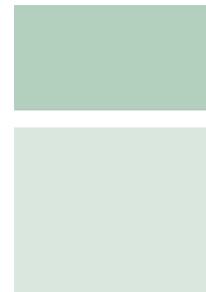
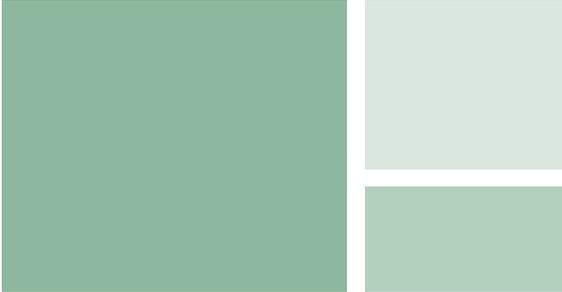


# Delaware County Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan

Conserve | Enhance | Connect

Volume III

# County Parks and Recreation Plan



APRIL 2015



**Delaware County Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan**  
Conserve | Enhance | Connect

**Volume II:  
County Parks and Recreation Plan**

APRIL 2015

**Prepared By:**

Delaware County Planning Department  
Court House and Government Center  
201 West Front Street  
Media, PA 19063



**This Page Intentionally Left Blank**

This plan is formatted for double-sided printing.  
Please consider the environment before printing this document.

**A RESOLUTION of the DELAWARE COUNTY COUNCIL  
Park, Open Space and Greenway Plan  
Community Conservation Partnerships Grant  
PROJECT (BRC-TAG-16-58)**

**WHEREAS**, the County of Delaware, with assistance from TPW Design Studios, has prepared a Countywide Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan; and,

**WHEREAS**, the purpose of the Plan is to create an overarching vision for the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources, open spaces, and greenways in Delaware County; to provide guidance for decision-making regarding open space and greenways; and increase public benefit while ensuring environmental quality and,

**WHEREAS**, the Plan was financed in part by a Community Conservation Partnerships Program grant under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, under contract number **BRC-TAG-16-58**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED** by Delaware County Council that:

- a. The project was completed in accordance with the Grant Agreement.
- b. All project expenditures have been made and were in accordance with the Grant Agreement.
- c. The Plan and related materials are acceptable to the County.
- d. The Plan and related materials will be used to guide future recreation and conservation decisions.
- e. The Plan and related materials shall be adopted as a component of the Delaware County Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968, as amended).

ADOPTED THIS 22 DAY OF APRIL, 2015, by Delaware County Council.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mario J. Civera, Jr., Chairman

Attest: Anne M. Coogan  
Anne Coogan, County Clerk

**This Page Intentionally Left Blank**

## Acknowledgements

### Delaware County Council

Mario Civera, Jr., Chairman  
Colleen P. Morrone, Vice Chairman  
John P. McBlain  
David J. White  
Michael F. Culp



### County Executive

Marianne Grace

### Delaware County Planning Commission

Thomas J. O'Brien, AIA, Chairman  
Thomas J. Judge, Vice Chairman  
Kenneth J. Zitarelli, Secretary  
Kathy A. Bogosian  
Lorraine Bradshaw  
Patrick L. Patterson  
William C. Payne  
Christine Valerio

### Planning Director

Linda F. Hill  
John E. Pickett, AICP\*

This project was funded in part by a grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund, Community Conservation Partnership Program, administered by the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.



## Acknowledgements (cont.)

### Delaware County Planning Department

Karen L. Holm, Manager  
Steven R. Beckley, AICP, Senior Planner  
Ryan T. Judge, Planner  
Zachary M. Barner, Planner\*  
Ginny M. McIntosh, Planner\*  
Julie Del Muto, Manager



Ron Aquilino, Data and Systems Coordinator  
Doris K. Cusano, Manager\*  
Anne P. Stauffer, GIS Coordinator

\* Former staff member

### Consultant:

TPW Design Studios with:  
Toole Recreation Planning  
Campbell Thomas & Associates



### Task Force:

Judith Auten	Ray McFall
Robert Bernhardt	Anne Murphy
Richard Burke	A. Richard Paul
Steve Byrne	William Payne
Brian Byrnes	Vince Pennoni
Alex Charlton	Tim Possenti
Bruce Clark	Jaclyn Rhoads
Bruce Dorbian	Jeffrey Rudolph
Rich Ehnou	John Sammartino
Susan Elder	Gary Snyder
Mike Fusco	Erica Sollberger, RLA
Stephanie Gaboriault	Cheryl Tumola
Brian Hoover	Robert Willert
Ed Magargee	Peter Williamson
Marc Manfre	

# Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation .....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
Introduction .....	1-1
Delaware County 2035 .....	1-1
Open Space Component Plan .....	1-1
Goals .....	1-3
Overview .....	1-3
County Level Parks and Recreation Services .....	1-4
Delaware County Administrative Code .....	1-4
Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department .....	1-5
A Brief History of the County Park System .....	1-5
Inventory of County Owned Parks and Open Space .....	1-6
Recreational Open Space .....	1-7
Non-Recreational Open Space .....	1-13
Needs and Opportunities of the County Parks System .....	1-15
Public Outreach Conclusions .....	1-15
Main Findings .....	1-16
Key Opportunities .....	1-19
Looking Ahead .....	1-21
<b>Chapter 2: Clayton County Park .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
Introduction .....	2-1
Brief History .....	2-1
Context within the Delaware County Parks System .....	2-1
Current Service Area .....	2-1
Existing Conditions and Inventory .....	2-2
Surrounding Land Use .....	2-2
Natural Resources .....	2-5
Existing Facilities .....	2-11
Historical and Cultural Resources .....	2-12
Structures .....	2-12
Park Access .....	2-13
Park Needs Analysis .....	2-14
Park Use, Programs, and Visitation in 2015 .....	2-14
Park Needs .....	2-15
Park Development Opportunities .....	2-16
Management, Maintenance, and Operations .....	2-16
Park Site Development Plan and Recommendations .....	2-16
The Site Development Plan “Concept” .....	2-16
Recommendations .....	2-17
Recommended Phasing & Cost Projections (Estimates) .....	2-28
Appendix C-1: Clayton County Park Soils .....	2-33
Appendix C-2: Clayton County Park Environmental Survey .....	2-63
<b>Chapter 3: Glen Providence County Park .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
Introduction .....	3-1
Surrounding Land Use .....	3-1
Context within the Delaware County Parks System .....	3-1

**Table of Contents**

Current Service Area.....	3-1
<b>Existing Conditions and Inventory .....</b>	<b>3-2</b>
Surrounding Land Use .....	3-2
Natural Resources .....	3-5
Existing Park Facilities.....	3-10
Historical and Cultural Resources.....	3-11
Structures .....	3-12
Park Access .....	3-13
<b>Park Needs Analysis .....</b>	<b>3-14</b>
Park Use, Programs, and Visitation in 2015 .....	3-14
Park Needs.....	3-14
Park Development Opportunities.....	3-15
Management, Maintenance, and Operations .....	3-15
<b>Park Site Development Plan and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>3-16</b>
The Site Development Plan “Concept” .....	3-16
Recommendations.....	3-19
Recommended Phasing & Cost Projections (Estimates) .....	3-27
<b>Appendix G-1: Glen Providence County Park Soils .....</b>	<b>3-31</b>
<b>Appendix G-2: Glen Providence County Park Environmental Survey.....</b>	<b>3-51</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Kent County Park.....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
Introduction .....	4-1
Surrounding Land Use .....	4-1
Context within the Delaware County Parks System .....	4-1
Current Service Area.....	4-1
<b>Existing Conditions and Inventory .....</b>	<b>4-2</b>
Surrounding Land Use .....	4-2
Natural Resources .....	4-2
Existing Park Facilities.....	4-9
Historical and Cultural Resources.....	4-10
Structures .....	4-10
Park Access .....	4-11
<b>Park Needs Analysis .....</b>	<b>4-13</b>
Park Use, Programs, and Visitation in 2015 .....	4-13
Park Needs.....	4-14
Park Development Opportunities.....	4-14
Management, Maintenance, and Operations .....	4-14
<b>Park Site Development Plan and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>4-15</b>
The Site Development Plan “Concept” .....	4-15
Recommendations.....	4-16
Recommended Phasing & Cost Projections (Estimates) .....	4-26
<b>Appendix K-1: Kent County Park Soils .....</b>	<b>4-29</b>
<b>Appendix K-2: Kent County Park Environmental Survey .....</b>	<b>4-43</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Rose Tree County Park.....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
Introduction .....	5-1
Brief History.....	5-1
Context within the Delaware County Parks System .....	5-1
Current Service Area.....	5-1

