



2026

PARKS AND
RECREATION
MASTER PLAN
SHALER TOWNSHIP

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the steering committee members, stakeholders, community members, staff, and officials who invested their time and expertise in the creation of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the future of Shaler Township.

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AWSHAW FIELD

NO DIVING
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01

Introduction



01

Introduction

PLAN PURPOSE

This Plan is Shaler Township's first Parks and Recreation Master Plan: a long-term roadmap to guide investment in the community's parks, recreation facilities, trails, and programs. The goal of the Plan is to assess existing assets and services, identify community priorities, and develop clear, actionable strategies that meet the evolving needs of current and future residents.

The Plan will provide a foundation for decision-making by:

- Evaluating the condition and performance of existing parks and facilities;
- Understanding the recreation needs and preferences of Township residents;
- Exploring opportunities to enhance accessibility and diversity in the park system;
- Defining short- and long-term goals for future improvements; and
- Establishing a clear strategy for implementation and funding.

A key priority of this Plan is to explore the feasibility and logistics of developing a new community recreation center. As Shaler Township considers expanding its recreation offerings, a centrally located, multi-use indoor facility could provide opportunities for year-round programming, events, fitness, and accessibility for all ages.

Ultimately, this Plan is a tool to help Shaler Township make informed, community-driven decisions that reflect local values and deliver high-quality recreation experiences for all.



PLANNING PROCESS

Work began in October 2024 and the Plan was finalized in December 2025. The planning process unfolded over six key phases, each building upon the last to ensure a thoughtful, community-centered, and actionable outcome.



PHASE 1: PROJECT LAUNCH

The project kicked off with a shared understanding of objectives, roles, and outcomes. This foundational phase set the stage for collaboration among the Township, consultant team, and Study Committee.



PHASE 5: TEST AND REFINE

Preliminary recommendations were tested with community members and key stakeholders. Feedback gathered during this phase helped refine priorities and shape a more responsive and implementable plan.



PHASE 2: DISCOVER

An in-depth inventory and analysis of Shaler Township’s existing parks, facilities, and operations provided the technical foundation for the Plan. This phase also included a needs assessment, drawing on demographic trends, national recreation data, and an evaluation of system performance.



PHASE 6: FINALIZE AND ADOPT

The final plan includes an implementation strategy that identifies funding sources, partnerships, and action items for the next decade.



PHASE 3: ENGAGE

Robust community engagement efforts took place throughout the process — including a public forum, open house, small group discussions, and online outreach. Conversations with residents, stakeholders, and the Study Committee helped shape priorities and aspirations.



PHASE 4: CREATE

Building on insights from earlier phases, the consultant team developed a plan framework, including goals, objectives, and recommendations to guide the future of parks and recreation in Shaler Township.

Who Was Involved

SHALER TOWNSHIP

Township staff and elected officials led the planning effort by providing data, local insight, and oversight throughout the process. Their involvement helped guide the engagement approach and shape plan recommendations.

LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY

Residents, local stakeholders, and officials contributed through interviews, meetings, and public engagement. Their input provided valuable perspective on park use, desired improvements, and future programming needs.

CONSULTANT TEAM

Architecture, engineering and planning firm OHM Advisors partnered with PROS Consulting to develop the Plan for the Township. It provides recommendations based upon publicly-driven input as obtained and analyzed throughout early 2025.

BUILDING THE PLAN

Plan Inputs

The process of building the Plan included the primary inputs described below. The key findings from each of these inputs helped create the foundation for development of the Plan recommendations.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS & INVENTORY

Understanding the past and the present of the Township's park system is the key to planning for the future. This input included a review and consideration of previous Township park assessments, and was critical to understanding how the park system is performing, the level of service it is providing, and how it meets the community profile.

PARK, FACILITY AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

The consultant team site-assessed all 12 parks as well as their programming offerings and facility infrastructure. The current characteristics of each played key roles in informing the Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At the heart of the planning process was community input from a robust engagement process. The public's attitudes and aspirations provided the intuitive local knowledge that shaped the Plan. The community provided input through a variety of methods including online survey, small group and individual interviews, and community workshops.

BENCHMARKING & BEST PRACTICES

Looking outside the Township park system to those in other communities offered a unique perspective and comparison for how to shape the Plan. This input provided a comparison to evaluate and shape Shaler Township's system and offerings, as well as inspiration for potential programs and facilities that have been successful in other communities.

