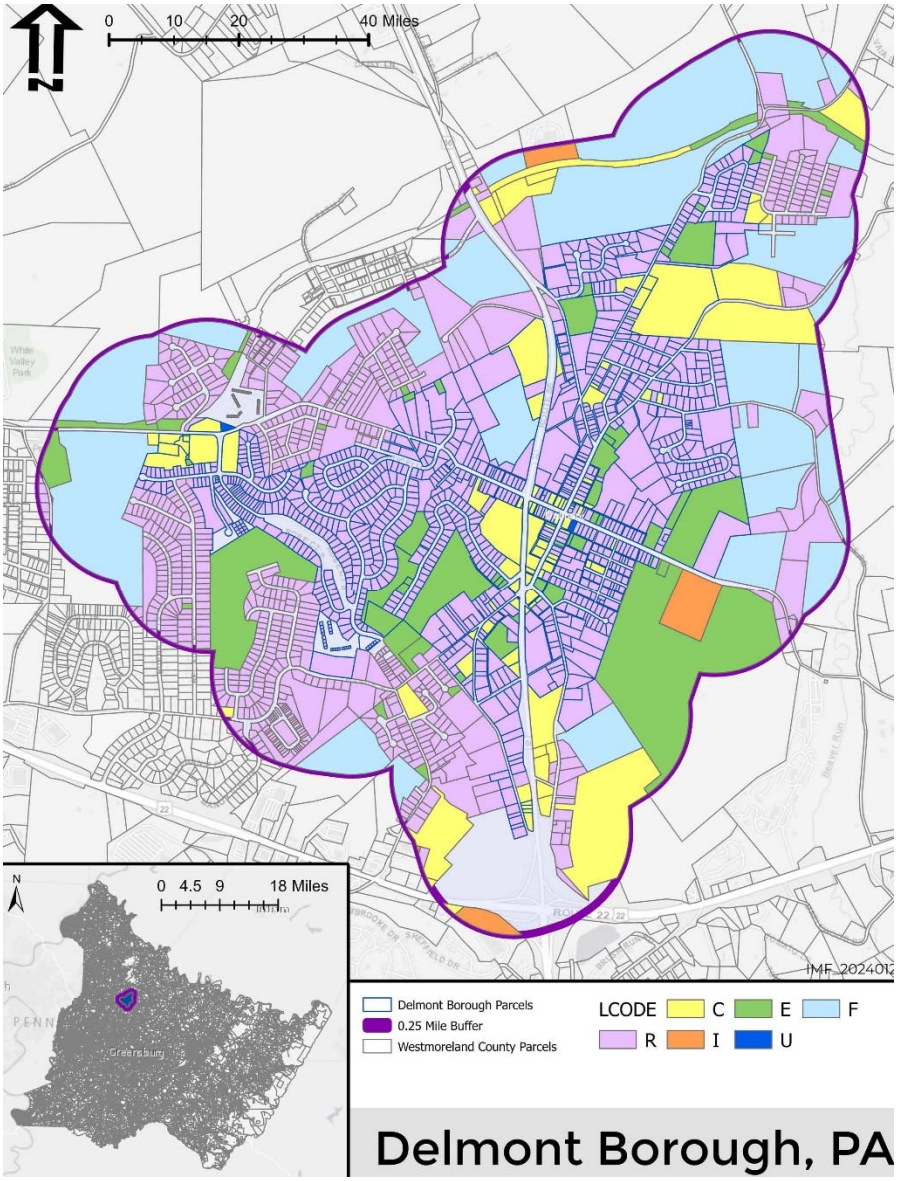
Physical Characteristics

In further carrying forward the Borough's connections between its public spaces and the Active Transportation Plan's detailed network of pedestrian-focused civic infrastructure improvements, an intricate system of connectivity is planned to formally join neighborhoods, commercial areas, and gathering spaces. An important part of making these connections is also in recognizing the varying levels of challenge and accessibility that will exist in context of adjacent land uses.



For the purposes of this Study's focus each of the five subject sites (Newhouse Park, Rose Wigfield Park, Valley Stream Park, Park Drive Park, and Shields Farm) is classified as park/open space with a majority of each facility's perimeter flanked with residential land uses.

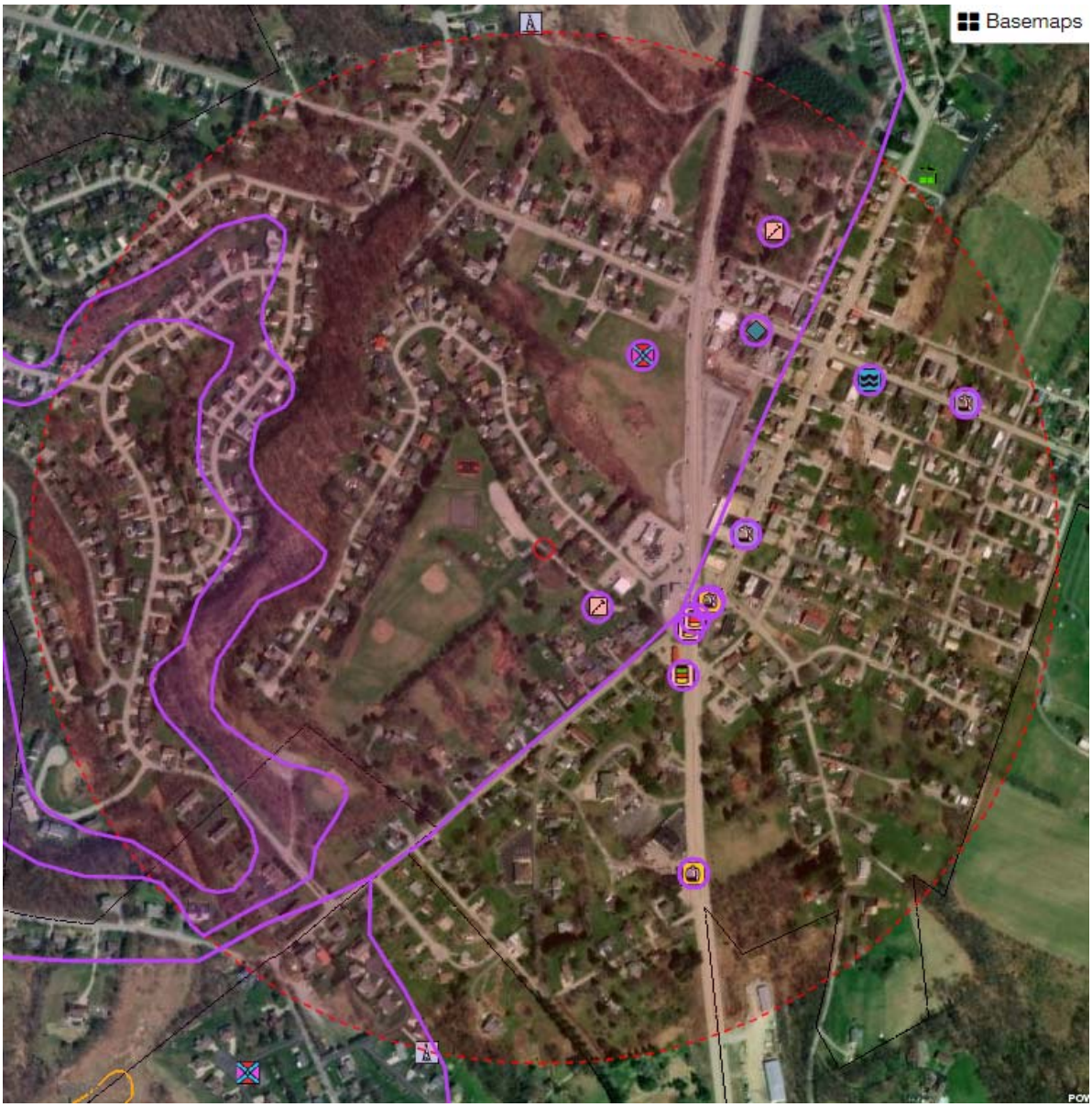
A detailed, parcel-specific assessment of the Borough's non-residential and residential land use patterns will be published in conjunction with the Borough's Comprehensive Land Use Plan and/or in conjunction with the Westmoreland County Planning Department's preparation of its upcoming District 2 Planning effort. Presently, the general land use pattern, available through Westmoreland County GIS mapping, is illustrated to the right.



As part of land use development/redevelopment implementation, the County has identified within its Comprehensive Plan that its Planning Districts approach is "based on the notion that county government is best suited to deliver planning and technical assistance and that local government is best suited to understand local needs and wants and to carry out the plan's recommendations."

Environmental Issues

The PA Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Site Assessment Tool presents inventory information related to permitting, licensing, inspection, compliance, discharges of pollution, regulated storage tanks, site remediation, and enforcement records they maintain. On the following pages is a snapshot of DEP's identified activities throughout the Borough for potential environmental coordination; prior to any detailed updates being completed within the Borough's public spaces, consideration for the extent to which more detailed environmental assessment may or may not be applicable should be examined.



Within a 0.4-mile buffer from Newhouse Park, 19 facilities are highlighted within the DEP Environmental Site Assessment Tool mapping database.

Site Name	Site ID	Primary Facility Name	Primary Facility ID	Sub Facility Name	Sub Facility ID	Primary Facility Type	Primary Facility Kind	Other Facility ID	Sub Facility Type	S Other ID	Primary Facility Status	Sub Facility Status	Compliance
J VOLEK JW-290 OG WELL	517526	J VOLEK JW-290	527094	J VOLEK JW-290	410927	Oil & Gas Location	NonCoal	129-24241	Well	129-24241	Operator Reported Not Drilled	Operator Reported Not Drilled	YES
OAKFORD OG GAS STORAGE RESERVOIR	231511	R DELISSIO JW-290	640580	R DELISSIO JW-290	777354	Oil & Gas Location	Coal	129-25094	Well	129-25094	Active	Active	YES
ENERGI FENESTRATION SOLUTIONS	242979	CUSTOM WINDOW EXT	247369	SEW TREAT	220456	WATER RESOURCE	INDUSTRIAL USE	021466-001	DISCHARGE	021466-004	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
SPEEDWAY STORE #100277	774947	SPEEDWAY STORE #10	767086	SPEEDWAY STORE #100277	1111497	EROSION & SEDIM	STORMWATER-CONST	PAI056513004	COMMERCIAL OR	PAI056513004	INACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
FATURS MKT DELMONT	481584	FATURS MKT INC/DELM	510809	INCINERATOR	389829	AIR EMISSION PLANT	Unavailable	25-1203428-1	INCINERATOR	65-594	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
FATURS MKT DELMONT	481584	FATURS MKT INC/DELM	510809	ADMIN SF FOR:FATURS MKT INC/DELMONT STORE	552070	AIR EMISSION PLANT	Unavailable	25-1203428-1	GENERAL ADMINIS	ADMIN	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
KENNAMETAL DELMONT PLT	4755	KENNAMETAL DELMON	625194	KENNAMETAL INC - DELMONT-SOIL	747370	LAND RECYCLING CLEA	Unavailable	5-65-946-2136	SOIL MEDIA	747370	ACTIVE	Unavailable	
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LIMITED	241413	GTE PRODUCTS GIBSO	625193	GTE PRODUCTS CORP GIBSON ELEC DIV-SOIL	747369	LAND RECYCLING CLEA	Unavailable	5-65-946-1901	SOIL MEDIA	747369	ACTIVE	Unavailable	
MANORDALE TIRE & SVC	515880	MANORDALE TIRE &am	534760	MANORDALE TIRE & SVC	418612	CAPTIVE HAZARDOUS W	Unavailable	PAD987342433	HAZARDOUS GEN	PAD987342433	Active	Active	YES
BARRY KELLEYS AUTO SVC	505284	BARRY KELLEYS AUTO	528327	BARRY KELLEYS AUTO SVC INC	412179	CAPTIVE HAZARDOUS W	Unavailable	PA0000008391	HAZARDOUS GEN	PA0000008391	ACTIVE	Active	YES
KUNKLES SVC	513964	KUNKLES SERVICE INC	533949	KUNKLES SERVICE INC	417801	CAPTIVE HAZARDOUS W	Unavailable	PAD014015515	HAZARDOUS GEN	PAD014015515	Unavailable	Unavailable	YES
SUNOCO 0363 0480	515951	SUNOCO SVC STA	539273	SUNOCO SVC STA	423125	CAPTIVE HAZARDOUS W	Unavailable	PAD987341047	HAZARDOUS GEN	PAD987341047	ACTIVE	Unavailable	YES
				Sub Facility ID	**Sub Facility Nar**	**Sub Facility Type**	**Sub Facility Status**	**Sub Facility Prior**	**Sub Facility Probl**	**PRIORITY**	**QUANTITY**	**UOM**	**STATUS**
				1070775	2535-22	Subsidence Area	Reclamation Complete	Extreme Health or	51 Known Subside	2,1	1,.1	CT,Acres	RDEP,RDEP
				1249202	2535-23	Subsidence Area	Reclamation Complete	Health or Safety In	51 Known Subside	2	1	CT	RDEP
				818600	2535-04	Coal Surface Mine	Reclamation Complete	Health or Safety In	20 Dry Strip Mine	2,2	1,1000	CT,Ft	RDEP,REC
Facility Name	**Facility ID**	**Facility Address**	**Facility Address2**	**Facility City**	**Facility State**	**Facility Zip**	**Facility County**	**Facility Municipal**	**Reg Expiration Da**	**Primary Facility ID**	**Site ID**		
SUNOCO 0363 0480	65-24182	100 GREENSBURG ST		DELMONT	PA	15626	Westmoreland	Delmont Boro	10/03/2024	614571	515951		
BARRY KELLEYS AUTO SVC	65-80155	2348 STATE ROUTE 66		DELMONT	PA	15626-1454	Westmoreland	Delmont Boro	10/03/2024	614815	591729		
65-80155	BARRY KELLEYS AUTO SVC	2348 STATE ROUTE 66		DELMONT	PA	15626-1454	Westmoreland	Delmont Boro		614815	591729		
65-24182	SUNOCO 0363 0480	100 GREENSBURG ST		DELMONT	PA	15626	Westmoreland	Delmont Boro		614571	515951		
65-14755	DRENNING DEL SYS	123 E PITTSBURGH ST		DELMONT	PA	15626-1423	Westmoreland			614404	591419		
65-01566	KUNKLES SVC	64 GREENSBURG ST		DELMONT	PA	15626-1416	Westmoreland	Delmont Boro		614198	513964		
Primary Facility ID	**PA Number**	**Site Number**	**Name**	**Total Features**	**Features Reclai**	**Primary Facility Type**	**Primary Facility Status**						
657797	PA 3510	3510	DELMONT SOUTH	3	1	Abandoned Mine Land	AML Inventory List						
656979	PA 2535	2535	DELMONT	25	22	Abandoned Mine Land	Abandoned						



Within a 0.4-mile buffer from Shields Farm's center, 25 facilities are highlighted within the DEP Environmental Site Assessment Tool mapping database.

Site Name	Site ID	Primary Facility Name	Primary Facility ID	Sub Facility Name	Sub Facility ID	Primary Facility Type	Primary Facility Kind	Other Facility ID	Sub Facility Type	S Other ID	Primary Facility Status	Sub Facility Status	Compliance
FLETCHER SALES & SERVICE	776971	FLETCHER SALES & SERVICE	769214	FLETCHER SALES & SERVICE	1116534	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-CONSTRUCTION (NON-PHASED)	PAI056513005	COMMERCIAL OR IND DEV	PAI056513005	INACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
SPEEDWAY STORE #100277	774947	SPEEDWAY STORE #100277	767086	SPEEDWAY STORE #100277	1111497	EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-CONSTRUCTION (NON-PHASED)	PAI056513004	COMMERCIAL OR IND DEV	PAI056513004	INACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
CNG DOMINION OAKFORD COMP STA	591303	CNG/DOMINION OAKFORD COMP STA	644103	CNG/DOMINION OAKFORD COMP S	784725	LAND RECYCLING CLEANUP LOCATION	Unavailable	65-05533	SOIL MEDIA	784725	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	
OAKFORD COMPRESSOR STA	249781	CNG/DOMINION OAKFORD COMP STA	644252	CNG/DOMINION OAKFORD COMP S	784992	LAND RECYCLING CLEANUP LOCATION	Unavailable	PAD981045107	SOIL MEDIA	784992	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	
DELMONT BORO WESTMORELAND CNTY	263882	DELMONT BORO STORM SEW SYS	643350	SW OUTFALL 020	1090255	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-MUNICIPAL	PAI136125	DISCHARGE POINT	20	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
OAKFORD COMPRESSOR STA	249781	OAKFORD COMPRESSOR STA	257089	OUTFALL 006	521242	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0003549	DISCHARGE POINT	6	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
OAKFORD COMPRESSOR STA	249781	OAKFORD COMPRESSOR STA	257089	OUTFALL 006	521242	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0003549	DISCHARGE POINT	6	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
DELMONT BORO WESTMORELAND CNTY	263882	DELMONT BORO STORM SEW SYS	643350	SW OUTFALL 020	1090255	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-MUNICIPAL	PAI136125	DISCHARGE POINT	20	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	IW OUTFALL 101	517240	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	101	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	IW OUTFALL 201	517239	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	201	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	IW OUTFALL 301	517241	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	301	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	OUTFALL 001	220457	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	1	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	TRTMT PLT	220459	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	TREATMENT PLANT	468S084	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	TRTMT PLT	1099296	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	TREATMENT PLANT	6512200	ACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	IW OUTFALL 101	517240	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	101	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	IW OUTFALL 201	517239	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	201	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	IW OUTFALL 301	517241	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	301	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	OUTFALL 001	220457	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	DISCHARGE POINT	1	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	TRTMT PLT	220459	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	TREATMENT PLANT	468S084	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	242979	VISION PROFILE EXTRUSIONS USA LTD	247370	TRTMT PLT	1099296	WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY	STORMWATER-INDUSTRIAL	PA0204811	TREATMENT PLANT	6512200	ACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
OAKFORD OG GAS STORAGE RESERVOIR	231511	H I SNYDER 2	512539	H I SNYDER 2	392120	Oil & Gas Location	NonCoal	129-24133	Well	129-24133	Active	Active	YES
OAKFORD OG GAS STORAGE RESERVOIR	231511	DELMONT BORO JW283	243676	DELMONT BORO JW283	210488	Oil & Gas Location	NonCoal	129-23928	Well	129-23928	Active	Active	YES
OAKFORD OG GAS STORAGE RESERVOIR	231511	CNG TRANSMISSION CORP JW285	243347	CNG TRANSMISSION CORP JW285	209454	Oil & Gas Location	NonCoal	129-23927	Well	129-23927	Active	Active	YES
ENERGI FENESTRATION SOLUTIONS	242979	CUSTOM WINDOW EXTRUSIONS INC	247369	SEW TREAT	220456	WATER RESOURCE	INDUSTRIAL USE	021466-001	DISCHARGE	021466-004	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
SALEM TWP WESTMORELAND CNTY RD SYS	620813	T 628 BRDG REPLACEMENT	678177	T 628 BRDG REPLACEMENT	916910	ENCROACHMENT LOCATION	SOILS & WATERWAYS	E65-891	BRIDGE	E65-891	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
SALEM TWP WESTMORELAND CNTY RD SYS	620813	T 628 BRDG REPLACEMENT	678177	T 628 BRDG WETLAND IMPACT	916911	ENCROACHMENT LOCATION	SOILS & WATERWAYS	E65-891	WETLAND IMPACT	E65-891	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	YES
FATURS MKT DELMONT	481584	FATURS MKT INC/DELMONT STORE	510809	INCINERATOR	389829	AIR EMISSION PLANT	Unavailable	25-1203428-1	INCINERATOR	65-594	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
FATURS MKT DELMONT	481584	FATURS MKT INC/DELMONT STORE	510809	ADMIN SF FOR:FATURS MKT INC/D	552070	AIR EMISSION PLANT	Unavailable	25-1203428-1	GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE	ADMIN	INACTIVE	INACTIVE	YES
Facility ID	**Facility**	**Facility Address**	**Facility Address2**	**Facility City**	**Facility State**	**Facility Zip**	**Facility County**	**Facility Municipal**	**Primary Facility ID**	**Site ID**			
65-05533	OAKFOR	6814 ROUTE 22		DELMONT	PA	15626	Westmoreland	Salem Twp	614255	591303			
65-05533	OAKFOR	6814 ROUTE 22		DELMONT	PA	15626	Westmoreland	Salem Twp	10/03/2024	614255	591303		
Sub Facility ID	**Sub Fac**	**Sub Facility Type**	**Sub Facility Status**	**Sub Facility Priority**	**Sub Facility Pro**	**PRIORITY**	**QUANTITY**	**UOM**	**STATUS**				
1070775	2535-22	Subsidence Area	Reclamation Comple	Extreme Health or Safety Impact	51 Known Subsi	2,1	1,.1	CT,Acres	RDEP,RDEP				
1249202	2535-23	Subsidence Area	Reclamation Comple	Health or Safety Impact	51 Known Subsi	2	1	CT	RDEP				
818600	2535-04	Coal Surface Mine	Reclamation Comple	Health or Safety Impact	20 Dry Strip Min	2,2	1,1000	CT,Ft	RDEP,REC				



Within a 0.2-mile buffer from DEP's Registered Park Drive Data Point, there are no facilities highlighted within the DEP Environmental Site Assessment Tool mapping database.



Within a 0.2-mile buffer from DEP's Registered White Valley Drive Data Point, 3 facilities are highlighted within the DEP Environmental Site Assessment Tool mapping database.

Primary Facility ID	PA Number	Site Number	Name	Total Features	Features Reclaimed	Primary Facility Type	Primary Facility Status
656979	PA 2535	2535	DELMONT	25	22	Abandoned Mine Land	Abandoned
Sub Facility ID	**Sub Facility Name**	**Sub Facility Type**	**Sub Facility Status**	**Sub Facility Priority**	**Sub Facility Problem**		
818612	2535-16	Impacted Water Source	Reclamation Complete	Environmental Impact	14 AMD Discharge Area		
818613	2535-17	Entry Point/Opening	Reclamation Complete	Environmental Impact	03 Open Shaft/Mine Entry		

PART III: AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

MISSION STATEMENT

Delmont Borough strives to meet its citizens' recreational needs by providing well-maintained, safe, and accessible public spaces in which a broad selection of enriching and community-oriented recreation programs can occur.