Existing Conditions and Inventory .....	5-2
Surrounding Land Use .....	5-2
Natural Resources .....	5-2
Existing Park Facilities.....	5-9
Historical and Cultural Resources.....	5-11
Structures .....	5-12
Park Access .....	5-14
Park Needs Analysis.....	5-15
Park Use, Programs, and Visitation in 2015 .....	5-15
Park Needs.....	5-16
Park Development Opportunities.....	5-17
Management, Maintenance, and Operations.....	5-17
Park Site Development Plan and Recommendations .....	5-18
The Site Development Plan “Concept” .....	5-18
Recommendations.....	5-21
Recommended Phasing & Cost Projections (Estimates) .....	5-29
Appendix R-1: Rose Tree County Park Soils.....	5-33
Appendix R-2: Rose Tree County Park Environmental Survey.....	5-55
<b>Chapter 6: Smedley County Park.....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
Introduction .....	6-1
Breif History.....	6-1
Context within the Delaware County Parks System .....	6-1
Current Service Area.....	6-2
Existing Conditions and Inventory .....	6-5
Surrounding Land Use .....	6-5
Natural Resources .....	6-5
Existing Park Facilities.....	6-10
Historical and Cultural Resources.....	6-11
Structures .....	6-12
Park Access .....	6-13
Park Needs Analysis.....	6-15
Park Use, Programs, and Visitation in 2015 .....	6-15
Park Needs.....	6-15
Park Development Opportunities.....	6-16
Management, Maintenance, and Operations.....	6-16
Park Site Development Plan and Recommendations .....	6-17
The Site Development Plan “Concept” .....	6-17
Recommendations.....	6-17
Recommended Phasing & Cost Projections (Estimates) .....	6-28
Appendix S-1: Smedley County Park Soils .....	6-33
Appendix S-2: Smedley County Park Environmental Survey .....	6-63
<b>Chapter 7: Upland County Park.....</b>	<b>7-1</b>
Introduction .....	7-1
Brief History.....	7-1
Context within the Delaware County Parks System .....	7-1
Current Service Area.....	7-2
Existing Conditions and Inventory .....	7-5

**Table of Contents**

Surrounding Land Use ..... 7-5

Natural Resources ..... 7-5

Existing Park Facilities..... 7-9

Historical and Cultural Resources..... 7-10

Structures ..... 7-11

Park Access ..... 7-12

**Park Needs Analysis ..... 7-15**

    Park Use, Programs, and Visitation in 2015 ..... 7-15

    Park Needs..... 7-16

    Park Development Opportunities..... 7-16

    Management, Maintenance, and Operations ..... 7-17

**Park Site Development Plan and Recommendations ..... 7-17**

    The Site Development Plan “Concept” ..... 7-17

    Recommendations..... 7-18

    Recommended Phasing & Cost Projections (Estimates) ..... 7-30

**Appendix U-1: Upland County Park Soils..... 7-35**

**Appendix U-2: Upland County Park Environmental Survey..... 7-59**

**Appendix III-A: Glossary of Acronyms ..... 1**

**Appendix III-B: Map Data Sources ..... 1**

**Appendix III-C: Delaware County Administrative Code ..... 1**

**Appendix III-D: County Parks Rules and Regulations..... 1**

**List of Maps**

Map 1-1: Delaware County Owned Open Space ..... 1-9

**List of Tables**

Table 1-1: Delaware County-Owned Open Space..... 1-8

Table 1-2: Action Plan ..... 1-20

Table 2-1: General Maintenance and Operation Frequencies..... 2-23

Table 2-2: Native Plant Material for Clayton County Park..... 2-27

Table 2-3: Clayton County Park - Phase I: Short Term (0-5 Years) Cost Estimate..... 2-29

Table 2-4: Clayton County Park - Phase II: Medium Term (5-15 Years) Cost Estimate..... 2-30

Table 2-5: Clayton County Park - Phase III: Long Term (15-30 Years) Cost Estimate..... 2-31

Table 3-1: General Maintenance and Operation Frequencies..... 3-22

Table 3-2: Native Plant Material for Glen Providence County Park ..... 3-26

Table 3-3: Glen Providence County Park - Phase I: Short Term (0-5 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 3-28

Table 3-4: Glen Providence County Park - Phase II: Medium Term (5-15 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 3-29

Table 3-5: Glen Providence County Park - Phase III: Long Term (15-30 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 3-30

Table 4-1: General Maintenance and Operation Frequencies..... 4-21

Table 4-2: Native Plant Material for Kent County Park..... 4-25

Table 4-3: Kent County Park - Phase I: Short Term (0-5 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 4-27

Table 4-4: Kent County Park - Phase II: Medium Term (5-15 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 4-28

Table 4-5: Kent County Park - Phase III: Long Term (15-30 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 4-28

Table 5-1: General Maintenance and Operation Frequencies..... 5-24

Table 5-2: Native Plant Material for Rose Tree County Park..... 5-28

Table 5-3: Rose Tree County Park - Phase I: Short Term (0-5 Years) Cost Estimate ..... 5-30

Table 5-4: Rose Tree County Park - Phase II: Medium Term (5-15 Years) Cost Estimate .....5-31

Table 5-5: Rose Tree County Park - Phase III: Long Term (15-30 Years) Cost Estimate .....5-32

Table 6-1: General Maintenance and Operation Frequencies.....6-23

Table 6-2: Native Plant Material for Smedley County Park .....6-27

Table 6-3: Smedley County Park - Phase I: Short Term (0-5 Years) Cost Estimate .....6-29

Table 6-4: Smedley County Park - Phase II: Medium Term (5-15 Years) Cost Estimate .....6-30

Table 6-5: Smedley County Park - Phase III: Long Term (15-30 Years) Cost Estimate .....6-31

Table 7-1: General Maintenance and Operation Frequencies.....7-25

Table 7-2: Native Plant Material for Upland County Park .....7-29

Table 7-3: Upland County Park - Phase I: Short Term (0-5 Years) Cost Estimate .....7-31

Table 7-4: Upland County Park - Phase II: Medium Term (5-15 Years) Cost Estimate .....7-32

Table 7-5: Upland County Park - Phase III: Long Term (15-30 Years) Cost Estimate .....7-33

## List of Figures

Figure 2-1: Clayton County Park with 9-hole golf course as it exists today.....2-1

Figure 2-2: Clayton County Park Service Area .....2-2

Figure 2-3: Aerial of the rural nature and residential development around Clayton County Park .....2-2

Figure 2-4: Existing Vegetation at Clayton County Park .....2-5

Figure 2-5: Waterway and floodplain .....2-7

Figure 2-6: Wetland .....2-7

Figure 2-7: National Wetlands Inventory of Clayton County Park.....2-8

Figure 2-8: Unnamed tributary channel to Green Creek through golf course .....2-8

Figure 2-9: Existing drainage pattern at Clayton County Park.....2-9

Figure 2-10: Green Creek .....2-10

Figure 2-11: Golf Course Pond .....2-10

Figure 2-12: Baseball/Softball Fields.....2-11

Figure 2-13: Soccer/Ballfield .....2-11

Figure 2-14: Picnic Grove with Pavilion .....2-11

Figure 2-15: Open Utility Corridors.....2-11

Figure 2-16: Two Paved Parking Lots and One Crushed Stone Parking Lot .....2-11

Figure 2-17: 9-Hole Golf Course and Clubhouse.....2-11

Figure 2-18: Multi-Use Trail .....2-11

Figure 2-19: Tot-Lot/Playground.....2-11

Figure 2-20: Pro Shop and Club House .....2-12

Figure 2-21: Maintenance Building 1 .....2-12

Figure 2-22: Maintenance Building 2 .....2-12

Figure 2-23: "Bunker" Building.....2-12

Figure 2-24: Transit connections to Clayton County Park .....2-13

Figure 2-25: Transit Access: .....2-14

Figure 2-26: Existing Vehicular Access Points at Clayton County Park .....2-14

Figure 2-27: Clayton County Park Playground .....2-16

Figure 2-28: Clayton County Park Concept Sketch .....2-17

Figure 2-29: Utility corridor in relation to Clayton County Park.....2-21

Figure 3-1: Article from the Chester Times on July 8th, 1936. ....3-1

Figure 3-2: Glen Providence County Park Service Area .....3-2

Figure 3-3: Wooded area in Glen Providence County Park .....3-5

Figure 3-4: Turtle in the pond at Glen Providence County Park.....3-5

**Table of Contents**

Figure 3-5: Broomall's Pond in Glen Providence County Park .....3-6

Figure 3-6: National Wetlands Inventory of Glen Providence County Park .....3-7

Figure 3-7: Existing drainage pattern at Glen Providence County Park.....3-8

Figure 3-8: Stream channel in Glen Providence County Park .....3-8

Figure 3-9: Pond discharge in the park .....3-9

Figure 3-10: Overlook structure.....3-10

Figure 3-11: Dedication plaque.....3-10

Figure 3-12: Stairs from overlook structure.....3-10

Figure 3-13: Broomall's Pond.....3-10

Figure 3-14: Open lawn and picnic groves.....3-10

Figure 3-15: Performance stage.....3-10

Figure 3-16: Pavilion .....3-10

Figure 3-17: Hiking Trails.....3-10

Figure 3-18: Overlook structure (date unknown) .....3-11

Figure 3-19: Park survey (February 1945).....3-11

Figure 3-20: Overlook structure entrance .....3-12

Figure 3-21: Pavilion .....3-12

Figure 3-22: Transit connections to Glen Providence County Park .....3-13

Figure 3-23: Glen Providence County Park Concept Sketch .....3-16

Figure 3-24: Wooded are in the park.....3-24

Figure 3-25: Shade trees in Glen Providence County Park .....3-24

Figure 4-1: Kent County Park Service Area .....4-2

Figure 4-2: Existing vegetation at Kent County Park.....4-5

Figure 4-3: Wetland area possibly created by a spring.....4-6

Figure 4-4: National Wetlands Inventory of Kent County Park .....4-6

Figure 4-5: Existing drainage pattern at Kent County Park.....4-7

Figure 4-6: Stormwater outlet along Darby Creek.....4-8

Figure 4-7: Darby Creek .....4-8

Figure 4-8: Paved parking area .....4-9

Figure 4-9: Tot-lot / playground and pavilion .....4-9

Figure 4-10: Darby Creek .....4-9

Figure 4-11: Dog park.....4-9

Figure 4-12: Open lawn area.....4-9

Figure 4-13: Earthen trail along Darby Creek.....4-9

Figure 4-14: Lindbergh Bridge.....4-10

Figure 4-15: "Mill-Seat" on the far side of Darby Creek .....4-10

Figure 4-16: Pavilion .....4-10

Figure 4-17: Existing pedestrian access points at Kent County Park .....4-11

Figure 4-18: Transit connections to Kent County Park .....4-12

Figure 4-19: Existing vehicular access to Kent County Park.....4-12

Figure 4-20: Dog park.....4-13

Figure 4-21: Dog Park Members taking advantage of such a wonderful Delaware County Park facility 4-13