Plan Outcomes

After analyzing all of the foundational inputs, the consultant team synthesized the information and created the following Plan outcomes.

PARK IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The consultant team built on the park, facility, and program assessments and the community input to develop strategies that will guide physical improvements to the park system. Each park receives a site plan with its recommendations to show how the strategies will be applied on the ground.

PROGRAMMING AND OPERATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

The consultant team developed strategies and actions to strengthen Shaler Township's parks and recreation operations based on program assessments, staff input, and community feedback. It addresses key needs such as modern administrative systems, structured programming frameworks, and funding resources. The chapter is organized by recommendations for operations, programming, cost recovery, staff development, and communications.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Plan includes a detailed strategic action plan recommending priority tasks for the park system which will effectively use system resources and provide the greatest community benefit.



HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION
Provides a high-level overview of the planning process and how to use the document. It summarizes the key recommendations, serving as a quick reference for understanding the Plan's vision, priorities, and actionable steps to achieve Shaler Township's long-term goals.

2 COMMUNITY PROFILE
Gives an overview of Shaler Township's current demographics, national recreation trends, and local market performance indicators. It highlights key strengths and opportunities that serve as a foundation for the Plan.

3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Throughout the planning process, key stakeholders and the general public were engaged to gain insight into community priorities and aspirations for the parks system. Feedback from the public open house, focus groups, and the online survey helped shape a shared vision and ensure the Plan reflects the community's needs.

4 PARKS, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS ASSESSMENT
Evaluates the current condition, accessibility, and amenities offered at each of Shaler Township's parks and recreation facilities. This section also identifies gaps in level of service.

5 PLAN FRAMEWORK
Establishes the mission, vision, guiding principles, goals, and objectives for the Shaler Township park system.

6 PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS
Translates findings from the park assessments and community engagement into site-specific concepts for priority parks. These are preliminary ideas intended to illustrate potential improvements and guide future design, investment, and programming decisions.

7 PROGRAMMING AND OPERATIONS
Assesses Shaler Township's current parks and recreation operations, including staffing, budgeting, and maintenance practices.

8 RECREATION CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY
Explores the opportunities and considerations for developing a new recreation center at Kiwanis Park. It outlines desired amenities and key programming, providing a foundation for future exploration and decision-making.

9 IMPLEMENTATION
Prioritizes the Plan's recommendations and outlines a phased roadmap for implementation. This section includes estimated costs, potential funding sources, responsible parties, and strategies for tracking progress over time.

10 APPENDIX
Contains park assessment matrix and other reports completed to understand the existing conditions and trends within Shaler Township.

PLAN FRAMEWORK

Public input, technical analysis, and workshops with Township staff provide the basis for the guiding principles and priority actions that contribute to achieving the vision and mission.

Parks Vision Statement





PRIORITY ACTIONS

The actions below are pulled from the implementation plan as the highest priority. These actions will deliver the highest level of impact in achieving the goals of the plan.

1 Conduct a statistically valid survey on recreation center funding.

Use findings from the feasibility study to develop the survey and determine public support for construction and ongoing operations.

2 Complete a detailed facilities assessment for the Kiwanis Park Pool.

Use results to understand remaining life-cycle, safety needs, and long-term capital investment requirements.

3 Establish dedicated Parks & Recreation leadership and implement key policies.

Develop and adopt key policies that will improve service delivery and expand capacity to enable additional parks and recreation system opportunities.

4 Deliver priority maintenance, safety, and aesthetic improvements across early-action parks.

Implement restroom locks and building repairs at Richter and Denny; apply binder to the Eagle Canyon Trail; upgrade signage at Denny and Vienna Woods; and enhance the entrance and street presence at Duss Park.

5 Deliver ADA and site furnishings improvements across at least three parks.

Focus on visible, foundational upgrades that build momentum and support system-wide accessibility.

6 Advance Phase 1 planning and improvements for Kiwanis Park.

Prioritize circulation and safety upgrades and integrate the Jeffery School site while developing a funding and phasing strategy. Incorporate findings from statistically valid survey and pool facilities assessment.

7 Support programming through enhancing and expanding outdoor covered spaces.

Construct the small pavilion at Duss Park and add power to Denny Park pavilion.

8 Develop consistent branding and communication for the department.

Create unified visual identity and messaging to highlight investments, improve visibility, and support public engagement.