The Plan's detailed strategy for implementation defines goals that are important in obtaining support for new ideas, events, and facility enhancements. To understand the community's desires, the results of the public survey and the key person interviews as well as Study Committee input were analyzed. Throughout the input process, a number of issues were consistently raised. These issues became the Study's initial objectives.

1. Address the recreational needs of all ages, abilities and interests.
2. Develop joint-use between private organizations, volunteer groups, the Borough and other organizations.
3. Pursue grant funding for the development of Borough facilities in collaboration with other groups, organizations or agencies.
4. Operate a responsible and financially efficient recreational department.

The public is seeking recreation facilities that are responsive to a wide variety of interests and community leaders want to make responsible decisions. Analyzing the inventory of facilities and programs as well as public survey results provides the direction for developing a ten-year strategy for the existing facilities as well as the acquisition/development of enhanced facilities. Both existing and future recreation programming will play a key role in determining the scope of new recreational amenities. These issues will be addressed in the Study recommendations.

STUDY GOALS

The community aims to enhance its existing amenities and services. In doing so, many facets, including a series of this Plan's goals, are important to consider:

- **Administration Goal:** Operate the parks and recreation system effectively and efficiently through volunteer, community official, and Borough staff leadership.
- **Park Maintenance and Safety Goal:** Ensure that park and trail areas and recreation facilities are attractive, well-maintained, safe and secure for visitors.

- **Recreation Programming Goal:** Offer citizens a balanced schedule of quality, affordable recreation programs and special events for all ages, in cooperation with Borough businesses, civic groups, sports associations, Greensburg Salem School District, Franklin Regional School District, neighboring municipalities, and other partners.
- **Park and Recreation Facilities Goal:** Enhance existing park areas and recreation facilities by determining priorities for improvements and by elevating accessibility standards.
- **Finance Goal:** Secure adequate financing and partnerships to support and sustain the operation, maintenance, development, programming, and future designation of park areas, open spaces, trail connections and recreation facilities.
- **Public Awareness and Marketing Goal:** Build community awareness of recreation's value in improving citizen health and quality of life, by increasing public knowledge and through encouraging the public to invest their time enjoying and being part of the Borough's public spaces and recreation programs.
- **Greenways, Trails, and Natural Resources Goal:** Promote a system of interconnected cultural resources, sensitive natural areas, public spaces, businesses, and neighborhoods in conjunction with the community's Official Map (upon its completion) and its Active Transportation Plan.

PART IV: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Administration

Parks and recreation management requires interdisciplinary skills which focus on the care and maintenance of facilities and programs. One municipal duty is to make sure the day-to-day delivery of parks and recreation services and facilities are satisfactory to the end users and provide an optimal environment for recreation functions. Recreation management incorporates all activities related to keeping a park system running. Representatives of Borough Council are structured to serve as the principal administrators of the Borough's facilities. It is an important role to coordinate and oversee the safe, secure and environmentally-sound operation of the Borough's recreation assets in a cost-effective manner aimed at long-term preservation and enhancement.

The Borough is positioned to operate its civic infrastructure effectively and efficiently through volunteers and Staff leadership. As established in the Borough's Code, the relationship of Borough elected officials, Council Committees, and the appointed Recreation Committee is pivotal to implementing these ideas both locally and in coordinating with regional and County partners. Presently, the focus of efforts is in serving the local population. The everyday functions of parks, recreation, and open space are to be balanced with staff and volunteer capacities. Key functions of the Recreation Committee will be to convey considerations applicable for resident outreach and priority projects in context of park user activity trends; the Council Grants Committee will be able to coordinate with Council to determine and propose funding pursuits to support the priority projects as they arise.

Delmont officials formally coordinated with Salem Township officials and established the technical agreement associated with the Borough's duties in policing Shields Farm. Opportunity abounds for the Borough to expand cooperative efforts and functions with other municipalities, schools, recreation providers, conservation groups, support groups, and area businesses.

The Borough aims to offer safe facilities for visitors as well as protecting the public investments; public perception that the parks are safe is also important to their success. Two featured components of this success are accessibility and risk management strategies.

Today's Relationship of ADA with Parks and Recreation

Right to Participate - Every single recreation and sport opportunity that is offered for people without disabilities is also available to the consumer who has a disability. With a reasonable accommodation, he or she will be able to participate alongside neighbors, relatives, friends, and others without disabilities in the pursuit of exciting, rewarding, and challenging sport and recreation opportunities. While separate programs, designed just for people with disabilities, are permissible and may in certain instances be preferred by the recreation consumer, the integrated opportunity must be provided.

Right to Reasonable Accommodations - A person with a disability has the right to reasonable accommodations, provided by the activity organizer or sponsor, to meet essential eligibility requirements, if necessary to facilitate or enable participation in the activity of his or her choice. Accommodations include changes in rules and policies; extra staff for the coaching or management of the activity; a sign language interpreter or other aids for recreation consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing; Braille or large print documents for recreation consumers who are blind or have impaired vision; and other efforts to facilitate participation.

Right to Adaptive Equipment – Participants could engage in an activity if the equipment is adapted, such as the provision of protective gear or modification in equipment such as rackets, clubs or other gear.

Right to an Assessment - Recreation and sport providers must assess the individual participant's ability, risk, and experience in the sport or activity. This includes consideration of how reasonable accommodations such as rule changes or adaptive equipment would eliminate or minimize the risk and enable participation in the activity. The assessment must apply to both participants with and without disabilities.

Other Rights – When rules and policies are implemented, they cannot have a greater impact on people with disabilities vs. those without. No higher fees will be charged to people with disabilities. The Municipality cannot provide substantial support to organizations that do discriminate against people with disabilities; public facilities cannot be used by organizations that discriminate. When changing a rule of play does not fundamentally change the activity, then the rule should be changed to accommodate the person with the disability. Behavior management in programs is a challenge as it is subject to interpretations. The defining edge is whether the

behavior is elevated to the potential of a direct threat with immediate physical harm resulting. Other challenging behaviors such as offensive language, not paying attention, and wandering around are inherent in some disabilities and are subject to accommodation and interpretation.

The Borough has the opportunity to complete a self-evaluation. As a complementing policy component to accessibility, Risk Management is a standard operating practice of parks and recreation agencies. Risk includes the possibility that harm could result from a hazard that would cause personal injury, death, property damage, economic loss or damage to the environment. To manage risk in Borough parks, a series of management steps are needed:

Risk Identification – It is necessary to identify all of the sources of potential hazards in the park. Delmont Borough needs to have knowledge at all times of any risk related to the parks. This includes park conditions, the employees or volunteers that might make the Borough subject to liability as the result of how they complete their duties, and any other liability of the Borough parks and recreation efforts.

Risk Assessment – Delmont Borough could work with its insurance carrier to evaluate the park and departmental operating practices to assess the probability of risk. This would also include tracking any incidents or injuries reported.

Public Spaces Risk Management Plan - The Risk Management Plan is important for both safe operations as well as in establishing credibility in case of litigation. Some insurance carriers provide assistance and even grants to undertake such planning projects. The plan should include the following documents all of which should be reviewed by the Borough solicitor:

- Statement that the Borough is committed to safety for citizens, employees and facilities
- Program registration information
- Accident forms
- Health forms if appropriate
- Participation forms and waivers
- Rental agreements and leases
- Program dates and documents
- Operations information and policies
- Reports for maintenance and procedures
- Inspection program and reports

A Tool for Risk Management **-** Routine scheduled maintenance provides the foundation for effective park security and risk management. When park visitors see that a facility is well cared for, the risk of vandalism and other undesirable social behaviors tends to diminish. The best security is not people in uniforms but people in parks playing and enjoying being outside.

In addition to risk management, the Borough can periodically review its Chapter 79 Parks and Recreation Areas legislation last notably amended in 2022. These proactive updates stem from various recreation-related discussions during this planning process and on-going programming coordination needs.

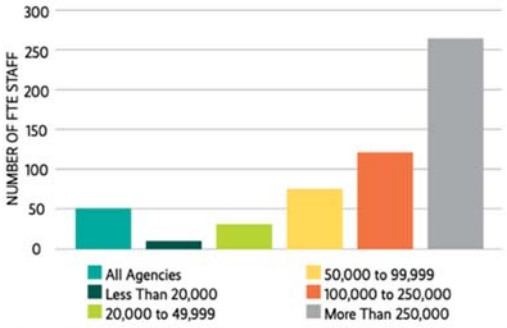
In future policy reviews, Borough Council can revisit Chapter 79 to determine and re-align policy provisions with 1) current park functions, 2) posted rules, and 3) general operational needs. Recognition of the manner and methods in which residents can participate in park planning should also be expanded within the Borough Code and/or as part of regularly conducted municipal meeting protocols/agendas.

Personnel

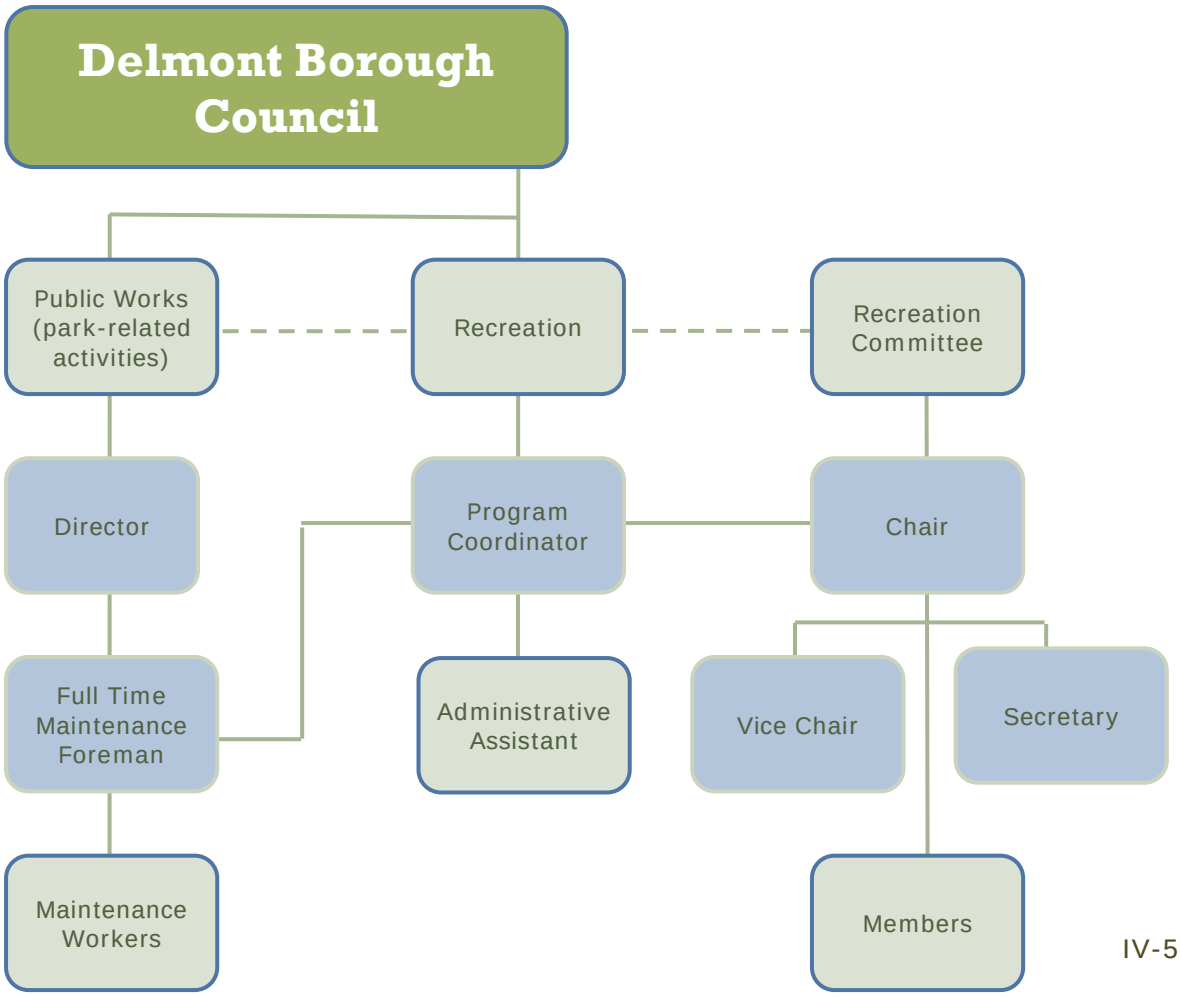
Two cooperating entities are responsible for recreation programs and services that Delmont provides. Similar to administrative functions, the Borough Council and its appointed Recreation Board volunteers conceptualize and publicize Borough-sponsored events. Staff functions are specifically geared to supporting administrative needs associated with sign-ups and communications. Chapter 37 of Delmont's Borough Code, most recently amended in 2018, stipulates the Recreation Board's operational mechanisms to fulfill their role in offering recreation, park, and open space programs and services. Borough Council has sole authority in maintaining the lands and buildings associated with parks and recreation, appointing residents to fulfill Board terms, and approve all Recreation Board recommendations.

In an excerpt from the 2023 National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) Annual Report, Figure 10 (to the right) identifies that in communities with less than 20,000 residents, 6 to 22 Full-Time Equivalent Staff support park and recreation agencies; the median is 11.3. When compared on a per capita (10,000) basis, these values are similar (6.5 to 20.5 and 11.5 median FTE). Considerations for personnel levels is a dynamic topic especially in considering park acreage and types that exist within Delmont. Further, as the Borough continues to evolve its park, recreation, open space, and greenway record keeping measures, consideration for additional staffing support can be aligned with day-to-day task needs and facility maintenance best practices. The Borough continues to grow its manuals and resource library in staying abreast of maintenance and programming support needs. NRPA's annual technical assessment and benchmarking resources can serve as be a viable comparative reference through the years ahead.

FIGURE 10: PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY STAFFING: FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTEs) (BY JURISDICTION POPULATION)



	All Agencies	Less Than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More Than 250,000
Median	51.5	11.3	32.3	75.8	121.5	264.1
Lower Quartile	17.3	6.0	17.0	46.0	72.8	103.9
Upper Quartile	134.7	22.0	67.8	127.5	198.3	533.0



Facilities and Open Space



For many, the heart of park and recreation planning discussions is in the facilities a community provides. In a comparison of park and recreation systems across the United States, Delmont Borough far exceeds the values highlighted in the 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review Key Findings. As shown to the right, nationally, there are 2,287 residents per park and 10.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. In Delmont, there are approximately 1,300 residents per park (when considering Newhouse Park and Shields Farm as principal parks and Valley Stream, Rose Wigfield and Park Drive Parks as supportive open spaces) and 61.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 Borough residents. As the Borough continues caring and evolving its park and open space system, these ratio considerations are important benchmarking points in the decades ahead.

A broad combination of facilities hosting opportunities for both active and passive recreation comprise Delmont's open space system. Across nearly 180 acres of public space, the Borough's five facilities offer a range of large gathering spaces and intimate lots intended for quiet respite.

Two neighborhood-focused areas include *Valley Stream Park* and *Park Drive Park*.

Rose Wigfield Parklet provides an intimate, formal, and centrally located relaxation and gathering space.

Newhouse Park is the community's signature park for both active and passive recreation.

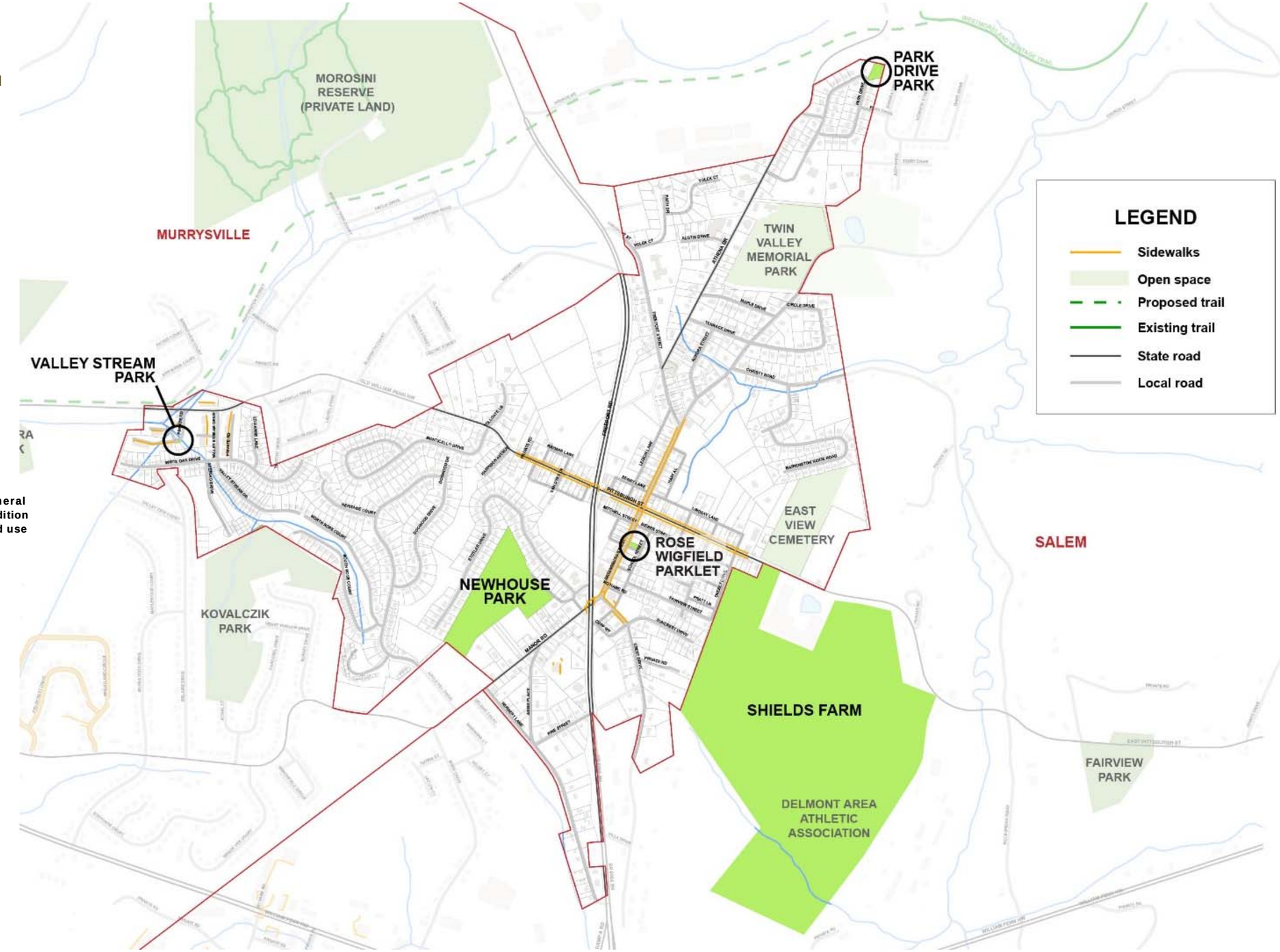
Shields Farm, located in Salem Township along the Borough's southeastern border, hosts locally and regionally significant special events throughout the year as well as includes improved athletic fields and amenities the Delmont Area Athletic Association has constructed over the course of many years.

DELMONT PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The Borough of Delmont comprises a majority of US Census Tract 8020.03 and all parks are located with this Tract.

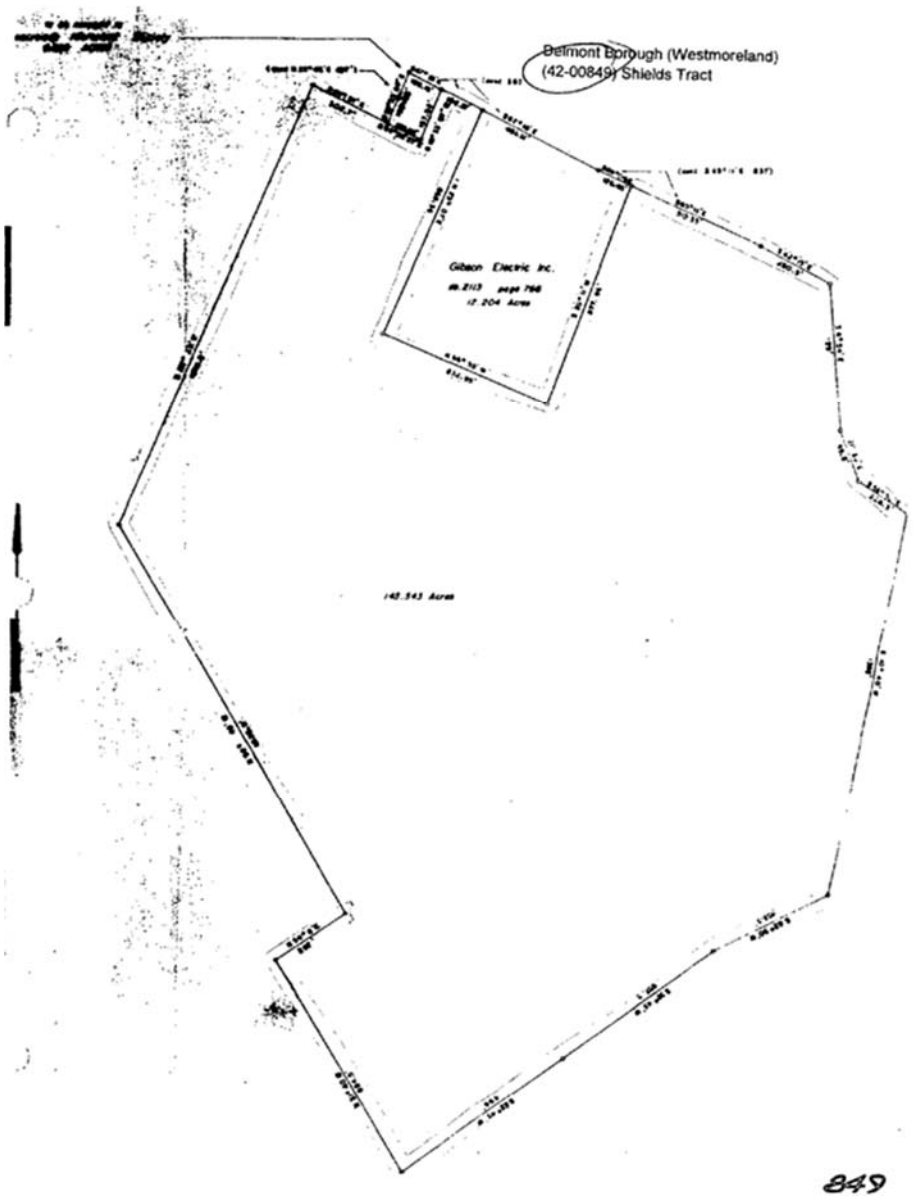
Facility or open space name	Ownership	Number and type of facilities	Acreage	General condition and use
Shields Farm	Borough	Primarily Passive	145	Fair
Newhouse	Borough	Mixture of Passive and Active	15 (Formally Designated)	Fair
Park Drive	Borough	Passive Play Space	<0.5	Fair
Valley Stream	Borough	Passive Play Space	<0.5	Fair
Rose Wigfield	Borough	Passive Plaza	<0.5	Fair





R. J. Shields (Shields) Farm

The Borough received funding in the past from the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) as part of project #42-00849. This funding was used towards the acquisition of a 145-acre tract of land in Salem Township, Westmoreland County. The Land and Water Conservation funding agreement (originally created in 1979 with amendment in 1980 and final approval noted in 1983) contains reference mapping and provisions that tie the site to perpetual park/recreation use.