Figure 4-22: Kent County Park Concept Sketch .....4-15

Figure 4-23: Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Trail western alignment through Kent County Park .....4-19

Figure 5-1: Rose Tree County Park service area .....5-2

Figure 5-2: Existing vegetation at Rose Tree County Park .....5-5

Figure 5-3: National Wetlands Inventory of Rose Tree County Park.....5-7

Figure 5-4: Concrete drainage channel.....5-7

Figure 5-5: Historic Springhouse .....5-8

Figure 5-6: Unnamed tributary to Crum Creek .....5-8

Figure 5-7: Plaza .....5-9

Figure 5-8: Pedestrian Mall .....5-9

Figure 5-9: Amphitheater .....5-9

Figure 5-10: Paved Multi-Use Trail .....5-9

Figure 5-11: Restroom Facilities (a) .....5-9

Figure 5-12: Restroom Facilities (b) .....5-9

Figure 5-13: Hiking Trail .....5-9

Figure 5-14: Community Garden Plots .....5-9

Figure 5-15: Memorials .....5-10

Figure 5-16: Gazebo .....5-10

Figure 5-17: Open Space / Lawn .....5-10

Figure 5-18: Maintenance Building .....5-10

Figure 5-19: Leedom House .....5-10

Figure 5-20: Rose Tree Tavern .....5-10

Figure 5-21: Hunt Club .....5-10

Figure 5-22: Four paved parking areas .....5-10

Figure 5-23: "Horseshoe" steeple chase at the park .....5-11

Figure 5-24: Existing historical resources at Rose Tree County Park .....5-11

Figure 5-25: Rose Tree Tavern .....5-12

Figure 5-26: Springhouse .....5-12

Figure 5-27: Toilet Building .....5-13

Figure 5-28: Maintenance Building .....5-13

Figure 5-29: Amphitheater .....5-13

Figure 5-30: Leedom House .....5-13

Figure 5-31: Transit connections to Rose Tree County Park .....5-14

Figure 5-32: Existing vehicular access points to Rose Tree County Park .....5-15

Figure 5-33: Rose Tree County Park Concept Sketch .....5-18

Figure 6-1: Smedley County Park service area .....6-2

Figure 6-2: Existing vegetation at Smedley County Park .....6-5

Figure 6-3: Penza Tract forest .....6-6

Figure 6-4: National Wetland Inventory of Smedley County Park .....6-7

Figure 6-5: Existing park drainage pattern at Smedley County Park .....6-8

Figure 6-6: Existing retention / rain garden basin .....6-9

Figure 6-7: Crum Creek from pedestrian bridge .....6-9

Figure 6-8: Crum Creek in Smedley County Park .....6-9

Figure 6-9: Two baseball/softball fields .....6-10

Figure 6-10: Six pedestrian bridges over Crum Creek .....6-10

Figure 6-11: Mountain bike course .....6-10

Figure 6-12: Several hiking trails .....6-10

Figure 6-13: Two large open lawn areas .....6-10

Figure 6-14: Three paved parking areas .....6-10

Figure 6-15: Concession Stand .....6-10

Figure 6-16: Environmental Center .....6-10

Figure 6-17: Two tot-lot / playground areas .....6-11

Figure 6-18: Pavilion .....6-11

Figure 6-19: Two soccer fields .....6-11

**Table of Contents**

Figure 6-20: Paper Mill Road park access drive .....6-11

Figure 6-21: Lewis House .....6-11

Figure 6-22: Mill Remains .....6-11

Figure 6-23: Existing historical structures at Smedley County Park .....6-12

Figure 6-24: Environmental Center.....6-12

Figure 6-25: Pavilion .....6-13

Figure 6-26: Pedestrian access at Smedley County Park .....6-13

Figure 6-27: Transit connections to Smedley County Park .....6-14

Figure 6-28: Smedley County Park concept sketch.....6-17

Figure 6-29: Trolley Station Trail.....6-21

Figure 6-30: Smedley Yellow Trail.....6-21

Figure 6-31: Leiper-Smedley Trail .....6-21

Figure 7-1: Rendering of the Netherleigh Mansion .....7-1

Figure 7-2: Upland County Park Service Area .....7-2

Figure 7-3: Existing vegetation at Upland County Park .....7-5

Figure 7-4: National Wetlands Inventory of Upland County Park .....7-7

Figure 7-5: Existing park drainage at Upland County Park .....7-8

Figure 7-6: Two-way access drive .....7-9

Figure 7-7: Tot-Lot / Playground .....7-9

Figure 7-8: Spray area .....7-9

Figure 7-9: Three multi-use playing fields.....7-9

Figure 7-10: Three paved parking areas .....7-9

Figure 7-11: Access drive looking north.....7-9

Figure 7-12: Existing historical resources at Upland County Park .....7-10

Figure 7-13: Netherleigh Mansion (1900).....7-10

Figure 7-14: Access drive to Netherleigh Mansion .....7-10

Figure 7-15: Caleb Pusey House (date unknown) .....7-11

Figure 7-16: Caleb Pusey House.....7-11

Figure 7-17: Netherleigh Carriage House.....7-11

Figure 7-18: Redwood Playhouse .....7-12

Figure 7-19: Pavilion / Maintenance Building.....7-12

Figure 7-20: Existing pedestrian access points to Upland County Park.....7-13

Figure 7-21: Transit connections to Upland County Park .....7-14

Figure 7-22: Existing vehicular access at Upland County Park.....7-15

Figure 7-23: Upland County Park concept sketch.....7-18

Figure 7-24: Wooded area in the park.....7-27



Overview and Needs Analysis  
County Parks and Recreation

1



# Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation

---

## INTRODUCTION

Delaware County’s landscape has undergone enormous change over the last century. Open land, which once constituted much of the County, has now given way to development, particularly over the last fifty years. This was primarily due to social, economic, technological, and industrial shifts. What remains of this important resource, so crucial to our quality of life, is in short supply and under a great deal of development pressure. The outcome of public meetings and surveys undertaken as part of the open space planning effort reveal that open space and recreational facilities are a priority to citizens countywide. The public, as a whole, has expressed interest in recreational parks, trails, open spaces, and the re-greening of urban areas, all with a heightened sensitivity for natural resources.

The County is taking a proactive planning approach to identify current needs and opportunities, as well as to address the challenges facing the County during the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The first major step in this process is the completion and adoption of the County’s comprehensive plan, *Delaware County 2035*, which was adopted in the fall of 2013.

## DELAWARE COUNTY 2035

*Delaware County 2035*, a Comprehensive Policy Framework Plan, establishes an overall vision for the future of the County through the year 2035. It also sets policies for development, redevelopment, conservation, and economic initiatives. The Plan provides the County’s 49 municipalities with a framework for the strategic use of public resources to improve the quality of life for all its residents. In accordance with the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), the plan “establishes objectives of the municipality concerning its future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character, and timing of future developments.”

*Delaware County 2035* consists of a central Land Use Policy Framework Plan and a number of related and interconnected, but more detailed, component plans. Some of these component plans – addressing additional planning-related elements within the County – have already been developed, such as the County Bicycle Plan; more are under development. Each component plan will use the same framework and build off of the land use policies laid out in the Framework Plan. Individual municipal plans serve as a basis for these plans. This Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway plan will serve as the open space component plan of *Delaware County 2035*.

*Delaware County 2035* is organized by the key themes of Delaware County, including the Land, People, and Places. The Places are further ordered into Character Areas and Central Places that have similar community characteristics and qualities. For a more detailed summary of *Delaware County 2035*, see Volume I: Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan, Chapter 1: Introduction and Background.

## OPEN SPACE COMPONENT PLAN

As stated above, this document is a component plan of *Delaware County 2035* and, as such, follows the framework and builds off the land use policies established in the plan. The intent of the Open Space

## **Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

Component Plan is to serve as a guide and resource for countywide, multi-municipal, and municipal open space planning efforts. It examines the policies and trends identified in the *Delaware County 2035* Land Use Framework Plan with specific regard to open space, recreation, and greenway needs and opportunities specific to the County.

It is important to note that the plan implementation relative to planning and zoning remain the responsibility of municipal officials. The County's powers are limited to suggesting refinements to local actions that reflect the common issues, goals, and strategies shared by the municipalities.

The Open Space Component Plan is the result of widespread public participation, which included surveys, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, input from a task force, and several public meetings. The public participation efforts conducted, in conjunction with the framework established in *Delaware County 2035*, informed the goals and objectives established throughout this plan. The document also benefited from the work of design and planning consultants contracted by Delaware County to examine open space needs and opportunities, particularly regarding the County Parks system.

In order to integrate all of the information, analysis, and goals of this plan in a manageable arrangement, the Open Space Plan was organized into four separate volumes:

### **Volume I: Delaware County Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan**

Volume I provides a complete review of municipal, county, state, and federal open space within Delaware County. It includes an inventory of existing open spaces and natural resources, analysis of open space and recreational needs and opportunities, and an overview of implementation methods for municipalities and the County to utilize.