02

Community Profile



02

Community Profile

OVERVIEW

This section presents key data and metrics relevant to Shaler Township, aligning them with the fundamental components of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. It includes an analysis of existing conditions and current market trends, providing a comprehensive snapshot of the community today. These metrics, along with public input gathered in the next phase of the process, will form the foundation of the Master Plan. This approach ensures that the plan's vision is both data-driven and informed by community insights.

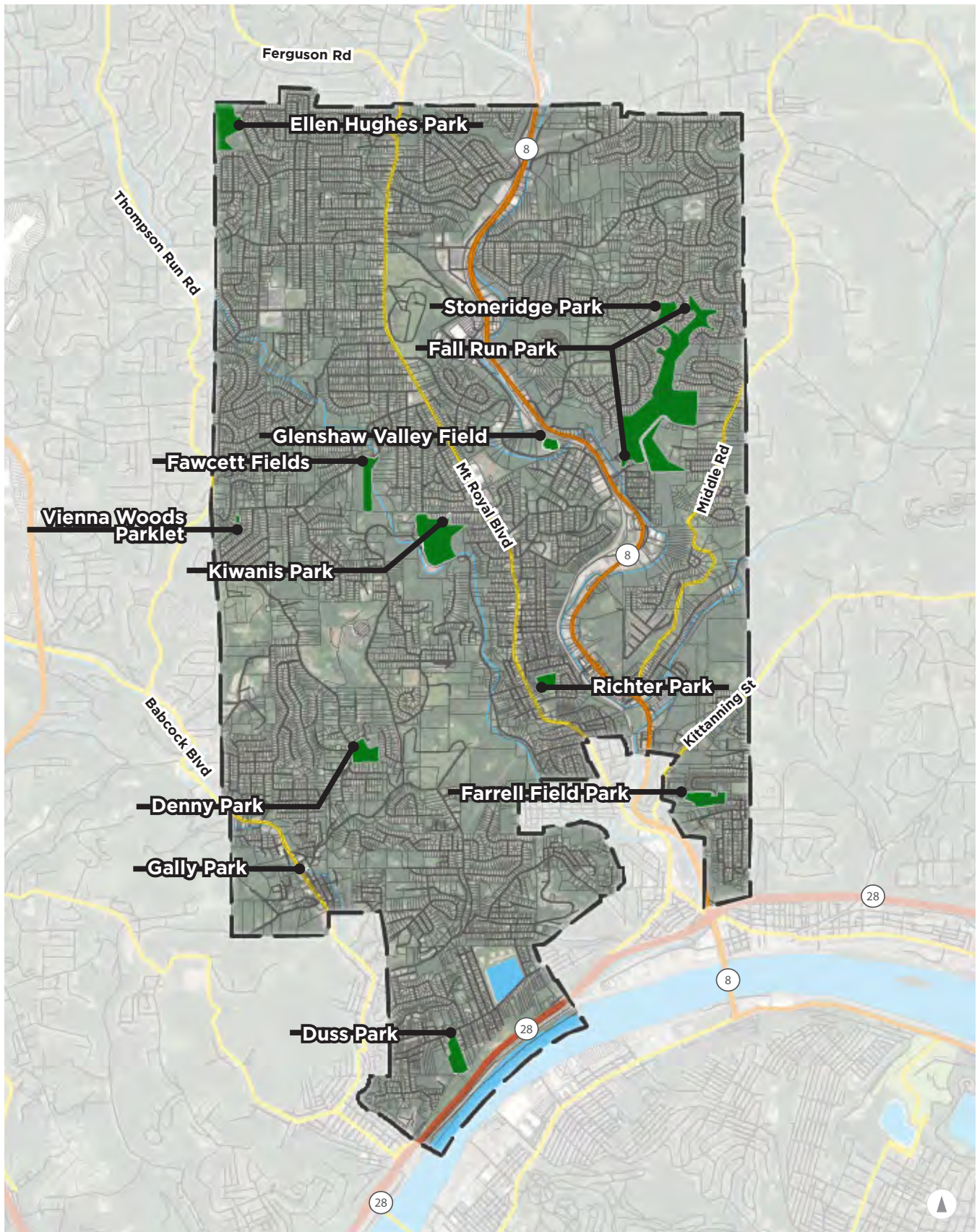
Shaler Township is an 11-square-mile suburban community located northeast of Pittsburgh in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. As a township of the first class, Shaler Township is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners, with each member representing one of the Township's wards. The Township is home to residential neighborhoods, community parks, and natural assets that contribute to its quality of life. Its location just outside of Pittsburgh offers residents convenient access to urban amenities while retaining a sense of small-town charm.