Situated within Salem Township directly bordering the Borough of Delmont, Shields Farm is the home to the Delmont Area Athletic Association (DAAA), Apple 'n Arts Festival, as well as

the Christmas in Salem Crossroads. In addition to athletic fields in the Park's southeast quadrant, a series of buildings housing antique farm equipment from the Fort Allen Antique Farm Equipment Association are situated throughout the central portion of the Park. In recent years an electrical upgrade was completed as well as replacement of some of the weathered logs at the log cabin located on the property at East Pittsburgh Street. The amphitheater was constructed by the Apple 'n Arts Festival as well as some locations that house different stations along a walking path used by Christmas in Salem Crossroads.

With the wide variety of special and seasonal event users, participants and organizers have identified through the years that there could be opportunity to enhance Shields Farm visitors' experience. As part of the planning process, consideration for a number of potential site enhancements were discussed with recognition that a more detailed site master plan process would be beneficial to determine the extent to which either active, passive, or a combination of the two types of recreation could be most suitable for the site. Highlighted desires thematically relate to infrastructure improvements (e.g. parking lot, restrooms, permanent shelter, electrical upgrades, walking paths, etc.). An evaluation and status report of site accessibility is imperative.

One technical item for specific coordination *for <u>any</u> future DCNR site specific planning or development projects* is that the Borough will be required to record a corrective deed restriction for Shields Farm. All projects funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program are permanently protected for the benefit of the public. Upon completion of the project, DCNR is responsible to complete post on-site inspections at five-year intervals on all projects. The inspection areas are defined by the "LWCF project boundary map" on file with DCNR and NPS.

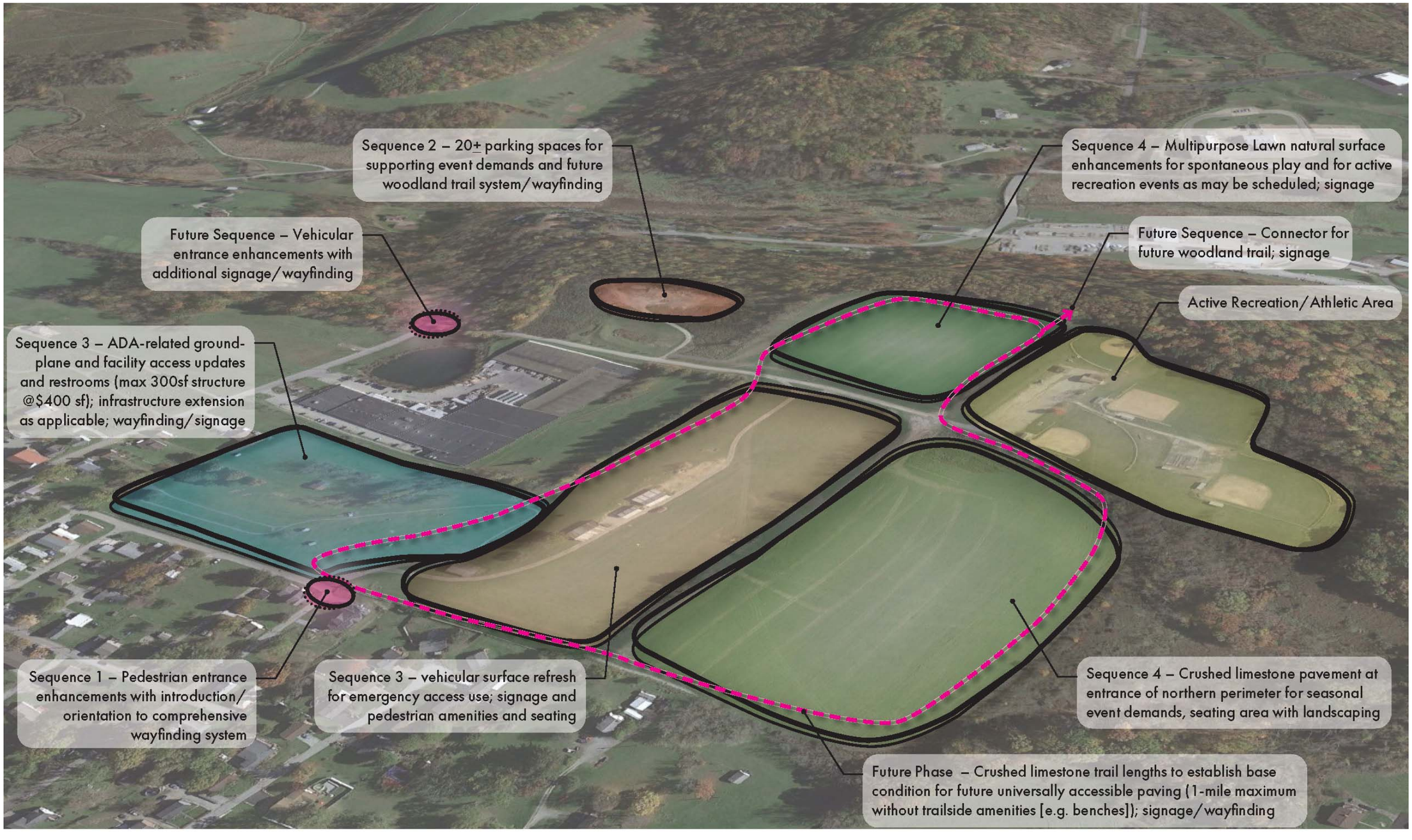
Shields Farm as outlined on the official LWCF boundary map is subject to the LWCF anti-conversion requirement as stated: "This property, or interest in property, was either acquired with, developed or donated as a match for funds provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources ("Department"). The source of the funds is Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, 54 U.S.C.A. §§ 200301-200310 et seq. ("Act"), provided through the National Park Service. This property, or any portion of it, may not be converted to purposes other than those authorized under the Act for property acquired and/or developed with Department funds. No change of use and no transfer of ownership, control, or interest in this property may occur, and no encumbrance may be placed on this property, without the written consent of the Department or its successor. The restriction in

this paragraph applies to both the surface and subsurface of the property. This restriction has the effect of a covenant running in perpetuity with the land and is binding upon the owner(s) of the property and upon all subsequent owners, successors, and assigns. This restriction is enforceable by the Department and its successors."

Properties that are developed with LWCF are not permitted to be converted to purposes/uses other than outdoor public recreation. No change of use and no transfer of ownership, control, or interest in the property may occur without written consent of DCNR. A conversion may occur when non-recreational use exists on a piece of property including but not limited to energy development, commercial development, municipal buildings, telecommunication towers and resource extraction.

In any discovery that the property has been converted to a use not consistent with public outdoor recreation, it is the community's responsibility to work with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to reach a solution. It is through this process that LWCF will help provide outdoor recreation opportunities for this and future generations. As a past recipient of LWCF funding, Delmont Borough will be required to record a corrective deed restriction for Shields Farm for any future DCNR site specific planning or development projects.

From evaluation of public comments received and general site observations, initial ideas and phasing concept for Shields Farm's potential enhancement were evaluated as part of the comprehensive planning process. The initial ideas' continued balancing and evolution can explored through further development of a Master Site Development Plan. In this type of effort, the Borough can explore the intricate relationships between site-specific, design-level elements including: the Site's specific purpose, goals, and objectives for local and regional audiences; features inventory and analysis; activity(s) and facility(s) analysis; design considerations; design process and recommendations; cost estimate and phased capital development program; maintenance and operations costs as well as revenue streams; along with potential consideration for more detailed assessment of security, cultural resources, forest stewardship, and other on-site structures. As part of site-specific site development package work efforts, the Brough will need to illustrate deed information and LWCF boundary information to ensure compliance with site- and funding-specific requirements.



SITE CONCEPT DESIGN DIAGRAM

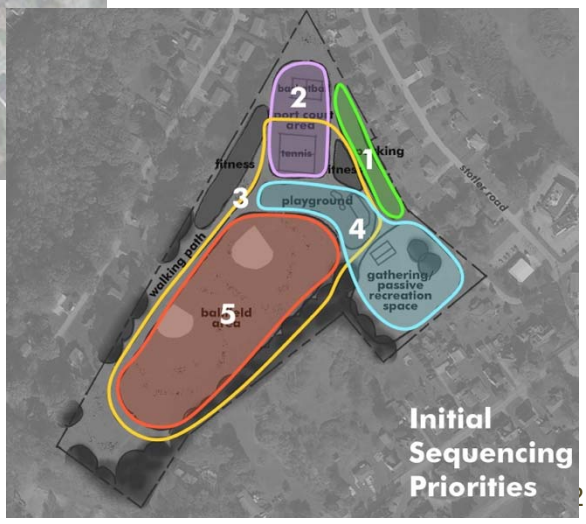
DELMONT BOROUGH CRPOS
Delmont, PA Feb. 2024

Newhouse Park

Newhouse Park is located within walking distance to several different housing plans in the area. Newhouse Park has an improved perimeter trail (approximately 1 Kilometer) around two diamond ballfields, a concession stand, and various play equipment. The play equipment is geared toward various ages. Although some sport court pavement has fallen into disrepair, new basketball court was installed three years ago, and bathrooms are opened during the summer months as well as a pavilion with kitchen that can be rented out. The Park's 15 formally improved acres adjoins 15 additional Borough-owned acres of wooded/open terrain. The Newhouse Park's current parking lot limits the size of events. The Delmont Recreation Board hosts a series of signature seasonal events that have included food trucks, bands, and movies after dusk. From evaluation of public comments received and general site observations, initial ideas and a phasing concept for Newhouse Park enhancement were captured as part of the comprehensive planning process.



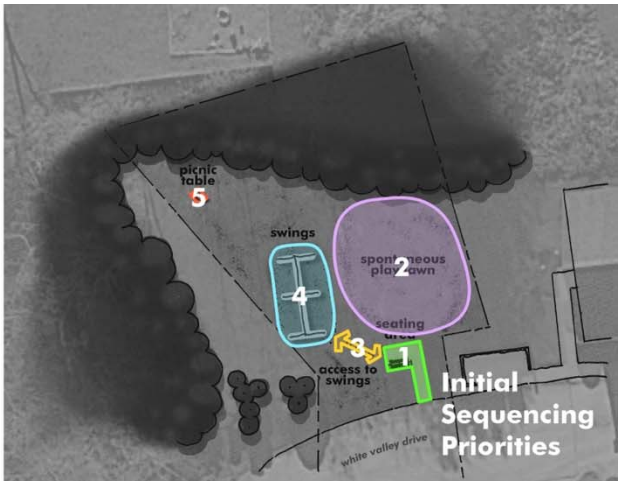
An evaluation and status report of site accessibility is imperative.



Valley Stream Park

Valley Stream Park is a Borough-owned and -maintained neighborhood park with limited equipment and facilities. From evaluation of public comments received and general site observations, initial ideas and a phasing concept for Valley Stream Park's enhancement were captured as part of the comprehensive planning process. For future site design and maintenance considerations, different scales of improvement could be considered. Concept ideas and phasing for a more constructed and a more natural space were prepared. With either concept selected, an evaluation and status report of site accessibility is imperative.





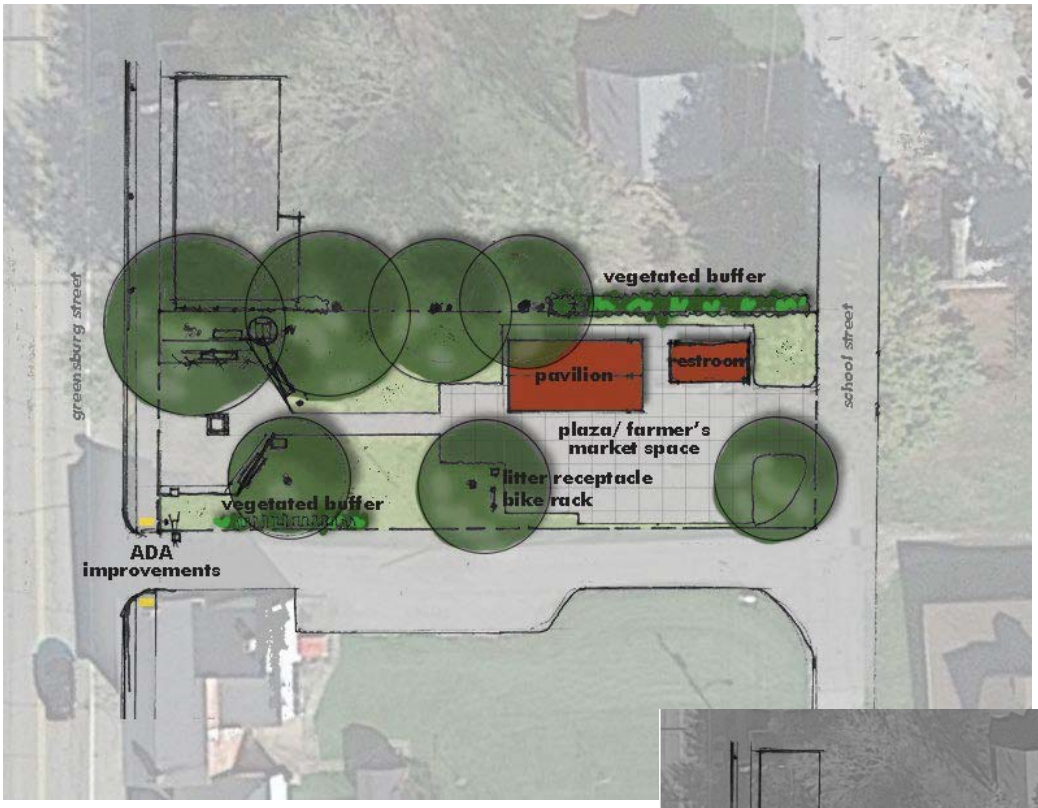




Rose Wigfield Parklet

Rose Wigfield Parklet (approximately 50' X 104') is located in Delmont's core business area and south of the registered Historic District. There was recently a bathroom facility and pavilion added to the parklet, which has also been the site of recent Eagle Scout projects to provide some rehab of the area. The parklet has also hosted various smaller events over the past few years, such as a Sock Hop Fundraiser, a wedding, and Delmont Daze. From evaluation of public comments received and general site observations, initial ideas and a phasing concept for Rose Wigfield Parklet enhancement were captured as part of the comprehensive planning process.

An evaluation and status report of site accessibility is imperative.





Park Drive Park

Park Drive Park is a Borough-maintained neighborhood open space with limited equipment and facilities. As part of the planning process, deed information remained unavailable through digital parcel assessment resources and should be secured prior to any site master plan pursuits. Parcel dimensions, as recorded through the Westmoreland County GIS mapping, are illustrated below. In pursuit of multi-municipal connection to the nearby Rangos Trailhead, the Borough can consider the extent to which grading and stormwater improvements on site can be coordinated with adjacent site grading and stormwater needs. An evaluation and status report of site accessibility is also imperative.

Upon adjacent landowner agreement and affirmation of potential easement participation, a study of trail/easement alignment and grading feasibility with cost estimating associated with trail connection should be conducted.

To retain the neighborhood-scale of and walkability to/from this space, no parking should be accommodated. Street signage reinforcing the same should also be erected/maintained.



Opinions of Probable Development (Hard) Costs Associated with Initial Sequencing Priorities

Notes: Average 2023 construction bid unit costs submitted as part of Western PA projects are included in hard cost equations below. Unless otherwise noted, Design, Engineering, Mobilization/Demobilization, Grading, Stormwater Management, Lighting, Utility Expansion, Contingencies, Permitting, and Other Applicable Soft Costs are not included in numbers below.

Shields Farm Park

Initial Sequencing Priorities (Hard Costs)

Sequence	Improvement	Assumptions		Initial Opinion of Probable Development Costs
1	Pedestrian Entrance Enhancements	Landscaping and signage/wayfinding	$	14,400
2	Parking Area	Asphalt pavement; 20 spaces total	$	280,000
3	Seasonal Event Gathering Area/Amphitheater	ADA-related ground-plane and facility access updates and restrooms (max 300sf structure @$400 sf)); infrastructure extension as applicable; vehicular surface refresh for emergency access use	$	245,000
4	Hillside Overlook	Crushed limestone pavement at entrance of northern perimiter for seasonal event demands, seating area with landscaping	$	67,200
4	Multipurpose Lawn	Fine grading and seeding for elevated active recreation/freeform athletic space	$	112,000
		Initial Sequencing Priorities Total		**$718,600**

Pedestrian Circulation Options (based on range of installation methods)

Future	Upland Trails Alt 1 @$5/SF; contractor bid-sourced unit cost 2023	Crushed limestone trail lengths @8' widths to establish base condition for future installation of universally accessible paving top layer (1-mile maximum without trailside amenities [e.g. benches]); signage/wayfinding	$	258,133
Future	Upland Trails Alt 2 @$11/SF; contractor bid-sourced unit cost 2023	Asphalt trail lengths @ 8' widths (1-mile maximum without trailside amenities [e.g. benches]); signage/wayfinding	$	536,917
Future	Woodland Challenge Trails Alt 1 handwork @$3/SF; workforce install	Earthen cut/fill trail lengths @3-4' widths (1-mile maximum without trailside amenities [e.g. benches]); signage/wayfinding	$	69,696
Future	Woodland Challenge Trails Alt 2 handwork @$5/SF; contractor install	Earthen cut/fill trail lengths @3-4' widths (1-mile maximum without trailside amenities [e.g. benches]); signage/wayfinding	$	116,160

Newhouse Park

Initial Sequencing Priorities (Hard Costs)

Sequence	Improvement	Assumptions	Initial Opinion of Probable Development Costs
1	Parking Area	40 spaces and associated stormwater management measures; asphalt pavement for universal accessibility	$ 560,000
2	Sport Court Rehabilitation	Rehabilitation and accessibility/safety measures of up to 2 courts	$ 84,000
3	Walking Path Rehabilitation/ Accessibility	6' wide asphalt path (up to 1/2-mile trail bed and surface reconstruction) @$11 SF; contractorbid sourced unit	$ 174,240
4	Playground	1 large playground with safety surface	$ 350,000
4	Gathering Space/Passive Recreation	Seeded lawn, trees, and other plantings	$ 105,000
5	Ballfield Area Rehabilitation/ Accessiblity	Rehabilitation and accessbility improvments of 2 diamond ballfields including fencing but no dugouts	$ 525,000
		Initial Sequencing Priorities Total	$ 1,798,240

Rose Wigfield Park

Initial Sequencing Priorities (Hard Costs)

Sequence	Improvement	Assumptions	Initial Opinion of Probable Development Costs
1	Vegetated Buffers	Evergreen trees	$7,000
2	ADA Improvements	Detectable warning strips, new concrete	$14,000
3	Plaza	Stamped Concrete (up to 5,000 SF @$20 SF)	$100,000
3	Site Amenities	Litter receptacle, bike rack, seating	$11,200
		Initial Sequencing Priorities Total	**$132,200**

Valley Stream Park: Concept Plan 1

Initial Sequencing Priorities (Hard Costs)

Sequence	Improvement	Assumptions	Initial Opinion of Probable Development Costs
1	Access/Seating Area	Concrete pavers; 2 benches	$21,600
2	Spontaneous Play Lawn	Seeding, fine grading	$4,200
3	Access to Swings	6' wide asphalt path	$5,600
4	Swings	2-bay swing set; wood chip safety surface	$49,000
5	Picnic Table	1 wooden picnic table	$4,200
		Initial Sequencing Priorities Total	**$84,600**

Valley Stream Park: Concept Plan 2

Initial Sequencing Priorities (Hard Costs)

Sequence	Improvement	Assumptions	Initial Opinion of Probable Development Costs
1	Access/Seating Area	Concrete pavers; 2 benches	$21,600
2	Pollinator Meadow	Seeding, plugs	$21,000
2	Meadow Observation Area	Seeding, fine grading	$5,600
3	Picnic Table	1 wooden picnic table	$4,200
		Initial Sequencing Priorities Total	**$52,400**

Park Drive Park Trail Access

Initial Sequencing Priorities (Hard Costs)

Sequence	Improvement	Assumptions	Initial Opinion of Probable Development Costs
	Walking Path	6' wide asphalt path (up to 200' trail bed and surface reconstruction on the lot) @$11 SF; contractorbid sourced unit cost 2023	$13,200
	Wayfinding	Signage/Wayfinding and 1 bench in coordination with off-site improvements	$12,000
	Pollinator Meadow	Seeding, plugs	$21,000
	Meadow Observation Area	Seeding, fine grading	$5,600
		Initial Sequencing Priorities Total	**$51,800**

Influences for Future Master Site Planning Considerations and Expansion of Plan Concepts Explored During this Planning Process

In each of the Borough's five park and open space facilities, the physical condition of most existing equipment, structures, surfacing, and pedestrian route grades/pitches will require upgrades and/or major repairs to comply with universal accessibility standards (of the

Americans with Disability Act [ADA]). Play equipment, if not compliant with ADA and Consumer Product Safety Commission safety guidelines should be removed and/or replaced as funding is available. As part of furthering inclusive design standards throughout the Borough's open space system, each of the five sites' future master site plans should include specifications for characteristics such as surfaces, textures, signage, and grading that open space users directly encounter.