### **Volume II: Countywide Greenway Plan**

Volume II is Delaware County's first ever countywide greenway plan. It identifies a countywide Primary Trail Network which connects recreational and cultural hubs via trails, as well as conservation greenways along stream corridors.

### **Volume III: County Parks and Recreation (this document)**

Volume III specifically examines the Delaware County Parks and Recreation system, and includes long range site development drawings and accompanying narratives for several of the major County parks.

### **Volume IV: Public Participation**

Volume IV is the accumulation of public participation materials from the planning process used for the development of the plan. This includes public presentation documents, public comments, meeting agendas and minutes/comments, stakeholder interview lists, and online survey results.

## **Connection with Delaware County 2035**

As a component of *Delaware County 2035*, it is important to consider how the open space plan correlates with and reinforces the County land use strategy established by that framework plan. The intent of this plan is to build upon the objectives established in the comprehensive plan with specific regard to open space. As such, the *Delaware County 2035* objectives helped shape the specific goals, objectives, and actions of this Open Space Plan. For more details on the objectives and themes of

**Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

*Delaware County 2035*, see Volume I: Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan, Chapter 1: Introduction and Background.

**GOALS**

As part of the planning process, three overarching goals were identified to guide the open space planning efforts in the County. They are the result of public participation, consultation with the Open Space Task Force, and an analysis of existing open space needs and opportunities. They also take into account the objectives identified in *Delaware County 2035*, along with their respective policies and actions. The goals of the Open Space Plan are:

**Goal 1: Conserve**

Conserve the natural and cultural resources of the County

**Goal 2: Enhance**

Increase and enhance the environmental and/or recreational value of developed and undeveloped lands

**Goal 3: Connect**

Develop a greenway network that connects natural features and people to community and regional destinations.

These interrelated goals represent a three-pronged approach to addressing the County's open space needs and opportunities and long term sustainable quality of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The goals are indicative of widespread opportunities to continue to conserve, enhance, and connect various features of Delaware County's open space system. As such, they serve as the basis for both discussion and recommendations made in this plan.

**OVERVIEW**

This volume is a park and recreation plan for the County Park system. Its purpose is to provide guidance to County Council and the County Parks and Recreation Department regarding how to maximize and enhance the use and function of County-owned parks, open spaces, and recreational programs. Chapter 1 of this plan contains an inventory of the County-owned open spaces and other properties, evaluates the Parks system against national and regional standards, identifies unexplored opportunities, and makes recommendations for modifications and improvements that will result in a Parks system that serves the needs of County residents long into the future.

The remaining six chapters of the County Parks and Recreation Plan were prepared for the County by a consulting landscape architectural firm. They are organized to serve as long-range, self-contained mini-master plans for six of the County's major parks. These County Parks are:

- Clayton County Park, Concord Township
- Glen Providence County Park, Media Borough and Upper Providence Township
- Kent County Park, Upper Darby Township
- Rose Tree County Park, Upper Providence Township
- Smedley County Park, Nether Providence and Springfield Townships
- Upland County Park, Upland Borough

## **Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

Each chapter/park master plan contains graphics and narratives describing park history; existing conditions, including an inventory of facilities, natural resources, structures, and points of access; a park needs analysis; and a park site development plan (concept and final drawings) and associated recommendations. The recommendations identified are long-range vision plans intended to guide future park development. Consideration was given to existing conditions and degree of development, trail and greenway connections, park programming, and sustainable maintenance and operation. Each plan contains a future conditions site development drawing, associated recommendations for phasing, and cost estimates for implementation. As with Volumes I and II of this plan, Volume III was developed with extensive public input that included public meetings, public surveys, focus groups, key person interviews, and meetings with neighboring municipal staff and officials.

### **COUNTY LEVEL PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES**

County governments generally provide park and recreation services and facilities at a different scale than municipalities. County parks often supplement municipal park offerings by providing facilities and programs that are mostly passive recreation. They are places to exercise, enjoy a picnic, connect with nature, or enjoy a concert or festival. Each county has needs and resources that determine the types of facilities that are provided in the parks.

Delaware County recognized the need for a county level park system around the time the first County parks were acquired. In 1932, County government appointed the first Delaware County Park Board, with Samuel L. Smedley as its first President. The County Commissioners charged the Park Board with providing various public recreational services; specifically, they could “acquire land for park purposes, develop sites for active and passive recreational uses, schedule reservations, provide picnic areas by permit, issue overnight camping permits, provide free weekly public band concerts in parks, and provide for maintenance and police protection in all parks areas” (Delaware County Planning Department 1978). Today the Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department, with the assistance of the Park Board, oversees the provision of these services.

### **DELAWARE COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

The Delaware County Administrative Code, which was adopted in 1978, establishes the Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department and Park Board as two of the Departments and Boards that are under the direct supervision of County Council (Article XI, §6-15, as amended). Their functions, duties, and organization are laid out in the code. For more information, refer to Appendix III-C.

#### **Delaware County Department of Parks and Recreation**

According to the Administrative Code, the Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for planning, operating, and maintaining the parks and developing and conducting recreational programs in the parks.

#### **Delaware County Park Board**

According to the Administrative Code, The Delaware County Park Board advises County Council and the Parks and Recreation Department on park planning, acquisition, and development. The Board is comprised of 11 members representing the County. The Board meets regularly with the Parks and Recreation Department in order to keep up to date.

## DELAWARE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The 1978 Delaware County Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Study, recommended reorganizing the staffing structure of the Parks and Recreation Department to better provide County-level parks services. These recommendations were reflected in the Administrative Code (adopted the same year) and its subsequent amendments. Incremental changes to the staffing and organizational divisions have evolved in the 37 years since, due to budgetary restrictions and changing priorities.

### Current Staff Organization

Today, the Parks Department is operated by roughly 27 office and parks maintenance staff. The Parks Department’s central offices are located in the Leedom House in Rose Tree County Park. The base of operations for maintenance staff and the largest garage for the Department’s heavy equipment is also located in Rose Tree County Park.



### Park Board

The Park Board continues to be organized, and conducts its business, in the manner laid out in the Code. Vacancies are filled by appointment from County Council. At regular meetings, the Parks Director goes through an agenda of current issues and receives comments and advice from the membership.

### Parks Rules and Regulations

The County Parks Rules and Regulations are included in Appendix III-D. An abbreviated Rules and Regulations is posted in every major County Park. Full and abbreviated versions of the rules and regulations are examined periodically by the Park Board, Parks Director, and County Solicitor. Recent incidents, issues, or complaints are taken into account during these reviews and provide a basis for any revisions that are made.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

After its inception in the 1930’s, the park system of Delaware County grew in its initial stages as parkland was added through donations from benevolent individuals. Glen Providence County Park (1935) was the first County Park acquired in this fashion, followed by Kent and Shrigley County Parks (1938).

## Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation

The first parcel of what became Smedley County Park, a 10.5-acre property called the “Hemlocks,” was donated to the County in 1937. Smedley County Park developed in the area around the winding Crum Creek that historically supported the Lewis Paper Mill. Unfortunately the park lost 28 acres to the Commonwealth for construction of Interstate 476 in the 1980s and 90s. Additional expansion in 1939, 1941, 1967, 1976, and 1999 added to the park.

In 1957, the 74-acre Clayton County Park, a portion of a 112-acre family farm, was acquired as a gift from Mrs. Nelson Clayton. The 9-hole golf-course at Clayton County Park officially opened in 1963. Additional acquisitions from 1964 through 1975 increased the size of Clayton County Park to 171 acres.

The land for Rose Tree County Park and Upland County Park was purchased by the County in 1966 and 1968, respectively. State “Project 70” funds were used for their acquisition. Upland County Park, then known as “Camp Upland,” was purchased from the Salvation Army and continued to be run as a summer camp until 1987. Prior to the County’s purchase of Rose Tree County Park, the site had been an organized fox hunting club since 1872.

The 1980’s saw the acquisition of many other parks in the Darby Creek stream valley. In addition to existing Darby Creek stream valley parks (Kent and Shrigley County Parks), the County acquired streamside properties and easements. Pursuit of these lands was recommended in the County’s 1978 Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Study.

In 1999, the County acquired Catania County Park in Ridley Park Borough from the Boeing Company for a cost of one dollar. The site had previously been used as a recreational area for company employees.

Also in 1999, the County purchased the former Paper Mill Products site on Crum Creek in in Springfield and Nether Providence Townships, which expanded Smedley County Park by 24 acres. The new recreational amenities on the site, including ballfields, trails, a playground, and parking were opened in 2006.

In 2010, the County negotiated the acquisition of a 41-acre portion of the Mineral Hill site (plus a 6-acre conservation easement) along Baltimore Pike in the Ridley Creek stream valley in Middletown Township. The park consists of geologically important rock outcroppings and significant native habitat, including wetlands, forests, and the main stem of Ridley Creek. Funding for the purchase came from Natural Lands Trust, Middletown Township, and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The County is currently negotiating the purchase of Little Flower Manor in Darby Borough and Upper Darby Township on Darby Creek.

### INVENTORY OF COUNTY OWNED PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The County of Delaware owns approximately 1,080 acres of public parks and open space. This open space is split between two main categories: recreational open space and non-recreational open space. Of the County-owned recreational open spaces, 634 acres are in the 15 properties considered County Parks. Nine properties are categorized as Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Space and are within a 5-mile stretch of stream valley in Clifton Heights, Lansdowne, and Yeadon Boroughs, and Upper Darby Township. The category of non-recreational open space contains 10 undeveloped open space properties owned by the County; they include open space adjacent to County service buildings, a small unused

**Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

camp property, and other conservation areas and greenway open spaces outside of the Darby Creek Stream Valley Park area.