In addition to inclusive design, a commitment toward sustainable practices in all areas related to recreation, parks and open spaces is important to consider for the future of parks and recreation. A Sustainability Audit is a critical element of this consideration. This Audit should serve as a "checklist" used to continually monitor existing sustainable practices and where new practices can be incorporated into the overall parks and recreation system. It also helps to inform the Municipality regarding both physical implementation and policy decisions.

Monitoring sustainability practices should integrate social, environmental and economic considerations into all aspects of parks and recreation. The following items as related to facilities, maintenance, programs and management should be regularly monitored in order to ensure that the system remains a viable community feature and becomes a regional benchmark to inspire similar park and recreation systems.

Facilities

- Use construction materials sourced within 150 miles to the greatest extent possible, with a minimum of fifty (50) percent goal of such materials on every project.
- Utilize on-site solar and wind power wherever possible, especially for pathway lighting and restroom facilities.
- Strategically plant deciduous trees on south- and west-facing sides of buildings in order to reduce summertime heat storage and increase wintertime heat absorption.
- Specify roofing materials, which have a low heat storage and high solar reflectance capacity.
- Install timers and low-energy light bulbs in order to most efficiently operate HVAC and lighting systems.
- Install operable windows in all buildings and locate any new buildings to best take advantage of natural ventilation.
- Secure outdoor spigots to discourage improper usage.
- Exceed all setback requirements as outlined for riparian and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Utilize vegetated swales to clean and infiltrate water.
- Specify durable recyclable materials to be used for all new construction.
- Increase connectivity between facilities to encourage walking and bicycling. Provide amenities that cater to pedestrians and cyclists such as bicycle racks, benches along connectors and reusable water bottle refilling stations.
- Incorporate facilities that generate active play functions, such as spray parks.

Maintenance

- Plan for and organize site improvements in a manner that most efficiently utilizes time required for large construction equipment.

- Develop strict emissions control measures for construction and maintenance vehicles. Also instill emissions control measures for all Municipality-owned vehicles.
- Monitor energy and electricity consumption. Install energy-efficient fixtures and appliances to the greatest extent possible.
- Utilize variable speed motors for energy savings.
- Minimize light pollution.
- Design planting areas to discourage weeds and conserve water.
- Plan non-sports field lawn areas with meadow species to reduce maintenance costs.
- Utilize best management practices for temporary erosion control during construction.
- Minimize hazardous waste.
- Protect natural conditions to the greatest extent possible.

Programs

- Develop initiatives to provide energy-efficient or renewable energy-based projects and services.
- Thoughtfully plan and schedule programs to take full advantage of natural day lighting.
- Provide public recycling and compost bins on-site at each Municipal facility. Provide signage or other educational material to encourage use of these facilities.
- Develop strategies, current actions and future plans for managing impacts on biodiversity.
- Target environmental education programs to all age groups.
- Use the Park and Recreation System to encourage philanthropy and other sustainable practices in outside and local communities.

Management

- Ensure that all sustainable programs and initiatives adhere to laws, standards and voluntary codes related to marketing communications (advertising, promotion, sponsorship, etc.).
- Make the health and safety of parks and recreation employees and volunteers a top priority.
- Put education, training, counseling prevention and risk-control programs in place to assist workforce members, families, and community members.

Recreation Venues to which Delmont Residents Have Access but Do Not Own

Westmoreland Heritage Trail (Trail)

As excerpted from the PA DCNR's Explore Pennsylvania Trails mapping database, the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (shown in red below) is within reach of Delmont Borough's northeastern perimeter. The Trail's existing eastern segment ends at Athena Drive,

approximately 0.5-mi outside of the Borough (within Salem Township).



In 2023, PA DCNR grant dollars were allocated to further extend the Trail's segments with construction of another 0.9 miles of trail from Industrial Drive in the Municipality of Murrysville to Rangos Trailhead (along Athena Drive) as well as rehabilitation of a trailhead, ADA access, and supporting site improvements. Presently, Delmont residents are required to drive or to ride/walk along unmarked rights-of-way to reach the Trailhead.

The extent to which the Trail's Rangos Trailhead can be directly connected to the Borough, via the municipality's Park Drive Park (Open Space) is of value for the Borough to further explore adjoining right-of-way and/or easement opportunities as well as future potential multi-municipal funding pursuits. This multi-municipal connection, further promoted as part of the Borough's 2023 Active Transportation Plan, establishes opportunity for local access to a growing regional pedestrian network. Specifics of designing suitable grade changes and the securing of easement authorizations will be two tasks of focus in realizing this important link.

Further, the Delmont Visionary Committee is working on a plan to bring a spur of the Westmoreland Heritage Trial to come through the town. The goals of the plan are to define a long-term vision for the recreation and open spaces and determine what improvements can be made that will benefit all members of the community. Depending upon the route

selected, the Borough will be called to reinforce public space design that upholds criteria associated with the Registered Historic District.

Palmer Imaging Arena

The venue, opened in 1997, houses three NHL ice sheets and is home to eight high school teams, one college team, and one amateur team. During the summer season the Allegheny Arena is transformed into a roller rink.

Palmer Imaging Arena, owned by Black Bear Sports Group, Inc. is a multi-purpose sports facility located in Delmont, PA. Opened in 1997, the 125,000 square-foot facility includes three NHL-sized ice rinks, with one of the ice rinks converting in March through August to dry floor concrete /sport court. These ice rinks are complemented by two meeting/party rooms that support a variety of corporate and community functions as well as group outings/field trips. Palmer Imaging Arena's mix of surfaces provides for a host of programs, program drop ins, leagues, themed events, expos, trade shows, shows and concerts.

Library

The Delmont Public Library has opened their new facility east of the Delmont Borough Building. The library was built with private funds and incorporates many environmentally friendly and sustainable building concepts. The Library conducts its own seasonal and weekly programming. The Library's supportive 501c3 group is one concept model the Borough could consider in future administrative partnering for the parks, recreation, open space, and greenways system.

Commerce Softball League

Commerce Softball League is a fun and competitive co-ed adult league. They play with an 8 Male-2 Female format. No limitations on the number of women. Historically, they play Sunday afternoon from April through August.

Petrillo's Karate Campus

Petrillo's Karate Campus LLC offer programs for all ages. Their goal is to give students a lifelong experience in Martial Arts. Their classes help build the mind & body. Their emphasis is on teaching the traditional Korean Art of Tang Soo Do, they strive on technique, philosophy and its history. They reinforce a healthy life style with physical endurance,

discipline and self-esteem. They care about their students by providing a clean, safe and fun environment, and also require all their instructors to have their clearances to teach children.

Westmoreland Sports League

An adult league whose mission is to provide opportunities for the people of Westmoreland County and surrounding areas to be social and network with one another while promoting local businesses. Their leagues are a great way to meet new people and to stay active! Currently offer bowling, cornhole, darts, golf, kickball, softball, volleyball, Mini-golf and Flag football.

Delmont Area Athletic Association

Delmont Area Athletic Association is located in Delmont, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Our mission is to offer the youth of our community an opportunity to have fun learning and playing the game of baseball or softball, developing lifelong skills in teamwork, good sportsmanship and to inspire them to achieve excellence on and off the field. The teams utilize the Shield Farm Ballfields, Apple Hill Field and the Newhouse Park Ballfield.

Franklin Regional and Greensburg Salem School Districts

The sports the School Districts offer are tennis, soccer, volleyball, cross country, football, swimming, golf, cheer, swimming, basketball, bowling, hockey, bocce, wrestling, lacrosse, softball, baseball, and track. The availability of the sports depends on the season and age range of the children.

The School Districts are generally suburban public school systems in southwestern Pennsylvania that proudly serve the communities of Delmont and its surrounding communities. The Districts are governed by publicly elected Board of School Directors and serve all grades K-12.

Based upon the sites' various offerings, states of maintenance and observed patterns of use, this Plan explores opportunities for updating each of the facilities. Within the Borough and specifically its parks, there are no known designated critical habitats or areas of special interest, sensitive species, drainage features, native wildflower meadows or the like.

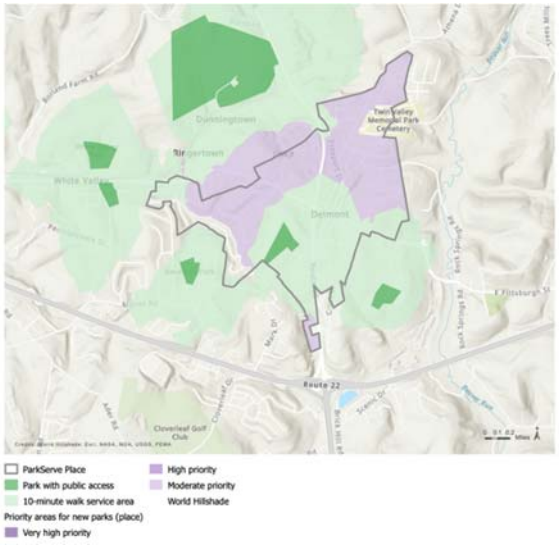
Building and Supporting Program, Finance, and Maintenance Data

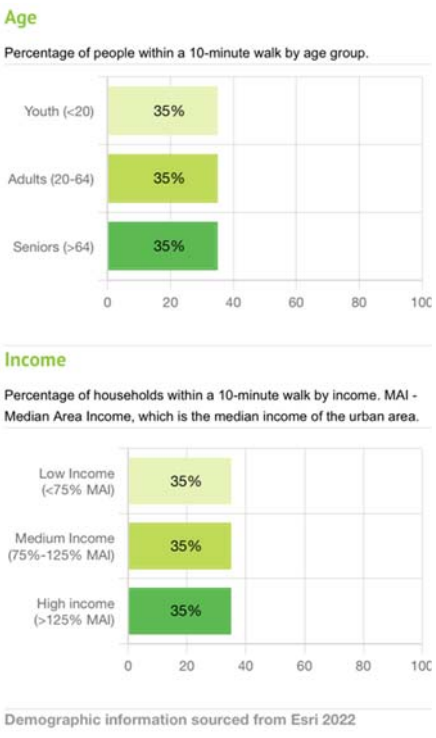
The Borough's year-to-year detailed and comparative records associated with programs, park and recreation-specific finance and maintenance logs are limited. It is recommended that the Borough structure an electronic database in conjunction with the topics and relationships outlined in the collaborative manual, " Financing Municipal Recreation and Park ."#The manual serves as an excellent primer for Delmont as it considers future structuring its short- and long-term public space investment strategies. Building upon the more detailed maintenance hour data the Borough has begun collecting during this planning process, the database will assist in organizing and evaluating work and resource and spending trends.

Regional Access

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) promotes parks for all. In doing so, they have developed an assessment tool access in cooperation with Trust for Public Land's (TPL) ParkServe platform that identifies access adequacy – areas that have access and those that have varying scales of access need. ParkServe reports that 35% of Delmont's population is "within 10-minute walk park access."

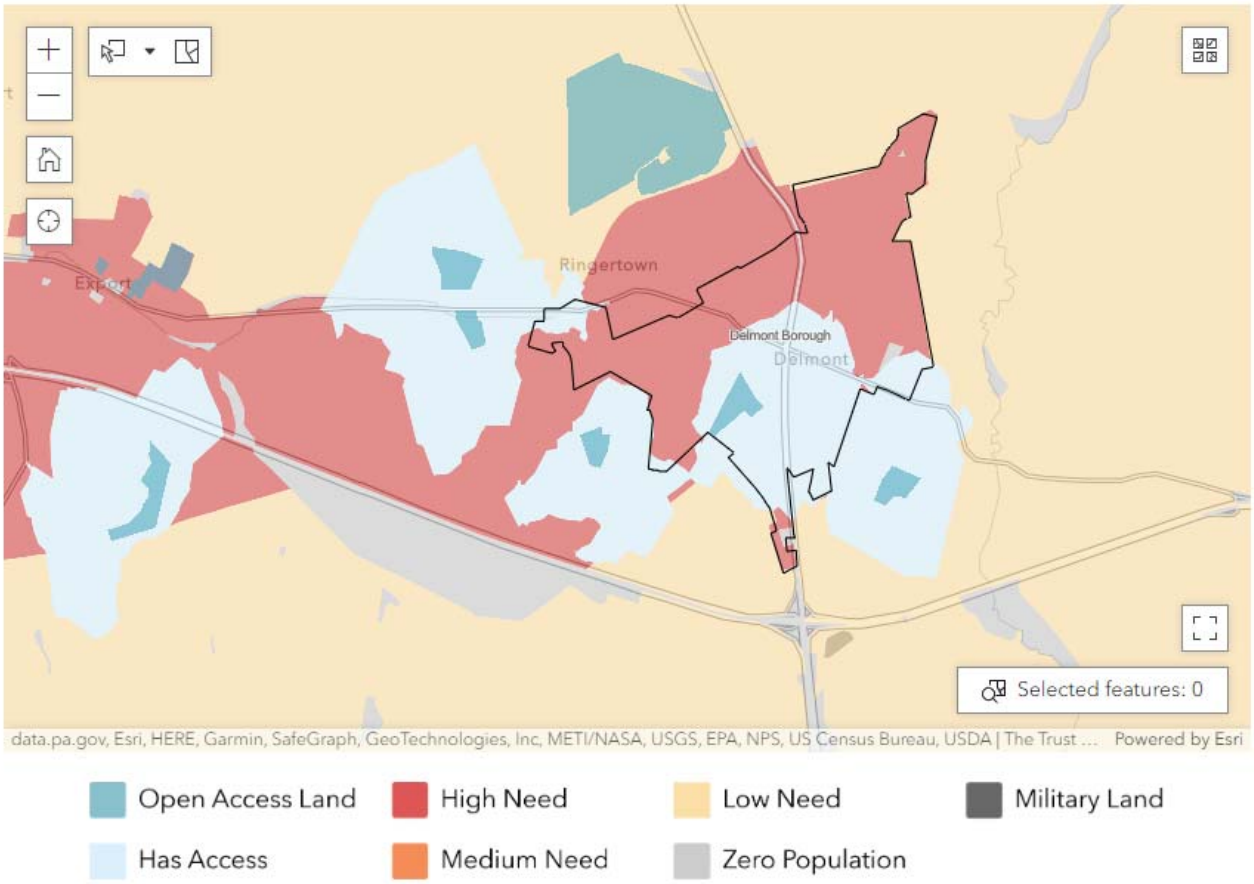
In the ParkServe excerpt to the right, areas in purple are identified as priority areas for new parks. Based upon the high acreage ratio Delmont is providing to its residents today (61 acres/1,000 people), it is recommended that improved access, rather than new parks, be a priority pursuit.





TPL's Research and Innovation Team used the data analysis methods to assist PA DCNR in identifying 10-minute service areas for Pennsylvania's parks, trails, public lands, and water access points. The following maps and data illustrate the results of this collaboration.

10-minute Walk Access to Parks/Open Spaces



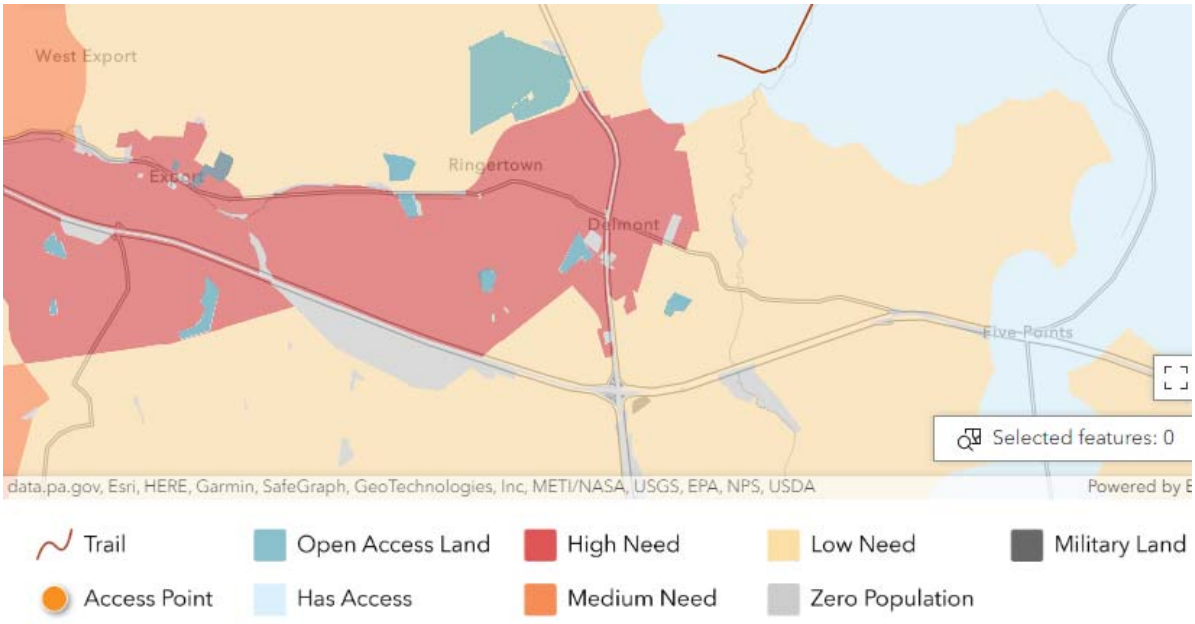
Level of need is based on population density, youth population density, and low-income population density within each county.

The following Delmont-Borough statistics associated with the 10-Minute Walk Map.

Total Population Served	1,054	Low-Income Households Served (%)	38%
Population Served (%)	38%	Medium Income Households Served.	133
Kids Served	228	Medium-Income Households Served (%)	38%
Kids Served (%)	38%	High Income Households Served	208
Adults Served	597	High-Income Households Served (%).	38%
Adults Served (%)	38%	Whites Served	1,002
Seniors Served	228	Whites Served (%)	38%
Seniors Served (%)	38%	Minorities Served	51
Low Income Households Served	120	Minorities Served (%)	38%

With proximity to Newhouse Park and Shields Farm, the southern portion of Delmont Borough contains greater access to public spaces than the northern and western portions of the community. The Borough's 2023 Active Transportation Plan presents a number of alignments to remedy the needs the Walk Assessment maps and database identify. Further, access to trails continues to gain momentum around the Delmont region. In upcoming years there will be less need illustrated on this graphic as the Westmoreland Heritage Trail system continues to be constructed westward toward and into Murrysville. On-road and/or separately designated pedestrian connections to expanded Trail segments within Salem Township and Murrysville are challenging based upon existing topography, right-of-way configurations, road speeds, and visibility.

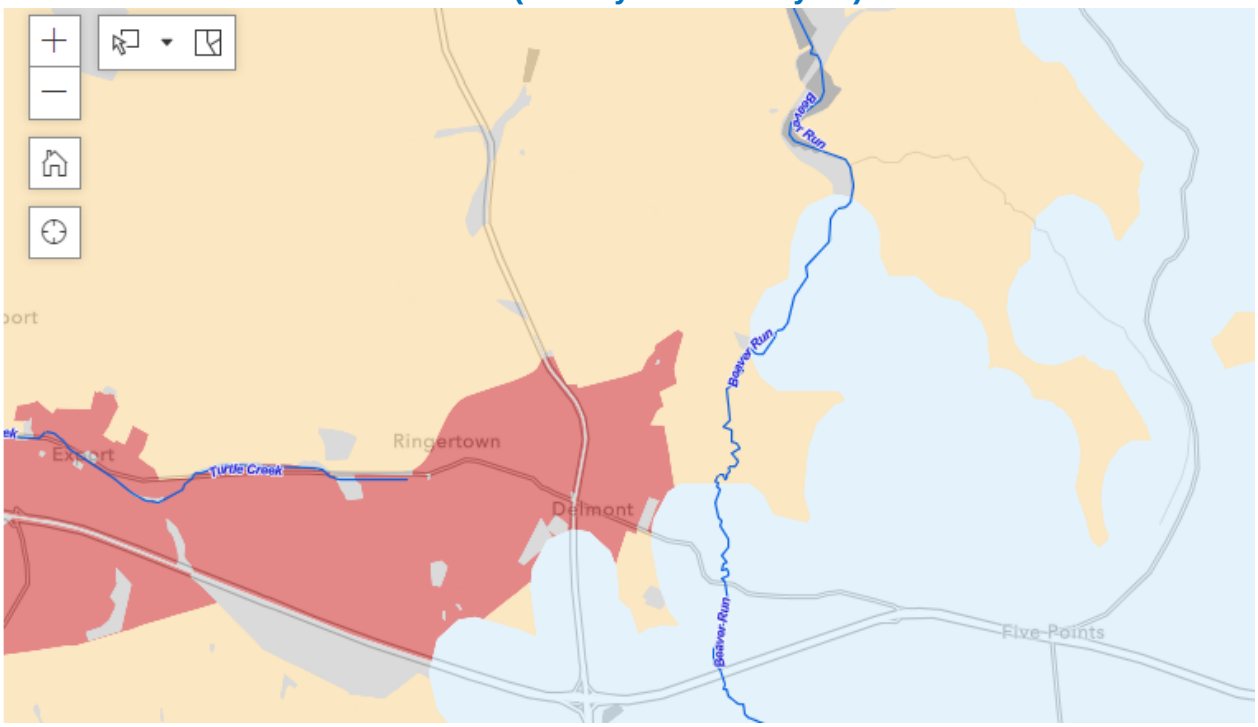
10-minute Drive Access to Trails (County-scale analysis)



Total Population Served	222,142	High-Income Households Served (%)	56%
Population Served (%)	62%	Whites Served	208,799
Kids Served	44,026	Whites Served (%)	61%
Kids Served (%)	61%	Minorities Served	13,338
Adults Served	127,343	Minorities Served (%)	66%
Adults Served (%)	62%	Less than High School Ed Served	12,853
Seniors Served	50,764	Less than High School Ed Served %	68%
Seniors Served (%)	62%	Linguistic Isolation Served	336
Low Income Households Served	32,080	Linguistic Isolation Served (%)	79%
Low-Income Households Served (%)	68%	Kids Under 5 Served	10,013
Medium Income Households Served	31,398	Kids Under 5 Served (%)	62%
Medium-Income Households Served (%)	64%	No Vehicle Households Served	2,458
High Income Households Served	31,750	No-Vehicle Households Served (%)	66%

As illustrated below, water-oriented recreation resources outside of the community are accessible to some homes within a 10-minute drive.

10-minute Drive Access to Water (County-scale analysis)



Total Population Served	214,363	High-Income Households Served (%)	54%
Population Served (%)	59%	Whites Served	201,450
Kids Served	42,697	Whites Served (%)	59%
Kids Served (%)	59%	Minorities Served	12,903.00
Adults Served	122,207	Minorities Served (%)	64%
Adults Served (%)	59%	Less than High School Ed Served	12,295
Seniors Served	49,448	Less than High School E Served (%)	65%
Seniors Served (%)	61%	Linguistic Isolation Served	339
Low Income Households Served	31,099	Linguistic Isolation Served (%)	80%
Low-Income Households Served (%)	66%	Kids Under 5 Served	9,645
Medium Income Households Served	30,422	Kids Under 5 Served (%)	60%
Medium-Income Households Served %	62%	No Vehicle Households Served	2,387
High Income Households Served	30,609	No-Vehicle Households Served (%)	64%

As part of all public input received, walkability and the enjoyment of walking within Newhouse and Shields Farm ranked highly. The Borough's continued support and investment in its pedestrian infrastructure will be favorable to both resident safety and resident enjoyment.

Greenways

The Borough does not currently manage any formally designated greenways within its park and open space system. Opportunity exists for the Borough to further examine the feasibility of establishing a local-level greenway as an extension of Newhouse Park. Spatial and dimensional needs of a series of a series of interconnected, undeveloped Borough-owned parcels to the west and northwest of Newhouse Park could be assembled and designated for further passive open space, and, if feasible, accessible, and safe, for an extension of the walking paths currently within Newhouse Park. If this land is dedicated for such public access, a maintenance plan and a budgeting plan will also need to be developed to support on-going visitorship.

The Westmoreland County's 2008 New Horizons guiding document carries forward the concept of a comprehensive, interconnected multiuse trail system. The desired outcome of the County's efforts is to "demonstrate increased usership from year to year and that [the network] is consistently cited as a valued community asset by the County's residents." Delmont is part of this effort in formulating connections within the Borough as well as working with its neighboring municipalities and the County to link its local network to the regional trail corridor.

Of the opportunities present, work to complete the connections to the regional Westmoreland Heritage Trail network support the County and Statewide Trail and Greenway goals. Work to establish a Newhouse Park greenway would further local initiatives.

Open Space Preservation Policies

The Borough of Delmont Code of Ordinances does not presently contain any ordinance provisions related to mandatory dedication of land or overlay zoning as related specifically to park and/or open space lands. The consideration for conservation easements is a voluntary mechanism for an applicant to present to the Borough; however, it is of important note that the Borough of Delmont has approached its build-out.

Facilities and Equipment Maintenance

Current maintenance programming is completed annually and seasonally between Borough Council and the Public Works Department. General and preventative maintenance management is conducted at the overall Public Works level with items specific to parks an open space being identified as needed and in preparation of high-season activity and special events. As part of the comprehensive parks, recreation, open space, and greenways plan process, the Borough has begun to track work hours associated with these public spaces. Overtime, the Borough will be able to determine the patterns of work with the Public Works Department as a whole and adjust work and personnel focus as seasonal demands and depths of work change associated with regular maintenance as well as special projects. As part of the Plan's preparation, the inventory of equipment available for Borough personnel to use in caring for public spaces includes the following. Of note, all vehicles and hand tools are shared with all public works functions.

1. Park-specific: 3 Zero Turn large deck mowers, 3 push mowers, 3 gas trimmers, 3 gas blowers
2. Multi-use public works vehicles: 1 pickup truck, 1 dump truck, and 1 backhoe
3. A variety of hand tools (shovels, rakes, hoses, etc.)

In future years of Borough capital resource planning, it is recommended that each of the pieces of equipment be entered into the database to track its age and extent of usage (typically tracked by hours of use). The extent to which the sequence of equipment replacement can be proactively planned will be favorable to longer-term budgeting.

Extending and applying the Risk Management discussion (introduced within the Part 4 Administration section) to Facility Maintenance is a high priority item for the Borough. As part of upcoming maintenance inspections of park facilities, including but not limited to ground plane surface accessibility, playground equipment, restroom access, parking, and seating, the Borough will be able to complete a series of self-evaluations associated with both accessibility and general risk management. Improvement areas can be prioritized, budgeted, and completed. This on-going prioritization will ensure maintenance is focused adequately on the conditions of the recreation and park facilities and open space areas. As Borough maintenance operations continue to evolve as part of the parks, open space, and greenways system, elected officials, staff, and volunteers can consider the value of developing a formal Maintenance and Operations Plan.

Recreation Programs and Services

Providing park land and recreation facilities are important municipal functions. Equally as important are the recreation experiences residents have through involvement in recreation programs. Recreation programming is the process of creating opportunities for people to engage in recreation experiences – both organized and self-directed activities.

Volunteer-driven programming and services are the engine behind the Borough recreation system. Volunteers pour their time into activities for the community. The Borough's Recreation Board offers a seasonal series of specialized/themed events throughout the year often centering on changes and/or celebrations of seasons. These activities are coordinated between the Recreation Board, typically serving as a host, with broader planning and budgeting conducted at the Borough Council level.

Throughout the seasons, resident participation has been increasing. In the coming seasons, the Borough can build a database to track participation levels and build outreach with invitations to past participants and broader messaging to those who have yet to experience an event. The Borough also has continued opportunity to work with local interest groups and other non-municipal providers to extend recreation programming and services to residents. Similar to local events, many successful regional programming draws are volunteer driven. The Recreation Board and Council have opportunity in future planning of seasonal and/or on-going activities to discuss and target ways in which activities can contribute to the following aspects of recreation: active and passive engagement, competitive and noncompetitive, individuals and groups, all gender identities, all ages and abilities, all races and ethnicities, all income levels, all education levels. In beginning to classify and highlight events based upon these aspects, the Borough and participants, alike, will be able gain a deeper understanding of the ways in which different activities/events are reaching different audiences. An example of a simple way in which to highlight these aspects is to list an audience interest category (e.g. "family," "teens," etc.) under each event title when posted on the Borough webpage.

While most feedback received as part of this planning process focused on either park facility-based comments or on self-directed activities (e.g. walking), residents and public event attendees alike expressed their satisfaction with events. The care and meaningful time volunteers put into arranging different events is the root of these successes.

With that, potential considerations for elevating programming in Delmont and with partners include:

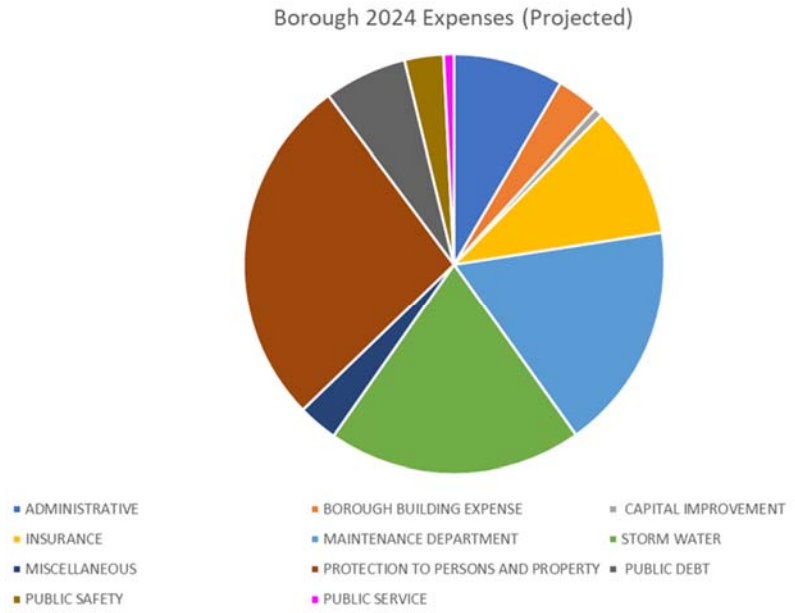
- Establish a more clearly defined programming role for Recreation efforts.
- Cooperate with the School Districts on recreation and adult education programs.
- Focus on enhancing and/or expanding the current family special events and adding new events in partnership with others. One or two special events should be added each year.
- Hold one Borough-sponsored program at every Borough park each year.
- Build a stronger relationship between the Borough and the School Districts for recreation programming and facility use by developing an agreement to allow the Borough priority use of school facilities for recreation programs and a special rate schedule.
- Adopt a 100 percent satisfaction guaranteed policy for recreation programs and give refunds regardless of the reason. After a program begins, pro-rate the refund.
- Conduct program evaluations after programs end to get feedback from participants to improve and enhance the recreation programs.
- Update program registration forms as part of Borough social media and on the website as appropriate.
- Develop a system to allow residents to participate in Borough recreation programs regardless of ability to pay.
- Develop a written inclusion statement for placement in the Borough Newsletter and on the website that promotes and values the involvement of all persons – including those with disabilities – in recreation program offerings.

Financing

In recent years and as projected within the 2024 municipal budget as part of the Public Services category, Delmont Borough has allocated approximately 0.5% of its general budget to conducting and maintaining park and recreation functions. Within the Public Services category this represents about 50% of that line item or approximately $14,000 annually allocated to park and recreation functions. In addition to the general fund, a capital fund is used for reserving park and recreation dollars when needed and/or planned for special annual purchases (e.g. new swing set, equipment, etc.).

Delmont Borough officials seek to understand the extent to which their civic space spending, revenues, and trends are comparable to other Westmoreland County municipalities of similar population size. An important note in conceptualizing this strategy by which to base comparisons could be made is that Delmont Borough has the MOST public space acreage and

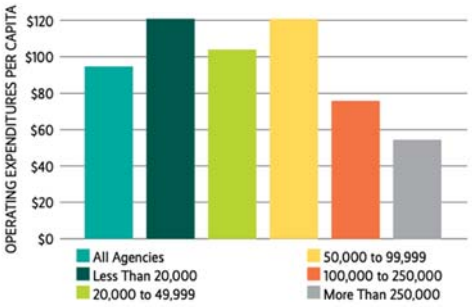
MOST sophisticated set of park offerings for which to care in comparison to more than a dozen municipalities that fit the size criteria. The half a percent (the general trend among those similarly populated communities) that other communities are spending is for fewer park and open space offerings.



Across the region and the public parks and recreation industry, communities are encouraged to balance facility longevity and safety with physical improvement and associated maintenance costs. NRPA's Park Metrics' operating expenditures provide insight into the range of resources that other small communities dedicate to park and recreation efforts. Delmont Borough's typical annual parks and open space operating expenditures is approximately $5.40 per capita and $77.80 per acre. In comparison, NRPA reports in communities less than 20,000 residents, the median expenditure per capita is $120.79 and the lower quartile $69.65. When considering a per acre comparison, NRPA reports in communities less than 20,000 residents, the median expenditure per acre is $7,495 and the lower quartile is $3,692.

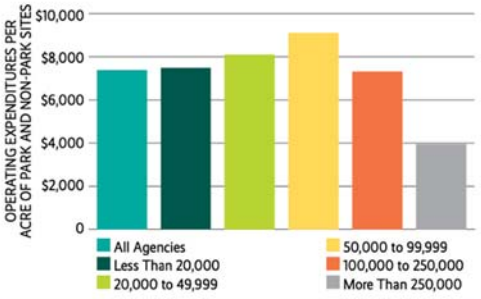
Given the system's extensiveness and maintenance planning considerations ahead, a goal over the course of the next decade would be for the Borough to consider and allocate a general fund park and recreation line-item budget of 3±% of its overall budget.

FIGURE 14: OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA
(BY JURISDICTION POPULATION)



	All Agencies	Less Than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More Than 250,000
Median	$94.77	$120.79	$103.95	$120.70	$75.88	$54.62
Lower Quartile	$53.23	$69.65	$64.04	$73.64	$47.07	$22.04
Upper Quartile	$173.05	$229.61	$197.61	$197.47	$155.62	$93.16

FIGURE 15: OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER ACRE OF PARK AND NON-PARK SITES
(BY JURISDICTION POPULATION)



	All Agencies	Less Than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More Than 250,000
Median	$7,388	$7,495	$8,106	$9,108	$7,323	$3,970
Lower Quartile	$3,521	$3,692	$4,250	$5,434	$3,082	$1,601
Upper Quartile	$17,668	$23,506	$20,047	$20,564	$14,045	$10,629

Further, the scale of capital fund work ahead in both physical improvement and in maintaining park assets is significant. Four aspects of this budgeting will be necessary to balance: 1) More than $3,000,000* of hard costs (2023 dollars) have been ballparked in context of initial sequenced priority ideas for site enhancements conceptualized as part of this planning process [*based upon western Pennsylvania contractor and material suppliers feedback, a range of construction material unit costs (such as that for concrete) are anticipated to increase more than 20% in 2024]; 2) Additional dollars associated with design/engineering, mobilization/demobilization, grading, stormwater management, lighting/utilities, contingencies, permitting, and other applicable soft costs will also need to be calculated on a project-by-project basis; 3) Improvements associated with upcoming accessibility and safety audits/evaluations will come on line; and 4) the Borough's Active Transportation Plan identifies many miles of important pedestrian connections. Based upon current project costs throughout the region, it is an opinion of probable development that the collection of the four above items could range between $15 and $20 million dollars over the course of the coming decade. As the current primary revenue stream for Borough park and recreation daily functions is tax-based, there is also opportunity for parks and recreation within the community to be a broader collaborative opportunity. A "Friends of the Park" of Foundation organization can take on different forms at different stages in its development. A new "Friends" organization, such as that in Northampton Township, Bucks County, Zelienople's Friends of the Park Community Park Association, Butler County, or West Whiteland Friends of the Parks organization, Chester County, may serve as an outgrowth of the municipal government with the goal of promoting volunteerism among residents. A more established "Friends" organization will have transitioned away from being an arm of the municipal government with its own charter as a separate nonprofit organization. Some "Friends" organizations may skip the step of being an auxiliary of the municipal recreation department and form explicitly as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit fundraising organization, which is the recommended path for Delmont Borough. Three example organizations from around the Commonwealth include:

FRIENDS' EXAMPLE COMPARISON

	Northampton Borough	Zelienople Borough	West Whiteland Borough	Recommendation for Delmont
Fundraising for facilities		✓		✓
Event Fundraising		✓	✓	✓
Volunteer coordination	✓		✓	
501(c)(3)			✓	✓

PART V: RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

In the coming decade, the Borough will set forth its operations and offerings of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness across the parks, recreation, open space, and greenway landscape. The municipality has opportunity to develop, support, and implement ideas needed to attain its proven efficiency and effectiveness of quality that the community desires.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of the planning process, the following recommendations have been identified related to programming, maintenance, park development, financing, promotion/public awareness, and partnerships. The foundation of the Plan's recommendations is rooted in the importance of balancing existing capacities, costs for implementation, and emphasis on enhancing safety throughout the community's public spaces. Priorities are conceptualized using analysis of available technical information and considerations for enhancing the baseline of future parks, open space, greenway, and connectivity planning tools. Prior to summarizing items in a succinct and simplified table, a few topics are notable for a deeper dive. These explorations seek to uphold the Plan's most immediate complementing key actions.

Administration – Work with community stakeholders to establish a Friends of the Park Organization that can assist the Borough in long-term planning initiatives and funding strategies.

Operation / Maintenance – Update the Borough's Public Spaces Risk Management Plan

Finance – Optimize service delivery and time efficiencies through establishing an electronic-based cost tracking system

Programs – Target to host 1 to 2 multi-municipal/multi-district program offerings per year

Facilities – Conduct Accessibility Assessments of each public spaces and prepare updated master site plans of each facility incorporating Assessment findings

Administration

Parks and recreation management requires interdisciplinary skills which focus on the care and maintenance of facilities and programs. It is an important role to coordinate and oversee the safe, secure and environmentally-sound operation of the Borough's recreation assets in a cost-effective manner aimed at long-term preservation and enhancement. One municipal duty is to make sure the day-to-day delivery of parks and recreation services and facilities are satisfactory to the end users and provide an optimal environment for recreation functions. Recreation management incorporates all activities related to keeping a park system running.

Core Recommendation

Work with community stakeholders to establish a Friends of the Park Organization that assists in long-term planning initiatives and funding strategies.

Priorities

1. Align administrative capabilities with needs to enhance the functionality of programs, facilities, maintenance operations, finance, and project management
2. Organize administration roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes
3. Utilize strategic management systems to plan and implement policies, procedures, and projects

Operation / Maintenance

Park maintenance is essential to providing safe, clean, functional, and attractive Borough parks through implementation of an efficient and effective management program. A formal policy sets standards for how maintenance will be performed now and in the future. Key elements include staffing, training and cost-benefit analysis.

Core Recommendation

Update the Borough's Public Spaces Risk Management Plan

Priorities

1. Establish formal responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department and on each job description as applicable
2. Provide specialized training for park maintenance through employee development programs

3. Develop a formal management tracking system for maintaining parks and recreation infrastructure

   Coordination is essential to the effective maintenance of municipal parks and recreation facilities. The Borough parks and recreation maintenance team is involved in the effective planning, organization, supervision, and evaluation of maintenance programs, plans, services, staffing, and equipment, not to mention the myriad of recreation facilities owned by the Borough. Streamlining maintenance tasks and the level of acceptable care at each park can help make these complex responsibilities easier. Additionally, keeping closer track of maintenance through standardization and written documentation will help the Borough save money, avoid duplication of tasks, and maintain a consistent quality of care at all of its parks and facilities. The goal is to have park maintenance accomplished in an effective and efficient manner so that parks and recreation facilities are safe, clean, and ready to use.

Financing

The purpose of financial management in parks and recreation is the judicious use of capital resources and the careful selection of capital projects to enable Borough spending to advance parks and recreation goals.

Core Recommendation
Optimize service delivery and time efficiencies through establishing an electronic-based cost tracking system. The exploration should examine the system's vitality and ability to sustain for future generations.

Priorities

1. Optimize efficiency and increase revenues through cost tracking

2. Organize data and conduct regularly occurring Financial Management Practices audits

3. Continue to support parks and recreation through a mix of Borough and non-tax resources

   Teaming with a nonprofit parks and recreation fundraising and advocacy group is a great way to complement the essential functions performed by the Borough's leaders and Recreation Board. This "Friends of the Park" group would not be a replacement for these entities but would instead serve an entirely different purpose: to secure private funds to enhance, develop, and maintain the parks and recreation system. Non-fundraising-related activities—such as volunteer coordination and recruitment; making recommendations for capital projects; implementing the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plan; and overseeing programming

and maintenance of the park system—would continue to be the domain of the Recreation Board rather than that of the "Friends" group. Special grant opportunities may be available to the "Friends" group, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, that may not be available to the Borough government and Recreation Board, opening up new and quicker avenues for funding. There may also be some grants through which funding can be sourced from both the Borough's General Fund and the "Friends" group—for instance, in an 80-20 split or a 60-40 split. Additionally, the "Friends" group can partner with private foundations, institutions (such as health providers), private recreation providers (e.g., outfitters, canoe clubs, etc.), and local employers to secure sponsorships and funding that would not normally be available directly to municipal governments. It is recommended that the "Friends" group be comprised of two standing committees (one for fundraising and the other for advocacy), with seven total board members. Two of these board members should be members of the Council, there should be and at least one board member should be from the Delmont Borough Recreation Board. Borough staff should attend meetings but abstain from being voting members of the group. Frequency of "Friends" meetings may change based on the level of project activity but may start at once every two months.

Programs

Programming is a complex component of parks and recreation management. Activities range from special community and family events to team sports to individuals' leisure time pursuits. To effectively involve residents in program offerings, the Borough needs to identify what various target audiences want and then determine the proper balance between programs it sponsors and those provided by other organizations. Partnerships and cooperation with private and non-profit recreation providers are keys to programming success.

Core Recommendation

Target to host 1 to 2 multi-municipal/multi-district program offerings per year as part of formalizing park and recreation programming with other Borough activities, potential multi-municipal partners, other public and private sector entities as well as partner with School Districts to realize time and cost savings.

Priorities

1. Have seasonally scheduled work sessions with all programming partners to ensure range of age-appropriate activities are strategically scheduled throughout the year

2. Expand programming from special events to regularly occurring activities

In addition, non-programmed, on-your-own activities make recreation accessible to a

wider audience that may not have the time, resources, or desire for formal programming. A variety of relaxing activities, including disc golf, exercise/nature trails, bocce, horseshoes, shuffleboard, and tennis, may be facilitated for those who prefer engaging in recreation on their own time. Additional walking trails can help build up a Borough-wide network of self-directed recreation. The goal of self-directed activities should be to get more people outside and using the parks and recreation facilities to enjoy nature, trails, and being active.

Facilities

Facilities are the building blocks of a parks and recreation system. They are the places where people can go to enjoy themselves. Delmont's overall recreation system strives to provide facilities which residents of all ages and abilities can enjoy for active sports, socializing, and quiet reflection. Facilities require ongoing evaluation to ensure safety, optimal function, and sustainability.