Below is an inventory of Delaware County-owned parks and open space. See Table 1-1 for a listing with acreages and numbers which correspond to locations on Map 1-1.

**RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE**

Many of the County Parks have considerable park amenities that have been developed over the years. These facilities range from picnic areas and pavilions to a 9-hole golf course at Clayton County Park. Some of the most prevalent amenities are formal and informal trails, which are used for exercise, nature walks, and connections to other destinations. Rose Tree County Park, perhaps the most recognized County Park, has an amphitheater, several memorials, significant passive open space, and a trail and path network. Smedley County Park in Springfield and Nether Providence Townships has several active recreation fields, including baseball and soccer. In Upper Darby, Kent County Park is located along the Darby Creek, has a dog park and a playground, and will be home to the County's first segment of the Darby Creek Trail.

Of the 15 County Parks, there are 5 that are over 30 acres in size (Clayton County Park, Rose Tree County Park, Smedley County Park, Upland County Park, and Glen Providence County Park). A sixth, Mineral Hill County Park, which was acquired in 2010, is a 43-acre parcel that has yet to be developed with passive recreational facilities.

**County Parks**

The 15 County Parks have been grouped into two subcategories for discussion: Major County Parks and Minor County Parks.

**Major County Parks**

The Major County Parks, numbered 1-7 below, are the most programmed due to their high level of usage and substantial facilities and amenities. They require the most attention from the County Parks and Recreation Department for regular maintenance. These 7 major county parks also include the 6 largest County Parks in terms of acreage. Kent County Park is smaller in size than some of the minor county parks, but requires more attention from the County Parks Department.

**1. Clayton County Park**

Clayton County Park is located in Concord Township between Garnet Mine Road, Conchester Highway (Rt. 322), Bethel Road, and Featherbed Lane. This 148-acre park features a 9-hole golf course as well as ballfields, picnic areas, woodlands, and trails. See Chapter 2 for additional description and site development drawing for Clayton County Park.

**2. Glen Providence County Park**

Glen Providence County Park is located between State Street in Media Borough and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Kirk Lane in Upper Providence. This 32-acre park is a passive recreation facility which features a rolling landscape with hiking trails, a mature forest, pond, and a great lawn with picnic areas and a scenic overlook. See Chapter 3 for additional description and site development drawing for Glen Providence County Park.

## Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation

Table 1-1: Delaware County-Owned Open Space

Name	Map #	Municipality	Acreage
<b>Recreational Open Space</b>			<b>Total: 666.3 (703.8)</b>
<b>County Parks</b>			<b>633.5 (671.0)</b>
Catania Park	20	Ridley Park Borough	14.9
Clayton County Park	3	Concord Township	148.3
Glen Providence County Park	8	Media Borough/Upper Providence Township	32.3
Incinerator Field	18	Marple Township	27.9
Kent County Park*	26	Upper Darby Township	5.2
Leedom Estates Park	22	Ridley Township	14.9
Martin Park	12	Upper Providence Township	22.4
Mineral Hill County Park	7	Middletown Township	43.2
Ridley Township Municipal Park	17	Ridley Township	8.6
Rose Tree County Park	9	Upper Providence Township	117.9
Pennock Woods*	32	Lansdowne Borough	7.2
Shrigley Park*	30	Lansdowne Borough	6.7
Smedley County Park**	13	Nether Providence/ Springfield Township	116.9
Upland County Park	11	Upland Borough	60.1
Willow Park	21	Ridley Township	7.0
Little Flower Manor***		Darby Borough/Upper Darby Township	***(37.5)
<b>Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Space</b>			<b>32.8</b>
Burkholder Tract	29	Lansdowne Borough	1.9
Castle Tool	33	Upper Darby Township	5.4
Darby Creek Parkland	27	Lansdowne Borough	2.2
Garrett Tract	24	Upper Darby Township	7.4
Holsten Tract	34	Yeadon Borough	4.8
Kempner Tract	31	Upper Darby Township	3.1
Kent Mills	25	Clifton Heights Borough	5.6
Kmart Streambank	28	Clifton Heights Borough	1.2
Woodgate Tract	23	Clifton Heights Borough	1.2
<b>Non-Recreational Open Space</b>			<b>Total: 416.5</b>
5th & Penn Vacant Streamside/PA Health Dept. Bldg.	15	Chester City	2.5
911 Center and Juvenile Detention Center	6	Middletown Township	66.9
Camp Sunshine	1	Thornbury	13.9
Chester City-County Vacant Land (Riverfront)	14	Chester City	3.1
Conservation Area - Marple	19	Marple Township	26.3
Conservation Area - Springfield	16	Springfield Township	2.2
Delaware County Prison	2	Concord/Thornbury Township	269.9
Pusey Lease Area	10	Chester Township	30.0
Stony Bank Road & Chester Creek	4	Thornbury Township	0.3
Unnamed Open Space	5	Chester Heights Borough	1.4
<b>County-Owned Open Space Total:</b>			<b>1082.8 (1120.3)</b>

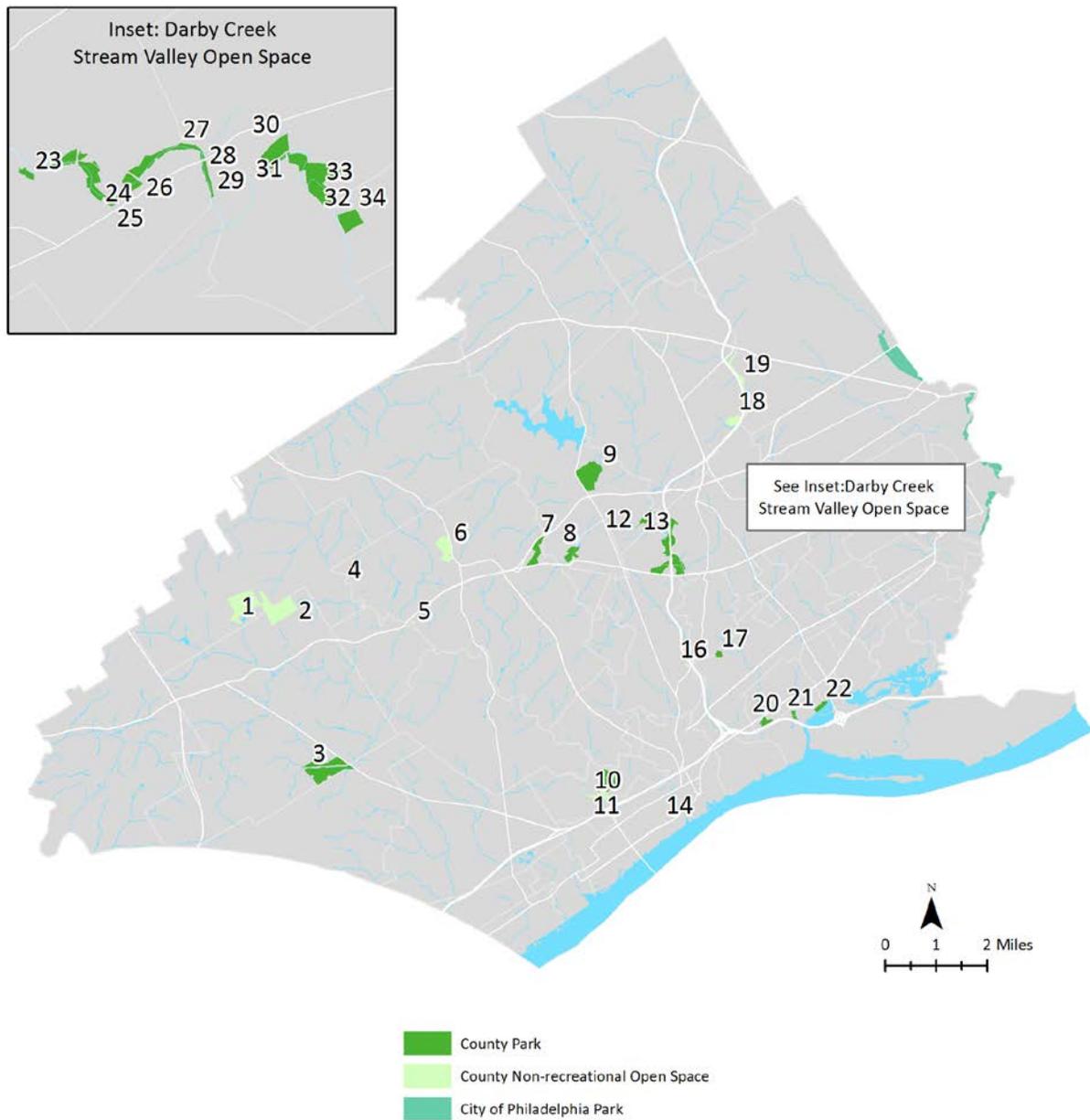
\*: Can also be considered Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Space

\*\* : Acreage does not include 30.3 acre tract leased from Swarthmore College

\*\*\*: Little Flower Manor property pending acquisition

Source: DCPD, 2015

Map 1-1: Delaware County Owned Open Space



Sources for all maps throughout this document can be found in the Appendix III-B: Map Data Sources

## Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation

### 3. Kent County Park

Kent County Park is located in the Drexel Hill section of Upper Darby Township on Bridge Street and either side of Marple Avenue (the Lindbergh Bridge), on the north side of Darby Creek. This 5-acre park contains a tot-lot/playground, a dog park and pavilion, a stream popular for fishing, woodlands, and an open lawn for recreational activities. See Chapter 4 for additional description and site development drawing for Kent County Park.