Core Recommendation

Institute enhancements to Borough facilities that would update them and enrich users' experience. These updates would help bring up to code, and thereby set the stage for spaces to be renovated and establish Newhouse as the premier park in the community.

Priorities

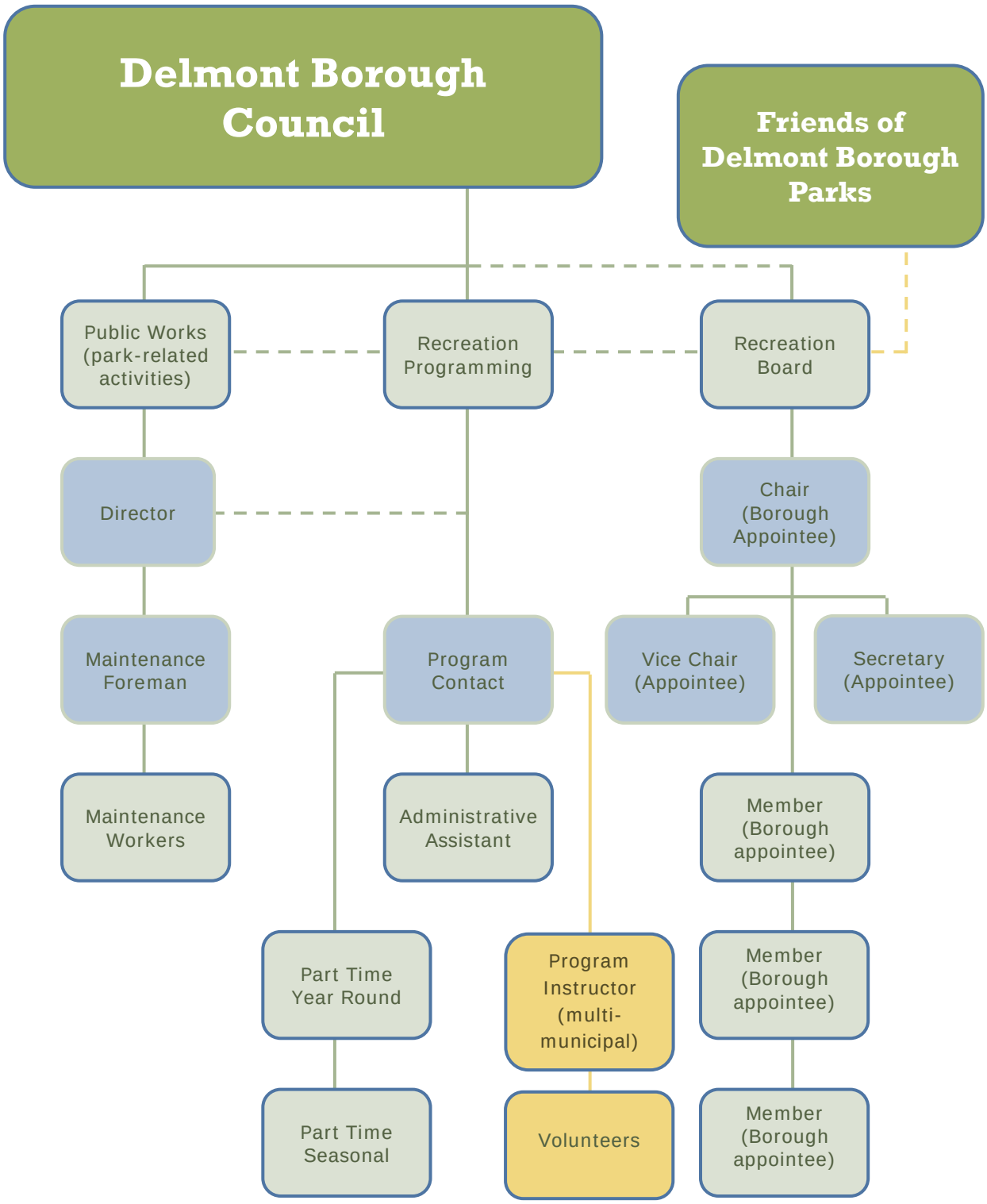
1. Initiate, update and develop implementation strategies for Master Site Plans and Resource Management Plans in conjunction with active transportation efforts

2. Implement physical, aesthetic and safety improvements according to the availability of staff, volunteers and financial resources

Following initiation of accessibility self-evaluations and risk management planning, the Borough can create mini-master plans for each facility. These plans provide the opportunity to assess and illustrate how site space at key facilities can be further optimized for active recreation as well as passive open space. This priority planning will also connect future facilities in accordance with the Borough's Active Transportation Plan. This combination creates a cohesive, enhanced network of greenspace in the Borough, with the potential to also be expanded to other nearby green spaces if or when the Borough may choose to secure additional lands for its park and recreation system.

With these considerations, the Borough has the opportunity to consider some enhancements to its organizational structure as illustrated on the following page.

POTENTIAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE UPDATES



ACTION TABLE SUMMARY

The following Action Plan summarizes the ideas for implementation. This Action Plan is the result of public input, collaboration with and input from community leaders. In understanding the recommendations in context of their goals, the community's action plan table reinforces each action. Potential timeframes for implementation key stakeholders are all factors unique to each recommendation.

While a municipal department, board or leadership will take the lead in implementing each recommendation, there are others in the Borough who can contribute to the completion of the task or who will need to support the completion of the task. Additionally, outside agencies, neighboring municipalities, county and state governmental organizations, as well as others, could partner with Delmont Borough in the completion of the tasks. Volunteerism will be another important component in implementing this plan.

To implement complex projects, the cooperation and collaboration of many will most likely be needed. Each project, policy and action will require the commitment and cooperation of civic leaders, authorities, residents, institutions and businesses. Complex projects also will typically have a high level of direct involvement with elected leaders and the Borough's staff. Smaller-scale projects may be initiated by community leaders but may be supported by volunteers. The manner in which the community's volunteers become engaged in and remain aware of opportunities will be critical to the success of implementing actions.

While making the case for the benefits of parks and recreation is always important, it is especially important during times when economic conditions may challenge municipal budgeting. Parks and recreation are important community assets that help to enhance quality of life, conserve the environment, build a sense of community, and enable residents to live long, active, happy lives. Realizing this, members of the Delmont Borough Staff, Recreation Board, and Project Steering Committee identified a series of priority key actions that are aimed to ensure that the Borough's parks and recreation system remains state-of-the-art and sets the stage for many years of continued future growth and opportunities.

ACTION TABLES – TABLE 1: POLICY/STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

STAKEHOLDER ABBREVIATIONS: BC – Borough Council; RB – Recreation Board; RD – Recreation Staff; SD –School District; PW – Public Works; RP – Recreation Partners; V – Volunteers; BU – Business Community

	Policy / Strategy Recommendations	Roles and responsibilities of agencies: Public	Quasi-Public / Private	Organizational structure to establish and maintain	Target Implementation Timeframe	Potential Costs	Potential Funding Source(s)
A	**Administration**						
1	Align administrative capabilities with needs to enhance the functionality of programs, facilities, maintenance operations, finance, and project management	BC	-	In Place/Continue	On-going	Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	-
2	Pursue partnerships for all recreation programs and special events sponsored by the Borough to help with staffing, promoting programs, and sharing facilities	BC, RB	-	Continue and Elevate Exisitng Structure	On-going	Elected Officials and Board Member Volunteer Hours	-
3	Organize administration roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes	BC	-	In Place/Continue	Immediate	Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	-
4	Include all park and recreation services on the main Borough website	RS	-	In Place/Continue	On-going/Revise as facilities change	1-2 hours per month	General Fund
5	Implement a strategy for capital expenditures prioritized based on available funding, public need and service to the public	BC	-	In Place/Continue	Short-term/Revise as expenditures change	Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	-
6	Prepare an annual report detailing Park/Recreation program statistics, partnerships and park facility rentals	RB	-	Elevate Existing Structure	On-going	Board Member Volunteer Time	-
B	**Personnel**						
1	Attend training such as the NRPA Director's School and/or Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society conferences and trainings	PW, RB, BC	FP (financial support)	Establish Structure for Budgeting and Personnel to Attend	Annually	$1,000-$3,000 (or as otherwise adjusted by provider annually)	General Fund/Donations
C	**Programs**						
1	Initially target a 100% return of revenue on each specific new program offered through the Borough Over time, adjust the fee structure for programs to target a 125% return on total program costs	BC, RB	-	Elevate Existing Structure	Short-term	Elected Officials and Board Member Volunteer Hours	-
2	Expand promotion efforts to spread the word in cost-effective ways about Borough parks, programs and recreation facilities	RB, RS	RP	Elevate Existing Structure	Short-term	Elected Officials and Board Member Volunteer Hours, 1-2 hours per month Staff Time	- / General Fund

Roles and responsibilities of agencies

	Policy / Strategy Recommendations	Public	Quasi-Public / Private	Organizational structure to establish and maintain	Target Implementation Timeframe	Potential Costs	Potential Funding Source(s)
D	**Services**						
1	Re-evaluate the non-resident fees charged for recreation programs and facility rental; Consider charging non-residents a set percentage higher fee (i.e. 25 percent to 50 percent higher fee than residents)	BC, RB	-	Elevate Existing Structure	Short-term	Elected Officials and Board Member Volunteer Hours	-
2	Develop a greater social media presence to promote recreation programs and special events	RB, RS	SD, RP, BU	Continue and Elevate Existing Structure	Immediate	Elected Officials and Board Member Volunteer Hours, 1-2 hours per month Staff Time	- / General Fund
E	**Maintenance**						
1	Establish formal responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department and on each job description as applicable	BC, RS, PW	-	Elevate Existing Structure	Short-term	4 hours Staff Time	General Fund
2	Prepare and implement a risk management plan, which focuses on methods to reduce frequency, severity and unpredictability of accidents at the Borough's Parks	BC, PW	-	Establish Structure	Immediate	Elected Officials Volunteer Hours, 40 hours Staff Time, RP Time	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
3	Prepare Accessibility Self-Evaluations and consult on resulting implementation strategy items as required	BC, PW	-	Establish Structure	Immediate	Elected Officials Volunteer Hours, 40 hours Staff Time, RP Time	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
4	Develop a written maintenance plan that describes the annual routine work and preventative maintenance that is needed at the parks including an inventory of the facilities at each site, what time of year and the frequency with which maintenance tasks should occur, and the acceptable standard of care in each park and facility that describes what they should look like when maintenance is completed	BC, PW	PRPS Maintenance Institute	Establish Structure	Immediate	PW Time / Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
5	Develop a long range maintenance plan that addresses the community's needs, existing park conditions, incorporates current available resources and capabilities as well as integrates the Borough's priorities for maintaining the park system's image	BC, PW	PRPS Maintenance Institute	Establish Structure	Short-term	PW Time / Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
6	Provide specialized training for park maintenance through employee development programs	BC, PW	PRPS Maintenance Institute	Establish Structure	On-going	PW Time / Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
7	Refine the computerized maintenance system/database tracking where each employee worked each day, the tasks performed and amount of time worked, to help with maintenance planning and decision making	BC, PW	Seasonal Intern	Continue and Elevate Existing Structure	Long-term	PW and Intern Time / Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	General Fund
8	Determine the frequency of mowing each park area on an individual basis	BC, PW	-	Continue and Elevate Existing Structure	Short-term	PW Time / Elected Officials Volunteer Hours	General Fund

ACTION TABLES – TABLE 2: PRIORITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

	Priority Capital Improvement Recommendations	Facility / area name	Description of proposed improvements	Hard Costs	Project Administration, Design / Utilities Engineering, Other Soft Costs and 20% Contingency	Total estimated development costs of proposed improvements*	Potential funding source(s)
A	**Short-term (1-3 years)**						
1	Prepare a Master Site Development Plan based on 2022 Concept Ideas and community feedback with highlights on repurpose areas	Shields Farm	Master Plan	$0	$5,000	$5,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
2	Prepare a Master Site Development Plan hbased on 2022 Concept Ideas and community feedback with highlights on repurpose areas and to determine feasibility of establishing adjacent greenway	Newhouse Park	Master Plan	$0	$5,000	$5,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
3	Develop a playground redevelopment plan to address the issues identified in the safety audit as well as providing a more cohesive overall playground design	Newhouse Park	Playground Redevelopment Concept	$0	$3,500	$3,500	Playground Company Design Assistance
4	Remove non-compliant furnishings and convert parcel to natural meadow areas	Valley Stream	Meadow Plantings and Furnishings/ Access Makeover	$5,000	$2,500	$7,500	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
B	**Medium-term (4-7 years)**						
1	Address existing playground safety issues identified in associated accessibility and risk audits	Newhouse Park	Playground Updates	$350,000	$250,000	$600,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
2	Construct path on Borough-owned property, pursue feasibility of adjacent site trail construction, secure easement on adjacent property(ies) and develop Park Drive Park connection to regional trail network	Park Drive Park	Connectivity Network Expansion	$200,000	$100,000	$300,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
3	Improve accessibility to all parks with defined ADA parking and entrance areas at Newhouse and Shields Farm	Newhouse Park and Shields Farm	Accessible Parking/Entrances	$200,000	$75,000	$275,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
4	Initiate, update and develop implementation strategies for Master Site Plans and Resource Management Plans in conjunction with active transportation efforts - includes connections to and within adjacent woodlands	Newhouse Park	Active and Passive Area transformations	$500,000	$250,000	$750,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
5	Begin implementation strategies for Master Site Plans and Resource Management Plans in conjunction with active transportation efforts	Shields Farm	Active and Passive Area transformations	$800,000	$400,000	$1,200,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
6	Improve park identification and directional signage in context of Active Transportation Routes	All Parks	Wayfinding/Signage	$250,000	$100,000	$350,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
7	Add bike racks at all parks in conjunction with active transportation improvements	All Parks	Connectivity Amenities	$20,000	$15,000	$35,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
C	**Long-term (8 plus years)**						
1	Continue implementing physical, aesthetic and safety improvements at Newhouse Park according to the availability of staff, volunteers, and financial resources	Newhouse Park	Active and Passive Area transformations	$1,000,000	$500,000	$1,500,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
2	Continue implementing physical, aesthetic and safety improvements at Shields Farm according to the availability of staff, volunteers, and financial resources	Shields Farm	Active and Passive Area transformations	$1,000,000	$500,000	$1,500,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations
3	Transform non-compliant surfaces and furnishings with construction refresh of priority site components	Rose Wigfield	Plaza/gathering space transformation	$150,000	$65,000	$215,000	Recreation Partners/FP/ Donations

ACTION TABLES – TABLE 3: 5-YEAR SUMMARY OF PROJECTED OPERATING FISCAL IMPACT

	Impacts on Operating Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
A	**Administration**					
1	Align administrative capabilities with needs to enhance the functionality of programs, facilities, maintenance operations, finance, and project management	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time
2	Pursue partnerships for all recreation programs and special events sponsored by the Borough to help with staffing, promoting programs, and sharing facilities	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time
3	Organize administration roles and responsibilities to ensure continued short-term and long-term park and recreation successes	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time
4	Include all park and recreation services on the main Borough website	$1,200	$1,250	$1,300	$1,350	$1,400
5	Implement a strategy for capital expenditures prioritized based on available funding, public need and service to the public	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time
6	Prepare an annual report detailing Park/Recreation program statistics, partnerships and park facility rentals	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time	Volunteer Time
B	**Personnel**					
1	Attend training such as the NRPA Director's School and/or Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society conferences and trainings	$1,000-3,000	$1,100-3,300	$1,200-3,500	$1,300-3,700	$1,500-4,000
C	**Programs**					
1	Have seasonally scheduled work sessions with all programming partners to ensure range of age-appropriate activities are strategically scheduled throughout the year	$800	$850	$900	$950	$1,000
2	Expand programming from special events to regularly occurring activities	$2,000	$2,150	$2,300	$2,400	$2,500
D	**Services**					
1	Re-evaluate the non-resident fees charged for recreation programs and facility rental; Consider charging non-residents a set percentage higher fee (ie 25 percent to 50 percent higher fee than residents)	-	-	$500	-	-
2	Develop a greater social media presence to promote recreation programs and special events	-	$200	$200	$250	$250

	Impacts on Operating Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
E	**Maintenance**					
1	Establish formal responsibilities for park maintenance within the Public Works Department and on each job description as applicable	-	-	$200	-	-
2	Prepare and implement a risk management plan, which focuses on methods to reduce frequency, severity and unpredictability of accidents at the Borough's Parks	2000	500	$500	$2,000	$2,000
3	Prepare Accessibility Self-Evaluations and consult on resulting implementation strategy items as required	2000	2000	$3,000	$3,000	$5,000
4	Develop a written maintenance plan that describes the annual routine work and preventative maintenance that is needed at the parks including an inventory of the facilities at each site, what time of year and the frequency with which maintenance tasks should occur, and the acceptable standard of care in each park and facility that describes what they should look like when maintenance is completed	-	-	$2,500	$2,500	-
5	Develop a long range maintenance plan that addresses the community's needs, existing park conditions, incorporates current available resources and capabilities as well as integrates the Borough's priorities for maintaining the park system's image	-	-	-	-	$5,000
6	Provide specialized training for park maintenance through employee development programs	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000
7	Refine the computerized maintenance system/database tracking where each employee worked each day, the tasks performed and amount of time worked, to help with maintenance planning and decision making	-	-	-	$500	-
8	Determine the frequency of mowing each park area on an individual basis	$50	$50	$55	$55	$55
9	Complete annual walk-through of the parks prior to budget preparation	$400	$425	$450	$475	$500
F	**Facilities**					
1	Initiate, update and develop implementation strategies for Master Site Plans and Resource Management Plans in conjunction with active transportation efforts		$10,000	$15,000	$15,000	$25,000
2	Implement physical, aesthetic and safety improvements according to the availability of staff, volunteers and financial resources		$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000

APPENDIX A

PARK SERVE DATA

ParkServe®

December 2, 2023

Project Areas

Delmont, PA - City Level Report

All statistical results are aggregated for the listed project areas and their service areas. Service areas are based on 10-minute (1/2 mile) walk times from project access points defined for each project area and based upon the walkable network.

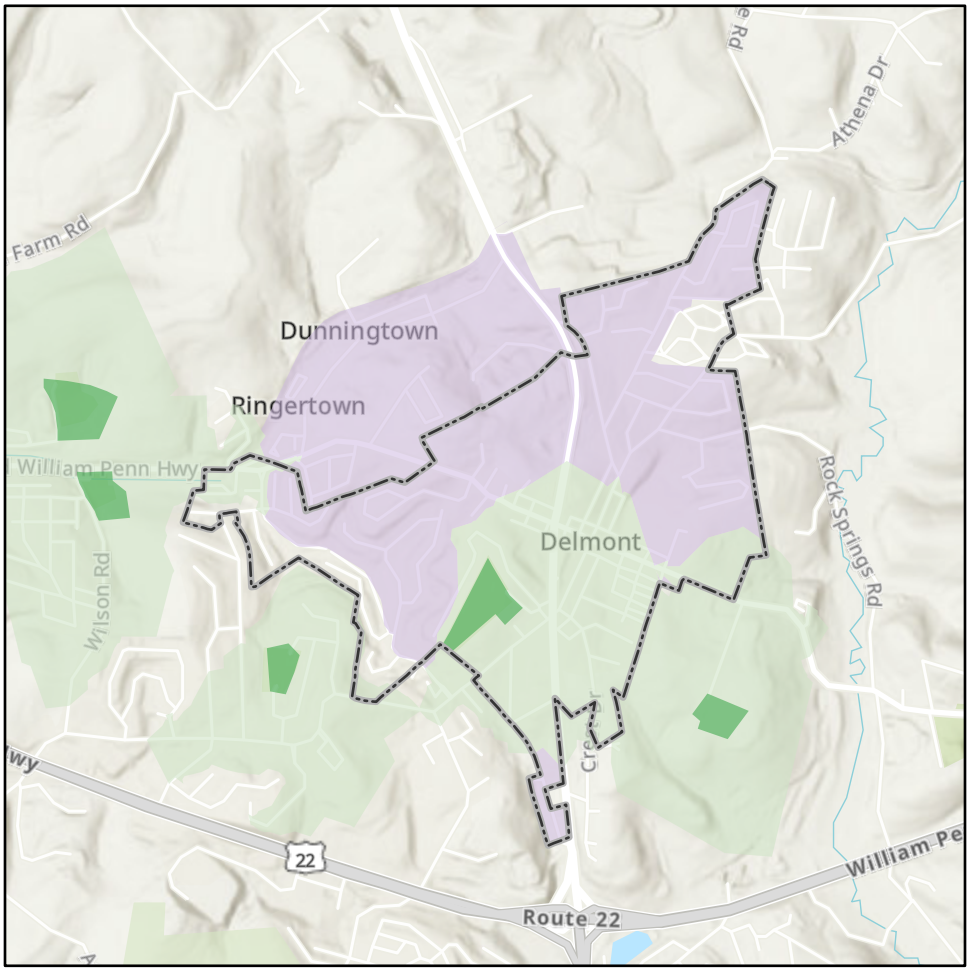
City Statistics	Current
City: Delmont, PA	
Park Acres	13
Total Population	2,561
Served Population	901
Percent Served	35.2%

Legend

- City Boundary
- Parks
- Service Areas

Priority areas for new parks

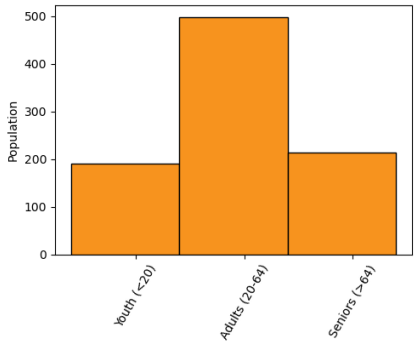
- Very high priority
- High priority
- Moderate priority



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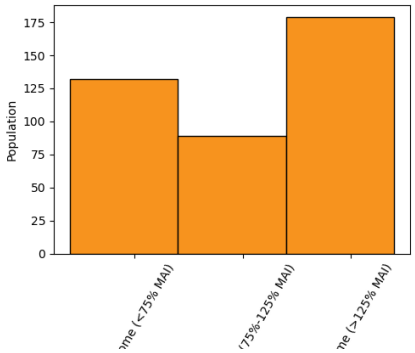
Population	Within a 10-minute walk
Total Population	901

Age	Within a 10-minute walk
Children (less than age 20)	190
Adults (age 20 to age 64)	498
Seniors (age 65 and up)	213



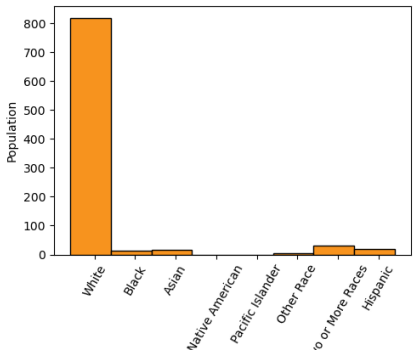
Households by Income	Within a 10-minute walk
Low income	132
Middle income	89
High income	179

(Generated from urban area median income)



Race/Ethnicity	Within a 10-minute walk
White*	818
Black*	13
Asian*	17
Native American*	0
Pacific Islander*	0
Other Race*	5
Two or More Races*	30
Hispanic	18

* Excludes those that report Hispanic origin (which is captured separately from race by the U.S. Census)



Demographic information is derived from ESRI 2022 Demographic Forecast Block Groups data.

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APPENDIX B

SAMPLE
ACCESSABILITY
REFERENCES

7 Things Every Playground Owner Should Know About the Accessibility of Their Playground Surfaces

2014 A publication of the U.S. Access Board and the National Center on Accessibility

1 Start with comprehensive planning and site selection.

2 Follow the Accessibility Standards for Play Areas.

3 Review the research findings about accessibility issues for play surfaces.

4 Assess during the planning, installation and maintenance phases.

5 Compare surface options.

6 Recognize that proper installation of play surface systems is key.

7 Commit to ongoing maintenance of accessible playground surfaces as a responsibility of ownership.

Selecting an Accessible Play Surface Is One of the Most Important Decisions



The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2011) estimates there to be 2.8 million school-aged children with disabilities in the United States. The Census Bureau (2009) estimates that one in every seven American families is affected by disability. For children with and without disabilities, the community playground can facilitate a positive environment for physical activity and inclusion. Today, lack of physical activity is considered one of the leading factors contributing to poor health among children. The neighborhood playground fulfills a critical role in community wellness, enabling children to play with friends and burn calories at the same time.

When the playground has barriers prohibiting use by a child with a disability, the opportunity for play and physical activity is lost. Inaccessible surfaces can pose barriers for children with disabilities who may use canes, crutches, walkers or wheelchairs from ambulating through the play area. Pushing a wheelchair over loose gravel or sand requires tremendous physical effort. When so much effort is exerted, little to no energy is left for play.

The presence of physical barriers can prevent children with disabilities from accessing all play elements on the playground. Most significantly, inclusive play between children with disabilities and children without disabilities is threatened when the playground does not have accessible equipment and surfaces. Physical barriers also prohibit adult caregivers with disabilities from engaging with their children and/or responding when a child is in need of assistance.

Recreation professionals and playground owners are confronted with questions of how to install and maintain safe and accessible public playgrounds that are fun; promote inclusion and physical activity; are cost effective and able to withstand a full life cycle of public use.

Choosing play surfaces that are accessible and that can be maintained as accessible surfaces, becomes one of the most important decisions during the playground planning and design phases. The purpose of this guide is to provide practical information that every public playground owner should know about the accessibility of their playground surfaces.

Surfacing the Accessible Playground:

7 Things Every Playground Owner Should Know About the Accessibility of Their Playground Surfaces

From 2008 to 2012, the National Center on Accessibility (NCA) at Indiana University-Bloomington conducted a longitudinal study on the accessibility of playground surfaces. The research study was funded by the U.S. Access Board. The information presented in this publication is based on the research findings and presented as guidance to public playground owners and operators.

Reproduction and dissemination of this publication is encouraged.

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1 All Successful, Inclusive Playgrounds Start with Comprehensive Planning

An economic assessment conducted during the development of accessibility standards for play areas estimated there to be 5,300 new public playgrounds constructed each year and more than 18,600 existing playgrounds that are renovated. The decision to build a public playground, whether it be in a park, school, mall or childcare setting, is an initial financial commitment of $60,000 to $100,000 and upward just for the purchase of equipment and construction (NCA Playground Surface Study, 2013). This cost can be overwhelming. Often times, new playground owners do not realize that owning a playground is not a one-time purchase. It is a commitment to maintain the equipment and surface for as long as it is open to the public. Most public playgrounds are designed to be in place for 10-20 years. At some point, the equipment will need to be serviced to meet revised safety standards and the surface will likely need to be repaired or replaced. A comprehensive planning process is essential to ensure everyone is educated on the safety requirements, the accessibility standards, design considerations, installation and ongoing maintenance needs.

An accessible playground starts with an accessible site plan. The site selection and layout of the accessible route should be considered alongside the selection of the play equipment. The accessible route must be designed as the main pedestrian route and connect all accessible equipment, both points of entry and egress. This means everyone enters and uses the site together.

A site survey may be necessary even on sites deemed “relatively flat.” A site survey, even for sites considered “flat” or without substantial change in elevation, should be conducted to design for a continuous accessible route, with compliant cross slope and adequate site drainage. At playgrounds without site surveys, the National Center on Accessibility research found more instances of non-compliant accessible routes. Most often equipment was moved during construction, deviating from the original plan, to accommodate the use zones. These changes negatively affected the accessible routes.

The site plan should include the layout of equipment and the planned accessible route should be drawn on the site plan connecting entry and egress from each accessible elevated play component and each accessible ground level play component. It is highly recommended that the accessible route be clearly defined on the site plan and construction drawings. If the playground owner decides to go with a surface material, such as loose fill that has a higher degree of surface variability, designation of the accessible route on the site plan will give the installer and maintenance personnel specific guidance on the appropriate location of the accessible route, installation of the surface material, and its ongoing maintenance to meet the accessibility standards.



2 Follow the Accessibility Standards

The 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design apply to state and local governments (Title II) and places of public accommodation (Title III). The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) Accessibility Standards apply to federal facilities. Both standards require newly constructed playgrounds and those existing playgrounds that are altered to comply with a series of technical provisions for accessible play components and the accessible route connecting these components.

The accessibility standards are minimum standards and do not require the entire play surface area to be accessible. The only required accessible surface area includes the accessible route from the entry of the play area, at least one connection to each accessible play component (points of entry and egress) and any clear space requirements adjacent to accessible play components. Children's play behavior indicates they spontaneously move throughout the play equipment, navigating on their own preferred routes. Designing the entire use zone as a congruent accessible route is recommended as a best practice to accommodate the free play behavior of all children navigating the play space.

Playground owners, designers and maintenance personnel must have a good understanding of the requirements for accessible routes within the play area and comply with the provisions of the accessibility standards. Outside of the play area, an accessible route must connect at the site arrival point, include parking, and the path to the main entrance of the play area. The accessible route must also connect all accessible elements and features of the play area within the site.

Within the play area, the clear width of the ground level accessible routes shall be 60 inches minimum. Two exceptions may be applied: 1) In play areas less than 1000 square feet, the clear width of accessible routes shall be permitted to be 44 inches minimum, if at least one turning space is provided where the restricted accessible route exceeds 30 feet in length; or 2) the clear width of accessible routes shall be permitted to be 36 inches minimum for a distance of 60 inches maximum provided that multiple reduced width segments are separated by segments that are 60 inches wide minimum and 60 inches long minimum.



Where accessible routes serve ground level play components:

- The vertical clearance shall be 80 inches high minimum.
- The running slope not steeper than 1:16 or 6.25%.
- The cross slope shall not be steeper than 1:48 or 2.08%.
- Openings in floor or ground surfaces shall not allow passage of a sphere more than ½ inch diameter.
- Changes in level between ¼ inch high minimum and ½ inch high maximum shall be beveled with a slope not steeper than 1:2.

For a playground surface to be compliant, both safe and accessible, it must meet the above mentioned technical provisions for running slope, cross slope, openings, changes in level, and vertical clearance. Public playgrounds must also meet referenced standards set by the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) related to resiliency for falls (ASTM F1292-99/04) and accessibility (ASTM F1951-99) around accessible equipment. Some jurisdictions and municipalities require surface systems to have certificates of compliance with ASTM standards. These certificates are often awarded through laboratory testing of surface samples. The standards require the actual site-installed surface systems to comply with ASTM F1292-99/04 and ASTM F1951-99.

The surface for the accessible route within the play area must meet the technical provisions of the standards as long as it is open for public use. Further, ground surfaces used for the accessible route are required to be inspected and maintained regularly and frequently to ensure continued compliance with ASTM F 1951-99. From the grand opening celebration to the coldest January day when parents bring their children outside to play and get some fresh air; as long as the playground is open for use, it must meet safety and accessibility standards.

Applying the Accessibility Standards to the Plan, Installation, and Maintenance of Ground Level Accessible Routes for Playgrounds

The following questions can be used through the planning process, during construction and as part of routine maintenance.

- ✓ Is the surface for the accessible route, clear ground space and turning space compliant with ASTM F1951-99 Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment?
- ✓ Does the playground surface comply with ASTM F1292-99/04 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment when ground surfaces are part of the accessible route and also located in the use zones?
- ✓ Is the accessible route part of the main circulation path and is it continuous to each accessible play component?
- ✓ Is the running slope for the ground level accessible route less than 1:16 or 6.25%?
- ✓ Is the maximum cross slope for the ground level accessible route less than 1:48 or 2.08%?
- ✓ Is there a minimum clear width of 60 inches for the ground level accessible route (some exceptions apply)?
- ✓ Are openings in the surface for the ground level accessible route no greater than .50 inch?
- ✓ Are changes in level along the ground level accessible route less than .50 inch beveled?
- ✓ Is the vertical clearance a minimum of 80 inches for the ground level accessible route?
- ✓ Does the clear ground space, 30 x 48 inches minimum, at egress of accessible equipment have a cross slope less than 1:48 or 2.08%?
- ✓ Are the ground surfaces inspected and maintained regularly and frequently to ensure continued compliance with ASTM F1951-99?

For more explanation on the application of the accessibility standards to public playgrounds, see A Summary of Accessibility Guidelines for Play Areas, www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/guides/play-areas.

3 Review the Research Findings to Learn More About Accessibility Issues for Surfaces

From 2008 to 2012, the National Center on Accessibility at Indiana University-Bloomington, conducted a longitudinal study on the accessibility of playground surfaces. The study was funded by the U.S. Access Board. The purpose of this study was to evaluate a variety of playground surfaces, their ability to meet accessibility requirements, their costs upon initial installation and maintenance issues over a 3-5 year period.

The research design for this study of playground surfaces began in 2005 with input from a national advisory committee. During the study, quantitative and qualitative data was collected through on-site inspections for a 3-5 year period. A national advisory committee provided feedback on the categories of surfaces to be evaluated, the criteria to be used for evaluation, the locations within each playground to be evaluated, data collection worksheets and on-site protocol. In addition, advisory committee members helped to expand the network for recruitment in the study and increase national awareness among playground owners.

The sample population for this study depended upon an established, or to be established, congenial relationship with the playground owner and the research team. The data for analysis required the research team to make a number of inquiries to the operation, planning, budgeting and maintenance procedures conducted by the playground owner. Most importantly, if there were any instances where locations on the playground were found to be in non-compliance with the accessibility or safety guidelines, the playground owner was to be informed and then carried the burden of bringing those instances into compliance.

Approximately 35 playground sites were recruited for participation during the evaluation period from October 2008 through May 2011. Data collection concluded in September 2012 so that all playground sites in the study would have a minimum of two years of data. All of the playground sites were located in public parks owned/operated by 16 different municipalities from Indiana, Illinois and Michigan. Sites included either neighborhood playgrounds or those located in regional parks. The 16 participating municipalities operated anywhere from 4 to 53 playgrounds each. None of the playground owners were “first time” owners. All of the owners had a history of managing playgrounds. They considered themselves somewhat knowledgeable of playground surface issues and eager to learn how they could improve upon their playground surface maintenance efforts for costs savings.

The playground surface products considered for this study had to initially meet the requirements of the accessibility standards for: accessible routes; ground surfaces; the ASTM F1292-99/04 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems



Under and Around Playground Equipment as determined by the surface manufacturer in laboratory testing; and the ASTM F1951-99 Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment as determined by the surface manufacturer in laboratory testing. Information on the surface vendor, specifications, costs and labor for installation was then collected. In turn, the research team contacted each vendor to collect additional information on laboratory certification with ASTM F1951-99 for each surface.

Five categories of surfaces were studied: poured in place rubber (PIP), rubber tiles (TIL), engineered wood fiber (EWF), shredded rubber (SHR) and hybrid (HYB) systems. Nine critical areas were inspected within 12 months of installation and continued to be evaluated at least once a year for the longitudinal study:

1) Entry to playground where playground surface starts;
2) Accessible route connecting accessible play elements;
3) Egress point of slide(s);
4) Swings;
5) Entry point(s) to composite structure(s)/transfer stations;
6) Climber(s);
7) Ground level play element(s) such as spring rockers, play tables, interactive panels, etc;
8) Sliding poles; and
9) Other areas (i.e. water play elements, etc).

A preliminary accessibility assessment of the playground surface was conducted and the surface tested for firmness and stability with the Rotational Penetrometer. At the discretion of the playground owner, the playground surface was also tested for impact attenuation with the TRIAX (surface impact testing device). The playground owner was notified immediately of test results for both the Rotational Penetrometer (firmness/stability) and the TRIAX (impact attenuation) and given opportunity to correct surfaces where deficiencies or non-compliance with standards were noted.

NCA Play Surface Study Findings

The most valuable lesson to be learned from this longitudinal study is that there is no perfect playground surface. Even within 12 months of installation, each type of surface had some type of issue or series of issues that affected the product's performance and contributed to the necessity and frequency of surface maintenance to assure accessibility and safety for use by children on a daily basis. A playground surface with poured-in-place rubber had a use zone found in non-compliance with the ASTM standard for impact attenuation. Playgrounds surfaced with tiles were observed with puncture holes, buckling and separating seams that created openings and changes in level on the accessible route. Inaccessible routes with undulating surface material were identified at playgrounds with engineered wood fiber. Each occurrence and event was weighed and balanced with the product's feature advantages and drawbacks. The information can serve as guidance to both future playground planning and priorities for designing new research. The following are the predominant findings from this study:

1. No single type of surface material/system was found to be the most accessible surface or better than others when comparing its ability to meet the accessibility standards with issues related to installation and maintenance.

2. Within 12 months of installation, playground sites in the sample with the loose fill EWF were found to have the greatest number of deficiencies, such as excessive running slope, cross slope, and change in level, affecting the accessible route to play components.

3. Within 12 months of installation, playground sites in the sample with loose fill EWF were found to have the highest values for firmness and stability, indicating greater work force needed to move across the surface, while playground sites with the unitary surfaces TIL and PIP were found to have the lowest values for firmness and stability– indicating less work force necessary to move across the surface.

4. Deficiencies (excessive running slope, cross slope, change in level, or openings) for PIP, TIL and HYB began to emerge 24-36 months after installation.

5. Occurrences were identified in the sample where the surface material installation did not parallel either the manufacturer's installation instructions or the procedural instructions on the laboratory test sample for ASTM F1951-99.

6. A playground surface with fewer accessibility deficiencies and a lower measurement for firmness and stability did not necessarily meet the safety standards for impact attenuation.

7. Surface cost for material cannot serve as an indicator or predictor of performance.

The full report *A Longitudinal Study of Playground Surfaces to Evaluate Accessibility: Final Report* is available on the National Center on Accessibility web site: ncaonline.org



Comparison of Playground Surfaces Evaluated in NCA





Poured in Place Rubber (PIP)	Tiles (TIL)
DESCRIPTION	**DESCRIPTION**
Wear layer with larger rubber particles and finished with a custom top layer of granular particles. A binding agent is used and the material is poured out on site or “in place” as it gets its name.	Bonded rubber constructed as 2 ft x 2 ft squares with interlocking sides.
COST (Average market cost 2009-2012)(MATERIAL ONLY)	**COST (Average market cost 2009-2012)(MATERIAL ONLY)**
$6.59 to $19/sq ft	$8.96 to $21/sq ft
INSTALLATION	**INSTALLATION**
Installer must be specially trained/certified by the manufacturer.	Can be installed by contractor or park/facility personnel. Learning curve associated with installation.
REPAIRS	**REPAIRS**
Repairs must be conducted by trained installer.	Repairs may be completed by contractor or park/facility personnel.
COMMON ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES	**COMMON ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES**
Cracking or flaking of the top layer can lead to divots and openings greater than 1/2 inch. Top layer deficiencies are often accelerated in high use areas (under swings, slides, teeter-totters). Results in non-compliant routes and clear ground spaces at equipment. May also result in non-compliant cross slope at entry/egress. Surface deficiencies can be traced to improper binding agent ratio, inability for product to properly cure, and deterioration of product over years of exposure to the elements.	Puncture holes and shifting seams can create openings and changes in level along the accessible route and at clear ground space for equipment. Foreign particles can lodge in seams causing separation including lift from adhesive for subsurface. Instances of cracking may occur as the product ages. Settled or washed out subsurface may compromise structural integrity of individual tiles.

Longitudinal Research Study





Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)

DESCRIPTION

ASTM defines EWF as processed wood ground to a fibrous consistency, randomly sized, approximately 10 times longer than wide with a maximum length of 2 inches. Free of hazardous substances. Not to be confused with wood chips.

COST (Average market cost 2009-2012)(MATERIAL ONLY)

$ 0.74 to $2.50/sq ft

INSTALLATION

Can be installed by contractor or park/facility personnel.

REPAIRS

Repairs may be completed by contractor or park/facility personnel.

COMMON ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

Improper installation and/or maintenance can result in undulation across the horizon of the surface affecting running slope, cross slope and change in level. Product material should be installed in layers and compacted in order to achieve an accessible route and level clear ground space at equipment. Surface material is likely to displace at heavy use areas with motion, such as at swings, slides, sliding poles, climbers, spinners and teeter totters. Displaced material should be raked level and compacted before additional fill is added.

Hybrid Surface Systems (HYB)

DESCRIPTION

Multi-layer system where the base layer may consist of either contained or loose particles like shredded rubber or carpet pad. The top layers may be outdoor carpeting, artificial turf, or rubber top mat.

COST (Average market cost 2009-2012)(MATERIAL ONLY)

$7.50 to $12.65/sq ft

INSTALLATION

Installer must be specially trained/certified by the manufacturer.

REPAIRS

Usually repairs must be conducted by the installer. In some cases, park/facility personnel may be trained to make smaller repairs.

COMMON ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES

Seams may separate or detach from the border creating changes in level and openings affecting the accessible route. Shifting of loose fill in the base layer may affect running and cross slopes. The artificial turf top layer may experience build-up of static electricity requiring application of anti-static solution.

4 Assess During the Planning, Installation and Maintenance Phases

Quick Reference

Running slope = 1:16 or 6.25% max

Cross slope = 1:48 or 2.08% max

Changes in level = 1/4 inch max (no bevel)
1/2 inch max (with bevel)

Openings = 1/2 inch max

Once the playground surface is installed, an on-site inspection of the surface system should be conducted along the accessible routes, at the clear ground spaces for entry/egress of equipment and required turning spaces. A digital level can be used to measure the running slope and cross slope. A 2 ft. digital level is most commonly used for accessibility assessments as it can measure greater variances within the cross slope than a longer level. A tape measure can be used to check any changes in level and openings on the accessible route. Changes in level should also be checked at transition points where the surface material changes. The firmness and stability of the playground surface along the accessible route can be measured in the field with a Rotational Penetrometer.



The maximum running slope for the ground level accessible route must not exceed 1:16 or 6.25%. Using a digital level is one option for measuring the slope of the ground level accessible route.



Measure the clear ground space in all directions with a digital level to ensure it is less than 1:48 or 2.08%. The clear ground space at all accessible play components entry and egress must be level for a child to transfer safely from a wheelchair to the play component.



Openings or gaps in the surface cannot exceed a 1/2 inch.



Check for changes in level, especially at transitions between surfaces. Changes in level from 1/4 inch to 1/2 inch must be beveled.



When conducting an assessment of the ground level accessible route, it helps to start with "the big picture" -- to view the play area in its entirety. Begin at the entry to the play area. Identify the accessible play components and the path to entry/egress for each piece of accessible equipment. Then focus in on the accessible route. Each segment of the route should be assessed for compliance with the accessibility standards. Look for the worst areas, those locations where the slope or cross slope may exceed the standard, where changes in level may be too high, or where openings may be too large.

One method to assess the ground level route using the photo above would be to look at each route segment, such as:

1. From the entry of the play area where the surface begins to the transfer system at the composite play structure.
2. The clear ground space at the transfer system.
3. Segments at each accessible elevated component egress to ground level, the clear ground space at egress, and the connector loop back to the transfer system, such as the segment from the right of the double slide and the clear ground space at the bottom of the slide to the transfer system; and
4. The segment to the right of the transfer system to the climbing wall including the transition from the poured in place surface to the engineered wood fiber and the clear ground space at the climber.
5. The segments from the entry and composite structure to the swings, including the clear ground space at a swing.
6. Segments to each accessible ground level play component.
7. Segments to other accessible play areas.

The purpose here is to look for deficiencies in order to make corrective actions. All of the technical provisions must be met through the entire route for it to be considered accessible. Thus, each segment should be assessed for slope, cross slope, change in level, openings, firmness and stability (which will be discussed in greater detail in the next sections). It would be inaccurate and incomplete to only measure slope at one segment, cross slope at another, or to average the data for three segments. Every segment of a route is used by people with disabilities, therefore it is critical that each segment meet the minimum standards.