### 4. Rose Tree County Park

Rose Tree County Park is located at North Providence Road and Rose Tree Road in Upper Providence Township. This 118-acre park features an amphitheater used for events and concerts, a plaza (mall), community gardening plots, hiking trails, memorials, large rolling lawn areas, wooded open space, and three historic structures. See Chapter 5 for additional description and site development drawing for Rose Tree County Park.

### 5. Smedley County Park

Smedley County Park is located on the north side of Baltimore Pike at Paper Mill Road. The Park contains land on both sides of Crum Creek in Nether Providence and Springfield Townships. This 117-acre park contains an extensive trail system, large areas of woodlands, ballfields, soccer fields, tot-lot playgrounds, open lawns, and picnic areas. Two buildings, the Environmental Center and the historic Lewis House are home to the Penn State Cooperative Extension of Delaware County. A 30.3 acre property known as the Martin Tract in Springfield is owned by Swarthmore College and is leased to the County. It is treated as part of Smedley County Park but not included in County-owned park acreage totals. The lease is year-to-year. See Chapter 6 for additional description and site development drawing for Smedley County Park.

### 6. Upland County Park

Upland County Park is located on the south side of 6th Street and western end of 3rd Street in Upland Borough, along its western boundary with Chester Township. This 60-acre park features the Redwood Community Playhouse, ballfields, open playing fields for football or soccer, a large tot lot/playground, picnic areas, woodlands, and open lawn for passive activities. See Chapter 7 for additional description and site development drawing for Upland County Park.

### 7. Mineral Hill County Park

Mineral Hill County Park, an approximately 41-acre parcel, is located on the north side of Baltimore Pike, south of the Route 1-Media Bypass near Ridley Creek in Middletown Township. It was acquired in 2010 from Elwyn, Inc. The property also includes an additional six acres which were acquired by the County as part of a conservation easement.

When combined with adjacent municipal park properties (Memorial Park in Middletown Township and Louis Scott Park in Upper Providence Township), the Mineral Hill Area is a combined 123 acres. Master planning for this park was included as part of the *Mineral Hill Area Parks Master Site Plan* (2014) and is incorporated into this plan by reference. The plan makes recommendations concerning stewardship of natural resources, appropriate park uses, trail system layout, site amenities, and possible pedestrian connections beyond the site. The amenities could include, but would not be limited to, parking, signage, and recreational facilities.

See the Mineral Hill Area Parks Master Site Plan at the following website for more information:  
<http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/planning/environmental/MineralHillAreaMasterPlan.html>  
The specific recommendations for Mineral Hill County Park begin on page 53 of that document.

**Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation****Minor County Parks**

The eight Minor County Parks numbered 8 to 15 below, are generally of a smaller size and require a lower level of maintenance from County Parks Department. Minor County Parks also include 4 County-owned parks that are maintained by Ridley Township through written or unwritten agreements: Ridley Township Municipal Park, Leedom Estates Park, Willow County Park, and Catania County Park (leased to Ridley Park Borough). More information on these leases and maintenance agreements are included in the descriptions below.

**8. Catania County Park**

Catania County Park is located on Chester Pike in Ridley Park Borough. It is a popular baseball and soccer recreational facility, which also includes a picnic pavilion, batting cages and tennis and volleyball courts, and a maintenance building. There are currently plans to remove the tennis courts to make room for two new ball fields. Little Crum Creek runs along the edge of the park.

There is a lease agreement for Catania County Park between Delaware County, the Ridley Park Athletic Association, and Ridley United Soccer. As per the agreement, the County mows the grass at Catania County Park. The athletic clubs were able to fund and build new field lighting and develop the athletic fields.

Catania County Park is situated on land that was purchased from the Boeing Corporation. A tunnel, that has since been closed, once connected the park to Boeing's property under Interstate 95. Adjacent to Catania County Park to the east is the Borough's Hetzel Park. Near the park's entrance, a new Police Station for Ridley Park Borough was constructed at Chester Pike in 2008.

**9. Incinerator Field**

The County's 27.9 acre property at the Marple Transfer Station #3 on Sussex Avenue in Marple Township contains open space and a multipurpose athletic field alongside the County Solid Waste Authority's facilities. The field is set up for softball and football and is used by local adult and youth leagues. The property also contains wooded open space along the Darby Creek stream valley and Reed Road.

**10. Leedom Estates Park**

Leedom Estates Park is a Delaware County-owned property under a lease agreement with Ridley Township. Under the agreement, the Township has responsibility for all recreational facilities and maintenance at this park. The original lease agreement began on April 1, 1980, for five years, continuing year-to-year afterward. The facilities at Leedom Estates Park include a well-kept baseball field, the Leedom Community Center, and a Boy Scout cabin. The Leedom Community Center hosts Township recreation programs. The park is located on Darby Road at the Darby Creek waterfront, but dense vegetation separates the park from the water's edge.

The Ridley Township and Eddystone Borough Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan (2011) stated: "The Township should involve County staff as well as the residents in local communities surrounding these parks [Leedom Estates Park, Ridley Township Municipal Park, and Willow County Park] in planning for facilities development and activities. It would also be a good idea for Township and County staff to meet and discuss the current conditions and future of these parks at least once a year."

**11. Martin County Park**

Martin County Park is located on Farnum Road near Crum Creek Road in Upper Providence Township. It is essentially an undeveloped stream valley where nature lovers can hike and enjoy the dense woodland

## **Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

and the stream. Smaller wildlife is abundant throughout the area, and the narrow park is a great example of stream corridor protection. Local community members use an earthen trail in the park and enjoy its natural woodland setting. There is no defined parking area, but it is possible along some nearby roads. The stream in Martin County Park is an unnamed tributary to nearby Crum Creek.

### **12. Pennock Woods**

Pennock Woods abuts Darby Creek at the southwest corner of Lansdowne Borough at the end of Pennock Terrace. The wooded property, which contains the Lansdowne Bird Sanctuary, was purchased by Delaware County from a private owner in 1978, preventing an impending residential development on the site. This area of woods is ideal for neighbors and nature lovers to walk along its earthen pathways to and enjoy its wooded setting and scenic slopes. Because of its location along Darby Creek, Pennock Woods can also be considered part of the Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Space sub-category.

### **13. Ridley Township Municipal Park**

Ridley Township Municipal Park, located on Michigan Avenue in Ridley Township, is located adjacent to Grace Park Elementary and the Notre Dame de Nemours schools. The park contains a fitness trail with exercise stations, a pavilion, soccer fields, a parking lot, and a playground. Once called Pritchard Park, this Delaware County-owned property is under a lease agreement with Ridley Township. The agreement specifies that the Township has responsibility for all recreational facilities and maintenance at the park. The original lease agreement began on April 1, 1980 for five years, continuing year-to-year afterward. The lease was subsequently amended in 1994, for 20 years, with the County having the right to terminate the lease every five years.

### **14. Shrigley County Park**

Shrigley County Park is a public open space in Lansdowne Borough. It is comprised of an open meadow surrounded by woodlands and rocky outcroppings. There is also an old, short, stone wall with a fireplace and a picnic area. The park is located between a SEPTA regional rail line and Darby Creek along Scottdale Road (both sides of the creek), and is adjacent to a short strip of Lansdowne Borough-owned stream frontage, which extends approximately 250 feet to the east.

The property was originally an old quarry that was filled in to create a more natural setting. The site contains shade trees along with a spring and rocky area. The park contains almost cliff-like steep slopes and high elevations in some areas. There is no formal parking area for guests to park except alongside the road. Shrigley County Park can also be considered part of the Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Space sub-category due to its location.

### **15. Willow County Park**

Willow County Park is another County-owned property that is maintained by Ridley Township; however, it has no formal or written agreement associated with it. Situated along Stony Creek, between the Nassau Swim Club and the Ridley Marina, it is accessible by Lodomus Avenue or Taylor Drive off of Fairmount Road. It is bounded by the Interstate 95 right-of-way and the creek. Northern and southern portions of the park are separated by dense vegetation. The northern section contains a softball field and a dirt pathway through the woods leading to the creek. The southern section, accessible from the cul-de-sac on Lodomus Drive, is a mowed area with younger planted trees. Willow County Park adjoins a small parcel of Township-owned open space off of Willard Drive, which straddles Stony Creek.

## Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Space

Beginning in the 1980s, the County protected a significant amount of open space within the Darby Creek Stream Valley. Approximately 33 acres of greenway conservation areas have been preserved along Darby Creek, and much of the streamside is being reserved for a planned future trail along Darby Creek between Upper Darby Township and Darby Borough. This acreage is in addition to the 19 acres listed with County Parks above included in Kent County Park, Shrigley County Park, and Pennock Woods. These 3 parks could additionally be classified with Darby Creek Stream Valley Open Space due to their location and inclusion in the planned Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Trail, but because of their current use and maintenance as County parks, they are grouped with County Parks.

This grouping of County owned open space along Darby Creek in Upper Darby Township, and Clifton Heights, Lansdowne, and Yeadon Boroughs has been referred to collectively as Darby Creek Park. In 1987, The *Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Master Plan* outlined a plan for acquisition and development for this area as a greenway park with a multi-use trail connecting the various county and municipal-owned parks and open spaces. Some of these properties were already County-owned at the time that plan was written; others have been acquired since then.

The County and municipal parkland is intermingled with institutional and commercial land, and some publicly-owned easements on private land. Parkland varies in size and type, from nature parks, like Pennock Woods, to level fields that have been used for athletics, such as Kent County Park. The Master Plan was updated in 2010 and the corridor is now planned as a Countywide Primary Trail (#23 - Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Trail) in Volume II: Countywide Greenway Plan.