Measuring Up: Playground Surface Field Testing

Regular inspections of the playground surface and equipment should be conducted to ensure continued safety and accessibility for all users. These inspections should include safety checks, the accessibility assessment of the accessible route, and field testing of the playground surface. Field testing conducted on the playground surface in the use zone should measure the impact attenuation for children who may fall, along with firmness and stability for accessibility to people with disabilities. This field testing should be conducted upon installation and throughout the life cycle of the playground. The Accessibility Standards require the accessible route within the play area comply with two referenced ASTM standards: ASTM F1951-99 Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment; and ASTM F1292-99/04 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment.

ASTM F1951-99: Lab Test

This is a laboratory test measuring the work force required for a 165 (+11 or -4.4) lb. individual in a manual wheelchair to propel across a given surface.

The lab test uses a 7 percent ramp as a baseline for the wheelchair rider. After the baseline is established, the rider conducts a series of straight propulsions over the sample surface for a minimum distance of 6.56 ft. The force needed to propel the wheelchair rider over the surface is measured. A second series of tests are then run where the wheelchair rider makes a 90 degree turn and the force is measured again. If the average work per foot for the sample surface is *less* than the work force to propel up the 7 percent ramp, the surface sample is considered as passing ASTM F1951-99. The advantage of the ASTM F1951-99 test procedure is that it provides a starting point to compare various surfaces by an objective measurement. However, the primary disadvantage and criticism of the protocol is that it is designed as a lab test in a controlled environment and cannot be easily replicated in the field or outdoors at multiple playground sites. Researchers have attempted to address the portability of this test protocol with the development of the Rotational Penetrometer (RP) described below.

Firmness and Stability: Field Test

While the ASTM F1951-99 protocol does not include a procedure for field testing outdoors at a playground, a field test method has been developed by the same engineering company that developed the original lab test method. A portable instrument known as a Rotational Penetrometer (RP) has been designed to measure the firmness and stability of surfaces. For the purpose of the NCA study, the Rotational Penetrometer was used as the field instrument to measure firmness and stability in lieu of the costly equipment for ASTM F1951-99. Documented research has shown the Rotational Penetrometer to have a high degree of repeatability and reproducibility (ASTM, May 27, 2005; ASTM, September 2010). These research findings also correlate to the lab test.



The "wheelchair test" is conducted on a sample test bed in the lab to determine the results for ASTM F1951-99.



A Rotational Penetrometer (RP) is used here to measure the firmness and stability of the surfaces.

The RP design includes a wheelchair caster placed on a spring loaded caliber in a metal tripod frame which suspends the caster about 6 inches over the surface. When the caster is released, the spring load gauge replicates the force of an individual in a wheelchair over a given surface. The penetration into the surfaces is measured for readings of "firmness" and "stability." National experts recognize the use of the Rotational Penetrometer as a portable and relatively easy device to use for surface testing. The field test method with the RP can be added to the assessment process just as measurements for slope, cross slope, change in level and openings are taken along segments of the accessible route for the play area. The RP can measure those segments for firmness and stability. This can be valuable in assessing how an installed surface performs over time.

Impact Attenuation: Lab & Field Test

In the field, ASTM F1292-99/04 Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment is also known as the "head drop test." It is a test to make sure the surface is resilient enough to prevent a life-threatening injury from a fall. A 6 inch diameter aluminum hemisphere in the shape of a child's head is dropped from the top of a tripod based on the fall height of play components. The aluminum hemisphere, or missile as it is called, contains an accelerometer. When dropped, the impact attenuation of the surface is measured in G-max and by the Head Injury Criteria (HIC). G-max is a measurement of the maximum acceleration, while HIC measures an integral of the acceleration time. The maximum values allowable by the standard are 200 for G-max and 1,000 for HIC. A TRIAX is the instrument used to conduct this test in the field.



A TRIAX is used here to test impact attenuation or the play surface's ability to absorb a fall and reduce severity of injury.

Playground Owners Can Utilize Field Testing to Get the Most Out of Their Surface Installation

The NCA surface study found the need to conduct field testing immediately following installation and throughout the life of the playground surface is critical to insure compliance with ASTM F1292-99/04 and ASTM F1951-99. A surface location can appear to be very accessible by the "look" of it. However, results may be surprising when the surface is actually field tested. This point is illustrated at NCA study sites managed by two different agencies.

One of the participating municipalities manages more than 30 park playgrounds, predominately surfaced with engineered wood fiber (EWF). The park maintenance personnel usually install the EWF by raking it level, allowing it to settle over time and topping off seasonally. The research team found the results for firmness and stability were not consistent with the manufacturer's ASTM F1951-99 results. The inconsistency was found in the installation process. The research team informed the playground owner of the field test results. Then the park maintenance crew changed their procedure for installation and also began compacting the surface material when it was topped off. Subsequent field testing yielded much better results for firmness and stability.

Another playground owner opted to also have the surface tested for impact attenuation and compliance with ASTM F1292. Drop heights from composite equipment up to 8 ft. high passed the field test. But it was the poured in place (PIP) surface at two swing bays that was found in non-compliance with HIC scores well over the 1,000 HIC allowable under the standard. The playground owner used the terms of the warranty and purchase order as a binding agreement requiring the manufacturer, at its own expense, to return to the site and repair the surface installation. Approximately 2,000 sq. ft. at the swing bays was resurfaced to add more depth to the PIP. When the surface area was retested, the HIC ranged from 650-750 at the swings, well under the 1,000 maximum allowable by the standard. Had the playground owner not discovered the non-compliant surface area until after the warranty had expired, it would have cost the agency in excess of $35,000 to correct the surface area serving four swings. During the course of the longitudinal study, at least two additional playgrounds surfaced with PIP were found in non-compliance with ASTM F1292. In each case, the playground owners required the installers to return to the site to make corrective actions.

The only way to verify the surface is installed similar to that in which it passed the laboratory test is to conduct field testing.

5 Comparing Surface Options Can Assist Planning Team in Selection Process

Like any big ticket purchase, comparison shopping is essential in the planning process. The planning team should embark on a purposeful mission to determine the playground surface system most appropriate for their site and operational resources. Some agencies may have more capital dollars at the front of the project for a surface system that costs a little more but requires less maintenance. Others may have a smaller project budget for a less costly surface, but have more operational funds for daily/ weekly maintenance.

The planning team should engage with all representatives from all surface systems under consideration. Decision-makers should dialogue with the surface supplier regarding realistic, objective measurements to evaluate surface performance and maintain the surface material over the life span of the playground. Decision makers must ask very specific questions to fully benefit from the advantages and costs-savings of a surface system. The dialogue with the manufacturer or sales rep should address:

- Specific written instructions for installation.
- Written description of the base, sub-base and required drainage system.
- Results of ASTM F1951-99 laboratory tests, including the values for the baseline, straight propulsion and turning runs. The test results should also include a description of how the surface was prepared for the lab tests and should be consistent with the installation instructions.
- Results of ASTM F1292-99/04, with written confirmation of the critical fall height for the surface material. These test results should include the depth of the surface material for drop heights. The critical fall height shall be higher than the fall height of the highest equipment on the playground.
- Written description of the maintenance and frequency necessary to maintain the accessible route and clear ground spaces.
- The field test procedures to assess the surface for impact attenuation and accessibility upon initial installation and periodically through the life of the product. This should include selection of an independent testing agent and optimum values for ASTM F1292-99/04 and ASTM F1951-99 when field tested.
- A minimum 5-year warranty that stipulates compliance with ASTM F1292-99/04 and ASTM F1951-99, field testing strategy, limitations, exclusions or preconditions, remedies available to the playground owner, and process for making a claim.

The playground owner should also ask the manufacturer for a list of customers in the area that have installed the surface material in the last 5-10 years. The planning team should talk to those customers and visit older installations to find out what issues may have come up with installation and maintenance.



If the surface system is to be installed by a contractor, those customer sites should also be visited to view the contractor's expertise and craftsmanship. It is important to visit older installations to see how the product has aged and what maintenance issues may have arisen over time.

The chart provided on pages 8-9 describes the playground surfaces included in the NCA surface study: poured in place rubber, rubber tiles, engineered wood fiber and hybrid systems. Other surface materials such as sand, pea gravel and shredded rubber have been used in playground construction. However, if used as part of the ground level accessible route, these surface materials must meet the accessibility standards, including the referenced ASTM standards. Many manufacturers continue to use technology and research to develop new and improved surface systems. The planning team should be on the lookout for new innovations, but at the same time ask questions and visit site installations. This inquiry will give the decision makers a greater understanding of what to expect from different products over the lifespan of the playground.

6 Proper Installation of Playground Surface is Key for Long Term Use and Maintenance

An accessible surface system can be rendered useless if it is not properly installed. Installation of surface systems should be performed by individuals knowledgeable of the accessibility standards and with expertise working with the surface materials. Surface materials/systems can be installed by both contractors and the playground owner's maintenance staff. Some manufacturers require contractors/installers to have special training and/or certification. Poured in place rubber (PIP) is almost exclusively installed by contractors specializing in the surface material. Some playground owners believe the intensive installation requirements for PIP, from mixing the binder to troweling the material level, are best completed by contractors experienced with the surface material. On the other end of the spectrum, engineered wood fiber (EWF) is most frequently installed by park maintenance crews and perceived as relatively easy compared to other surface materials. Somewhere in the middle, tile (TIL) and hybrid systems (HYB) are known to be installed by both contractors and park maintenance personnel.

There is a perception among playground owners that installation of surface systems by their own park crew will produce cost savings for the agency. However, there is a learning curve with the installation process that can prove to be challenging. During the NCA surface study, a playground owner selected a surface based on the perception it would be easy for park crews to install. The first installation was perceived as so difficult for the park maintenance crew that any cost savings was mitigated by the lengthy learning process. By the time the playground owner had installed its fourth playground with TIL, the agency had decided to transition to a different surface. On the contrary, another playground owner that contracted the installation to a preferred manufacturer's installer was very pleased. Intensive installation may mean the contractor is the only one able to make repairs such as those due to vandalism or patches at locations where equipment may have been removed. The costs for return repairs or patches can be dependent upon whether the project is covered under the warranty.

Critical details must be communicated between the design and construction phases, regardless of whether the installation is by contractor or park/facility personnel. Site plans and construction drawings should provide details like maximum running slopes and cross slopes, beveled edges, transitions, adjoining seams and affixing the surface material to the border. Preparation of the base and sub-surfaces should be explained. Lack of attention to drainage or omission of weed barriers between layers can lead to sub-surfaces being washed away, base layers infiltrating top layers, and excessive moisture contributing to the growth of mold and vegetation. All of these issues can affect the usability, the safety and the accessibility of the playground surface. Accessibility deficiencies arising out of installation were associated with all of the surfaces in the NCA study.



The playground site has been graded with earth-moving equipment. The concrete base has been prepared and is awaiting the application of the poured-in-place rubber (PIP) system. At this site, the playground equipment and surface system will be installed by a contractor specializing in playground construction.



The base layer of crumb rubber has been installed. The top layer, a rubber mat system, is fit around equipment and the seams are joined. Both the equipment and surface system at this site will be installed by the park maintenance crew.



Poured in Place Rubber (PIP)

Accessibility deficiencies at PIP sites were commonly found in areas where the granules from the top layer had started flaking off. This flaking condition has been linked to either inadequate ratio of bonding agent to granules when mixed on site; and/or failure of the bonding agent to properly cure when installed at 40 degrees Fahrenheit and falling. The manufacturer installation instructions show the preferred atmospheric temperature for installation to be 40 degrees Fahrenheit and rising. Left unattended over time, areas where the top granular layer has flaked away can lead to non-compliant clear ground space at play equipment such as swings, transfer systems and the egress of slides. Deficiencies related to installation methods may not become evident for months or even years. Thus, it is necessary for the playground owner to prepare for these situations prior to purchase through the terms of the warranty and/or specified funds for maintenance.

Tiles (TIL)

The NCA study identified accessibility deficiencies with TIL most often related to puncture holes ranging from .50 inches to more than 2 inches in diameter and locations where the seams had started to shift or buckle creating openings and changes in level along the accessible route. The puncture holes may be products of intentional vandalism or unintentional damage from users stepping on rocks and other foreign objects with enough force to penetrate the surface. Loose particles are also known for lodging in the TIL seams causing separation at the seams. Left unattended, the particles can lodge so deep in the seams that the adhesive can degrade and the TIL can separate from the concrete subsurface. As the product continues to age, instances of cracking have been identified where either the subsurface or structural integrity of the surface product is compromised. Because TIL are made from rubber product, the surface should continue to be monitored throughout its life cycle for its ability to meet the impact attenuation requirements of ASTM F1292.

Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)

Sites installed with EWF were found to have the highest number of accessibility deficiencies within the first year of installation. Because EWF is a loose fill surface, it is frequently observed with accessibility deficiencies related to running slope, cross slope and change in level. EWF has been observed with undulation across the horizon of the surface area. The undulating surface material creates changes in level, running and cross slopes exceeding the maximum allowable standards resulting in non-compliant accessible routes to play components. It is critical for the manufacturer/supplier and the playground owner to communicate the process for installation. In most instances it is necessary for the loose material to be installed in layers, watered and compacted in order to achieve an accessible route and level clear ground space at equipment. Some playground owners consider the installation of EWF as an opportunity to use volunteers to assist in compaction by running drum roller teams across the surface area.

Hybrid Surface Systems (HYB)

Two of the three different types of HYB systems (outdoor carpet and artificial grass) were installed by contractors representing the manufacturers. These surface systems required installers experienced with laying the sub-surface, adjoining seams, and affixing the surface material to the border. Separation at the seams appeared to be the most prevalent concern following installation. Repairs to seams must be made by the contractor and costs are dependent upon the terms of the product warranty.

7 Commitment to Ongoing Care and Maintenance

Maintenance is one of the greatest factors affecting the accessibility of playground surfaces. The accessibility standards require ground surfaces to be inspected and maintained regularly and frequently to ensure continued compliance with ASTM F1951-99. Therefore playground owners should have a thorough understanding of the care and maintenance required for their selected surface systems. Some surface materials may only require seasonal maintenance, while others may require weekly or daily maintenance. The frequency of maintenance is dependent on the surface material and number of users.

The NCA surface study showed there was a lack of installation/ maintenance information provided by the manufacturer to the playground owner prior to purchase and there was a steep learning curve related to working with various surface systems. Each of the 16 participating municipalities had maintenance personnel trained through either the National Recreation and Park Association's Certified Playground Safety Inspector program or the Illinois Park District Risk Management Association (PDRMA). The participating agencies recognized maintenance as a critical need in order to provide a safe environment for the public to recreate. All of the municipalities had "playground crews" responsible for visiting each playground site, making visual inspection of the area, collecting trash, and completing repairs as needed. The playground crews ranged in number from 1-3 staff, usually with one full-time employee and 2-3 seasonal staff during the summer months. At least 30 minutes was spent on site. However, the frequency of visits to each site varied among the different agencies. Large playgrounds at regional parks and sites where programming occurred were most often visited. Some were visited daily during peak summer months. Smaller neighborhood parks may have been visited 1-3 times per week or two times per month.

Surface deficiencies were found to exist at each site regardless of the frequency of visits by the playground crew. Maintenance crews should receive training both on the accessibility standards and the care specific to the surface material. Over the course of the longitudinal study, the research team found that where the playground crews became more engaged in the study, the maintenance specific to accessibility began to improve. At least three EWF sites had improved accessibility where the surface material was observed as more level and better compacted than previous site visits. One site utilizing PIP as the primary access route and EWF as the secondary access route was assessed with less than 1 percent slope at the transition between the two surface materials. This was observed as the most improved and maintained transition between surface materials of the sample.



Over time, the unitary surface may separate at the seams or from the border creating gaps, openings or changes in level that will require repair.



Loose fill materials, like EWF, may experience undulation of the surface material and or displacement under heavy use areas with motion such as at swings, slides, sliding pools, climbers, spinners and teeter totters. This will require the surface material to be raked level, filled and compacted so that the clear ground space is level in all directions for a safe transfer onto and off the equipment.

Poured in Place Rubber (PIP)

PIP was recorded as the surface material requiring the fewest instances of maintenance. Maintenance areas were noted where the surface had cracks, buckles, openings or a granular layer had worn away under high traffic areas like swings, transfer steps and the egress at slides. While PIP had the fewest instances requiring maintenance, it is still notable because the surface repairs can be extensive. Repairs must be done by either the original installer or professional certified by the manufacturer resulting in added costs. The patch repairs also necessitate cutting away a larger section of surfacing in order to fill and level the deficient area.

Tiles (TIL)

TIL sites were recorded with a high number of locations in need of maintenance. TIL deficiencies included punctures holes ranging from .50 inches to more than 2 inches in diameter; and instances where the seams had started to shift or buckle creating openings and changes in level along the accessible route. It was unclear whether the puncture holes were products of intentional vandalism or unintentional damage from users stepping on rocks and other foreign objects with enough force to penetrate the surface. Playground owners in the NCA study reported their maintenance crews were able to replace the TIL with puncture holes. Deficiencies were also identified at sites surfaced with a combination TIL and EWF. The intent of the playground design was to use the TIL as the primary accessible route to points of entry/egress and fill the remaining use zone with EWF. The loose fill particles of EWF were scattered throughout the play area, across the tiles, concrete walkway and in the grass. Some of the particles had started to lodge in the TIL seams causing separation at the seams. There were even instances where the particles had lodged so deep in the seams that the adhesive had degraded and the TIL had separated from the concrete subsurface. Over time, these areas would be identified with changes in level and openings requiring repair or replacement of the individual tiles.

Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF)

EWF sites were recorded in need of maintenance most frequently and earliest in the NCA study. Sites surfaced with EWF were commonly found to have an undulating surface material creating changes in level, along with running and cross slopes exceeding the maximum allowable standards. This would result in non-compliant accessible routes to play components. Large areas where the loose material had been displaced under heavy use areas with motion such as at swings, slides, sliding poles, climbers, spinners, and teeter totters were observed at all of the sample sites with EWF. A kick-out area at a swing could be as large as 3 ft. x 8 ft. with a depth of more than 5 inches. The accessibility standards require the minimum 30 x 48 inch clear floor space for transfer to/from the accessible play components to have a level surface with less than a 2.08 percent cross slope in all directions. The displaced surface material at locations such as the bottom of slides, a swing, or ground level play component rendered the accessible route to the play component non-compliant with the accessibility standards. Maintenance issues at sites began to emerge where the product was filled at the kick-out area rather than the raked level, compacted and then filled and compacted. Where the kick-out areas had been filled, the surface material would eventually be displaced. Over time this created higher undulating mounds at the front and back of the kick-out area and greater cross slopes within the required clear floor space.

At locations where the EWF was paired with a unitary surface, deficiencies were identified at the transition between the two surface materials. The EWF had settled by 1-5 inches creating a change in level and excessive running slope up to 16 percent at the transition. This was most prevalent at sites installed with PIP as the primary access route. At locations where TIL was intended as the primary accessible route and EWF was used as secondary safety surfacing, the EWF particles began contaminating the TIL seams.

To the layman, the terms EWF and woodchips are often, incorrectly, interchanged. The difference between EWF and wood chips are the additional processes beyond the typical landscape chipper. Unlike woodchips out of the chipping equipment, EWF is shredded again, stamped/flattened and made pliable to the extent that the particles will weave together to create a traversable, impact attenuating surface. In addition, there is an ASTM standard specification for EWF (ASTM F2075) further distancing the material from any product made on site or purchased from a nursery or home improvement store. The ASTM standard for EWF requires the particles be small enough to pass through a series of three sieves, ¾ inch, 3/8 inch and No. 16 (0.0469 inch). The sample is considered compliant if no more than 1 percent residue is left on any individual sieve. Large wood particle chips, chunks and shredded twigs were found at all of the EWF sample sites. The observable quantity of large wood particles raised into question whether a test sample from any of the sites would comply with the ASTM standard specification for EWF and specifically the sieve test. In addition to the large particles, there were instances where vegetation and mold were found growing in the surface material.

Hybrid Surface Systems (HYB)

As tested within 12 months of installation, all three HYB surface systems were observed to have minimal deficiencies, comparable to PIP. One of the most commonly noted deficiencies among the HYB was separation at the seams that created openings and changes in level greater than ½ inch. A build up of static electricity was also found to occur seasonally with the artificial grass hybrid system.

What Every Playground Owner Should Know About the Accessibility of Their Playground Surfaces

1 All successful, inclusive playgrounds start with comprehensive planning. The site selection and layout of the accessible route should be considered alongside the selection of the play equipment. A site survey may also be necessary.

2 The accessibility standards apply to playgrounds in parks, malls, schools, child care facilities and other public accommodations covered by the ADA and the ABA. Playground owners, designers and maintenance personnel must have a good understanding of the requirements for ground level accessible routes within the play area.



5 The research findings tell us there is no perfect surface. Each type of surface requires the playground owner understand its characteristics and what is required with installation and maintenance.

6 Proper installation of the playground surface is critical for long term use and maintenance. An accessible surface system can be rendered useless if it is not properly installed. Installation should be performed by those knowledgeable of the accessibility standards and with expertise working with the surface materials. Field testing should be conducted following installation and periodically through the life of the surface system.

7 Playground ownership is a commitment to ongoing care and maintenance. Maintenance is one of the greatest factors affecting the accessibility of playground surfaces. Playground owners should have a thorough understanding of the care and maintenance required for their selected surface systems.



3 Accessibility assessments of the play area should be conducted during planning on paper, installation on site, and for ongoing maintenance. The assessment should include the accessible route throughout the play area along with clear ground space at entry/egress to accessible equipment. The areas should be checked for compliance with running slope, cross slope, changes in level and openings.

4 Comparison shopping is essential in the planning process. Decision makers should engage with suppliers to gather information on various surfaces and evaluate surface options. The sales rep should provide documentation on installation, field testing, maintenance and a minimum 5-year warranty. The planning team should talk to customers and visit installations to find out what issues may have come up with installation and maintenance.



Adapted from *7 Things Every Playground Owner Should Know About the Accessibility of Their Playground Surfaces*, a publication of the U.S. Access Board and the National Center on Accessibility.