Most of these Darby Creek Stream Valley properties still retain the name of their former owners, such as the Kempner Tract. Most, but not all of them, touch the creek. The Woodgate Tract in Clifton Heights is near the stream, but another small private parcel separates it from the creek. Not all of the parcels will be needed for the multi-use trail (some are on the opposite side of the creek), but they are still valuable for use as a conservation greenway.

Another County-owned property, the Burkholder Tract, was leased to Lansdowne Borough in 2010 for a period of 25 years. Per the agreement, the Borough has developed, and will maintain, a section of the multi-use streamside trail called the Lansdowne Gateway Trail. This trail connects two Borough Parks, Gateway Park and Hoffman Park along Scottdale Road.

See Table 1-1 and Map 1-1 for Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Open Spaces owned by the County.

## NON-RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

The County's Non-Recreational Open Space contains undeveloped open space owned by the County, that is not currently or planned as a County Park and is not managed the County Parks Department. Delaware County owns significant amounts of open space adjacent to County service buildings. For example, the County Prison in Thornbury and Concord Townships, sits on over 414 acres of land, less than 144 acres of which is developed for the prison. The County property containing the former Camp Sunshine is adjacent to this open space. In Middletown Township, the 911 and Juvenile Detention Center sit on nearly 70 acres. Much of this land remains open lawn or wooded. While these spaces are not recreational or parkland, they serve environmental functions, such as stormwater control and wildlife habitat. They also help to maintain the rural characteristics in parts of Delaware County. Also

## **Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

categorized with Non-Recreational Open Space are a few small streamside or riverfront properties and conservation areas, which may have value for park or greenway purposes.

### **1. 5<sup>th</sup> and Penn Vacant Streamside/PA Health Dept. Building**

A linear open space along Chester Creek in Chester City contains a Pennsylvania Health Department Building at the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> and Penn Streets. The South end of the site abuts Route 291. The site has potential for use as part of a Chester Creek trail (See Volume II, Countywide Greenway Plan, Primary Trail #7).

### **2. 911 Center and Juvenile Detention Center**

The area around the County facilities on Route 352 near Yearsley Mills Road contain lawns, meadows, woodlands, and a baseball diamond.

### **3. Camp Sunshine**

The Camp Sunshine property is a small former camp located on Thornton Road in Thornbury Township. It has been closed for many years. The property is adjacent to the west of the undeveloped part of the Delaware County Prison land.

### **4. Chester City County Vacant Land (Riverfront)**

A small parcel of land that is located south of the Kerlin Street and Front Street intersection in Chester City and on the riverfront. The property has no road access of its own. It is located in an industrial zoning district and is bounded on the north by a property owned by Riverbridge Associates. Portions of the adjacent property which have road access are also vacant with lawn or meadow land cover.

### **5. Conservation Area – Marple**

The County's Marple Conservation Area is located on the west side of Darby Creek in Marple Township. It is a mostly linear parcel of open space, approximately one mile long, sandwiched between the Interstate 476 right of way and Darby Creek, from Lawrence Road and West Chester Pike, south to near Burmont Road. The conservation area functions as a stream buffer and conservation greenway, and was acquired during the development of I-476.

### **6. Conservation Area – Springfield**

The Springfield Conservation Area is in Springfield Township, between the Interstate 476 right-of-way and the Avondale Springs apartments open space, located on the other side of Crum Creek on Avondale Road in Nether Providence Township. It functions as a buffer of the creek and conservation greenway, and was acquired during the development of I-476.

### **7. Delaware County Prison**

The George W. Hill Correctional Facility is the County's prison, situated in Concord and Thornbury Townships. There are two sections of open space consisting of flat meadow and woods next to the facility, totaling approximately 270 acres. Two sections of open space on either side of Cheyney Road are outside the security fence (not part of the prison proper), and are to the east (146 acres) and north (124 acres) of the prison in Thornbury Township. Camp Sunshine is west adjacent to the northern portion. The County has had agreements with farmers who use parts of the open spaces for growing crops.

### **8. Pusey Lease Area**

The Pusey Lease Area is densely wooded open space south of Chester Creek in Chester Township. It is situated between the Landingford Plantation (owned by the Friends of the Caleb Pusey House) to the north and the Chester Creek Rail right-of-way along its southern boundary. The County's leaf

**Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

composting farm is on the other (south) side of this right-of-way. The Landingford Plantation property is narrow around Chester Creek, and it is the only land separating this site from Upland County Park. This site has potential usefulness in connecting the Chester Creek Trail to Upland County Park (See Volume II, Countywide Greenway Plan, Primary Trail #6). (It is unclear why the word “lease” is part of this unofficial name, as currently there is no lease on the property.)

**9. Stony Bank Road & Chester Creek**

The County owns an unnamed open space lot in Thornbury Township, which may have usefulness for a potential trail connection as it is situated on or adjacent to Chester Creek on a Countywide Primary Trail corridor. (See Volume II, Countywide Greenway Plan, Primary Trail #4).

**10. Unnamed Open Space**

The County owns a property on the inside of a bend in Chester Creek just south of Baltimore Pike, near the planned Chester Creek Trail (See Volume II, Countywide Greenway Plan, Primary Trail #6) and future Wawa regional rail station. There may be a use for it that could benefit one or both of those projects.

**NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE COUNTY PARKS SYSTEM**

In order to help identify needs, strengths, and opportunities associated with the Delaware County Parks and Recreation system, the consultant team included a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP), recognized by the National Recreation and Park Association. As a member of the Planning Team, the CPRP assisted with the public participation effort, helped to analyze the results, contributed objective observations, and assisted in the development of recommendations for the County Parks and Recreation system.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH CONCLUSIONS**

The CPRP, in consultation with all of the members of the Planning Team, came to the following conclusions relative to public input concerning the County Parks and Recreation system:

**What works well and strengths:**

- There is high positive public regard for Delaware County’s parks and recreation system.
- The County’s Parks and Recreation system received high ratings from the public on safety, location, cleanliness, and fun.
- The Summer Festival concert series is the hallmark of the Department’s programming.
- The County Parks and Recreation staff is “Excellent.”

**What core services should Delaware County provide:**

- Natural areas and facilities that are not found in municipalities, such as the Rose Tree County Park amphitheater, the Clayton County golf course, and other large scale “destination” facilities such as sports complexes or major playgrounds.
- Trails should be a main function of parks and recreation in Delaware County.
- More indoor recreation facilities.

**Opportunities to address countywide needs and issues through parks and recreation:**

- Important roles for the County Planning and Parks & Recreation Departments should be as the “Convener” of parks and recreation providers throughout the county in the public and private sectors and in providing technical assistance to parks and recreation providers about funding, grants and assistance in the grant process.

## Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation

- Use parks and recreation in tourism planning to strengthen Delaware County’s economy.

### Potential Improvements:

- Improved parks signage.
- Development of a sports complex.
- Development of a countywide trail network.
- Technical assistance to municipalities desiring to develop their own trail networks to connect to the county and regional trail system.
- Working more with municipalities as a group could help maximize parks and recreation resources countywide.
- Increase safe access to and from County Parks.
- Use the County Parks and Recreation system as a tourism tool.

### Challenges:

- Limited financial resources.
- Increasing public awareness about Delaware County’s role in providing a county parks and recreation system.
- Available and affordable land in the County for open space.

### Ways the County can address issues responsibly:

- Increase volunteerism in the parks.
- Create, sustain and enhance partnerships.
- Adopt the roles of convener and provider of technical assistance.
- Continue to explore new funding opportunities.
- Increase public involvement in a way that can be managed by parks and recreation successfully.
- Review staff requirements and organization for optimal operation and service delivery.

## MAIN FINDINGS

The following is a summary of key findings of the CPRP regarding the County Parks and Recreation system:

### Strengths

Having the support of the public for a parks and recreation system is invaluable in moving forward with improvements to the system and its support and operation. Building upon success generates more success. The following strengths will help to take the system from good to great:

- The parks are well located to serve citizens countywide.
- The parks have “good bones” with a mix of natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources.
- Park programs, such as the Summer Concert Series and the Festival of Lights, reach thousands of people, enhancing the image of Delaware County government. These events serve as ambassadors for excellent public service.
- Partnership potential is a relatively untapped resource. A variety of organizations, municipalities, and citizens are willing to help support the county parks and recreation system indicating that the potential for more partnerships exists.
- The parks appear to be safe, clean, and attractive overall. This finding is supported by public input into development of the plan.

**Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

- Interdepartmental collaboration, such as between the Planning and Parks and Recreation Departments, works really well and helps to advance parks and recreation initiatives. Particularly noteworthy is the Planning Department's focus on open space, natural resource conservation, and securing grants to improve the County Parks.

**Size and Nature of the County's Parks**

The County should consider the size and nature of its parks as compared to other typical county parks in the region and the state.

County parks generally provide diverse opportunities for passive and active recreation uses to a wide range of simultaneous users. Generally, county parks provide complexes of intensively developed activity areas. These parks offer diverse experiences and activities that typically involve an individual or group for a time period of up to a day and which may attract large numbers of spectators or participants. Typical facilities such as sports complexes, indoor gymnasiums, field houses and waterfronts are found in county parks. Facilities in these parks are larger in scale than those found in municipal parks. County parks may combine larger complexes of developed areas with extensive natural areas. Many county parks in Pennsylvania are several hundred to several thousand acres.

In contrast, municipalities have neighborhood parks under 25 acres and community parks from 25 to more than 100 acres. Delaware County's 15 parks range in size from 5.2 to 148 acres, more similar in scale to municipal parks. Only three parks (Clayton, Rose Tree, and Smedley) have more than 100 acres. Nine parks are smaller than 25 acres. The sizes of the parks are due, in part, to the geographical size of the County, when and how the parks were originally acquired, and available land for acquisition today.

It is, however, important to note that the County continues to seek expansion and improvements to its system, as evidenced by the purchase of the 46.2 acre Mineral Hill property in 2010, the pending acquisition of the roughly 40-acre Little Flower Manor property in Darby Borough, and ongoing efforts to develop the Darby Creek Stream Valley Park Trail.

The County does an excellent job of maximizing its open space by providing a diverse range of facilities and programs in the parks, with each having a unique feature, such as a golf course, dog parks, or amphitheater.

**Visitation**

In general, the parks are very well used. The level of maintenance in County parks is very good, considering the general level of use they receive. The location of the parks and the nature of their facilities, activities, and attendance vary greatly. For example, the Summer Festival in Rose Tree County Park attracts thousands of people each year to over 40 concerts. One of the County's largest parks, Upland County Park, receives intense use of its baseball and football fields. Other areas of the park appear to be underutilized; as such, this document address opportunities to further develop the park and market its amenities to a broader audience.

Depending on the age and amenities at each facility, there are opportunities to make improvements and add additional facilities that expand its usage/opportunities. Recommendations for long-range improvements are highlighted in the individual park site development drawings that follow this section of the Volume III.

## Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation

### Aesthetics

Parks that were planned in earlier days, such as Glen Providence County Park, with its wonderful WPA stonework, have charm and character. Rose Tree County Park has historic buildings, a very interesting horse racing past, and a rich cultural history. Opportunities exist to capitalize on these elements to enhance the park facilities and exhibit the unique character of each park. All of the parks would benefit from specific design direction that addresses and reveals the history of these landscapes in conjunction with the needs of future park visitors. There are a number of opportunities for the Parks & Recreation Department to continue to partner with other County departments (i.e., the Planning Department and its environmental and historic preservation staff). It can also partner with other area organizations (i.e., watershed groups, Natural Lands Trust, and friends of groups) to maintain the parks and facilities and seek the advice of professional park planning and design experts to further these goals.

Although the County has a variety of park types, the system as a whole could benefit from additional facilities and modernization. Such improvements are proposed in each of the following site development drawings. The proposed improvements will both enhance the park's function and help to further capture the interest of potential users and visitors.

### Sports Facilities

Ballfields are the most heavily used facilities in the parks. There are opportunities to improve and add additional facilities where appropriate.

### Special Use Facilities

The amphitheater in Rose Tree County Park and the golf course in Clayton County Park are examples of two special use facilities that are evocative of traditional county park type facilities. Other county-scale facilities that could be considered for Delaware County's parks include a destination playground, a sports complex for softball and rectangular field sports, an aquatics center, an indoor recreation center possibly as an expansion of the Redwood Community Playhouse, outdoor ice skating, archery, geo-caching, orienteering, fishing, and an outdoor gym/fitness area. A sports complex for softball emerged as a significant concept based upon input from the public about the shortage of ballfields in tandem with discussions with the Visitors Bureau citing their desire for such a facility for sports tourism, and important economic engine for Delaware County.

### "Pop-Up" Uses

Where facilities are not provided, citizens find a way to undertake recreational activities on their own, and facilities "pop-up" in parks such as mountain biking in Smedley County Park. Mountain biking appears to have a constituency in place that could be solicited to support the development of appropriate facilities. In other areas, IMBA (International Mountain Bicycling Association) has helped to plan, develop, secure funding and manage mountain bicycling areas in parks.

### Access

Access to parks is limited for walkers and cyclists, with most access required by car. Some crossings in busy areas are hazardous. The site development drawings in this plan suggest pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit connections to County Parks.

## **Identity and Information**

There appears to be a general lack of awareness that Delaware County government operates this fine county park system. Increasing public recognition that the County government operates parks and recreation will enhance the overall image of Delaware County services among those who live, work, visit and play here.

Entrances to the parks and the recreation centers appear to be poorly identified, and little if any information about the park programs and facilities is posted. The County Parks system would benefit greatly from a system-wide re-design that would include entrance, directional, regulatory, informational, and interpretive signage. A uniform signage system would unify the park system, make the system appear larger, and convey just how special the Delaware County park system is. The sign for Rose tree Tavern could serve as an inspiration in planning a new signage system.

Promotions and marketing will result in the most gains in creating visitation, participation, and stewardship in County parks. Delaware County maintains a website for parks and recreation; the website should be redesigned and expanded for a full range of informational and promotional work to foster more public awareness about parks and recreation in the County. The Summer Festival promotional video is a fine example of future directions for the Department on the website.

## **KEY OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Establish County Roles in Parks and Recreation**

In addition to operating the County parks and recreation system, Delaware County can help to foster a true countywide system of parks and recreation with many collaborators in municipalities and organizations in the public, non-profit, and private sectors. Since municipal parks and recreation systems and conservation organization and citizens based groups are an integral part of Delaware County's parks and recreation network, the potential for partnerships in parks and recreation exists. The County should consider the following roles for Delaware County Planning and Parks and Recreation Departments:

- Act as a convener and facilitator of partners in parks and recreation endeavors including trail planning, multi-municipal planning, and other opportunities that will emerge.
- Provide technical assistance to municipalities, especially on planning, funding opportunities, and grants.
- Continue to work with the Delaware County Planning Department on the implementation of the recommendations of the Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan.
- Consider a larger role for the County related to trails on a case-by-case basis. Create a "Trail Team" with representatives of county departments including Planning, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and Solicitor to facilitate trail planning and determine the role of the County on specific trails under consideration.

### **Make Improvements to the County Parks System to Foster Its Prominence**

Improvements to the Delaware County parks and recreation system should be oriented to larger scale facilities and services rather than single facilities spread out here and there. This would include the following measures:

- Work with qualified park planning and design professionals for park design, improvements, and construction on all park capital improvement projects.

**Chapter 1: Overview and Needs Analysis of County Parks and Recreation**

- Exploring opportunities to create partnerships to operate small county parks of fewer than 25 acres. This could help municipalities to mitigate their shortage of parkland.
- Develop a capital improvement program to begin implementation of the county park master plans included in the Open Space, Recreation, and Greenways Plan. Strive to undertake improvements with high public visibility, support, and economic development potential first.
- Explore the concept of developing a county sports complex on one of the county owned opportunities suitable for such as development.
- Develop a policy to make the park system more sustainable and environmentally friendly including a green infrastructure, turf management, meadows, stormwater management, maintenance, vehicles, and so on.
- Build destination playgrounds and outdoor fitness facilities rather than small play lots.
- Develop an interdepartmental review process to evaluate parcels up for tax sales for recreational use before re-selling them.
- Continue planning a countywide system of trails in partnership with municipalities and community-based organizations.

**Table 1-2: Action Plan**

OBJECTIVE	Maintain a County park system that contains county-scale parks, and offers facilities, services, and programs that attract countywide interest and participation.	
<b>CP 1</b>	<b>Delaware County will...</b>	
ACTION	<i>Delaware County will...</i>	
CP 1.1	Examine the organizational structure and mission statement of the County Parks and Recreation Department.	▲
CP 1.2	Periodically examine the full and abbreviated versions of the County Park Rules and Regulations, and revise if needed and necessary.	●
CP 1.3	Continually examine all County-owned non-recreational open space for its potential to satisfy open space and recreational needs.	●
CP 1.4	Continue to explore funding opportunities to operate, maintain, and enhance programs and facilities in its parks.	●
CP 1.5	Explore opportunities to create partnerships with municipalities to operate small County parkland of less than 25 acres.	▲
CP 1.6	Develop a policy to help make and keep the County park system more sustainable and environmentally friendly by employing green infrastructure methods such as meadows, modern stormwater management, and turfgrass management.	▲
CP 1.7	Improve Parks Department communications through a redesigned and expanded Parks website and uniform park signage.	▲
CP 1.8	Add the word “County” to the official name of each park in the Delaware County system.	▲
CP 1.9	Expand County Parks’ recreation and special events programming to additional locations.	◆
CP 1.10	Explore partnering with other citizens groups, organizations and municipalities to increase feasibility of expanding programs.	▲
CP 1.11	Ensure that all proposed facilities in County parks are designed and/or reviewed by persons experienced in landscape architecture.	●
CP 1.12	Implement the site development drawings and master plans in Volume III.	●

▲ : Short Range (1-5 Years)    ◆ : Medium Range (5-10 Years)    + : Long Range (10+ Years)    ● : Ongoing

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

It is important to consider this Volume III: County Parks and Recreation Plan in the context of the entire Delaware County Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan. Volume III specifically addresses the major parks within the County Park System, providing a detailed profile of each within the remaining Chapters 2 through 7. These chapters are comprised of narratives, site development drawings, and recommendations for Clayton County Park, Glen Providence County Park, Kent County Park, Rose Tree County Park, Smedley County Park, and Upland County Park.

Recent and forthcoming master site plans for other County Parks such as the Mineral Hill County Park (the Mineral Hill Area Parks Master Plan, 2014) and the Little Flower Manor property (pending acquisition) are incorporated by reference as part of Volume III, and as elements of the County Comprehensive Plan.

In conjunction with Volumes I and II of the Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan, these documents outline a comprehensive approach to open space and recreation needs and opportunities.