Fawcett Fields is one of Shaler's twelve parks, offering athletic facilities in a natural setting. Image Source:



FIGURE 1: Park Locator Map



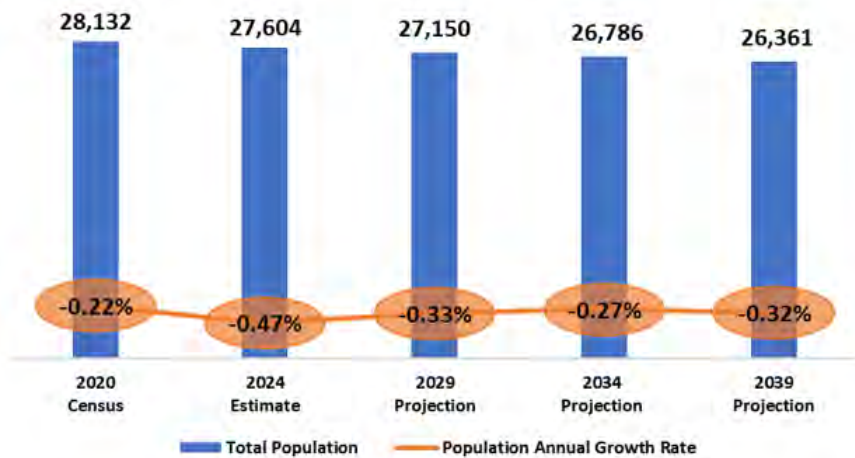
TOWNSHIP DEMOGRAPHICS

Shaler Township’s current demographics and trends can shed light on current and future park and recreation needs and guide investment in parks, recreation facilities, and programming.

Population

With a 2024 population estimate of 27,604, Shaler Township is experiencing a slow but steady population decline, which is projected to continue over the next 15 years. The population decreased from 28,132 in 2020 and is expected to decline slightly to 26,361 by 2039. While the population of Shaler Township is decreasing, so is the population of Allegheny County. However, the population of the County is decreasing at a significantly slower rate (-0.06%) than the Township (-0.47%) and is expected to continue on that path.

FIGURE 2: Shaler Township’s Total Population and Annual Growth Rate



Age Groups

The Township’s largest age group is adults aged 35–54, making up 25% of the population. There is a notable increase in residents aged 65–74 projected through 2039, indicating an aging population that may require expanded active adult amenities and wellness programming. Shaler has a larger proportion of the older age segments compared to the County and State, with individuals aged 55-74 making up 28.2% of Shaler’s population compared to 24.3% in the County and 24.7% in the State, while individuals aged 75+ make up 10.9% in the Township and just 9.1% and 9.0% in the County and State, respectively. Inversely, the County and State have a larger population proportion of individuals aged 0-19 and 20-34 than Shaler.

FIGURE 3: Shaler Township’s Population by Age Segments

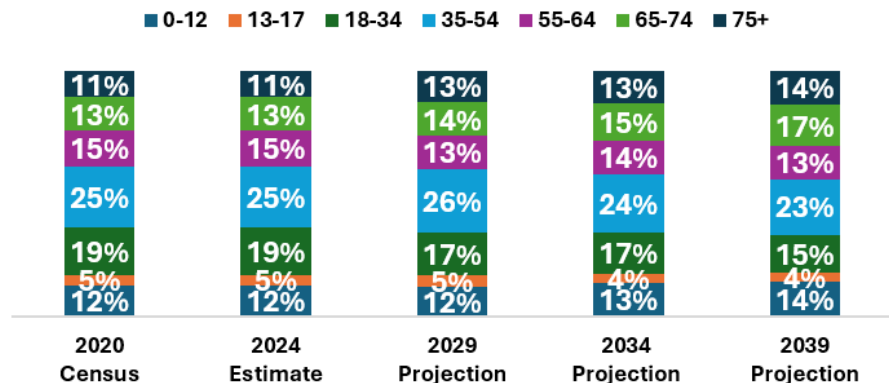


TABLE 1: Shaler Township’s Local and National Demographics Comparison

2024 Demographic Comparison		Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	U.S.A.
Age Segment Distribution	Ages 0-19	18.7%	20.5%	22.4%	23.7%
	Ages 20-34	17.5%	21.7%	19.5%	20.3%
	Ages 35-54	24.9%	24.4%	24.3%	25.4%
	Ages 55-74	28.2%	24.3%	24.7%	22.7%
	Ages 75+	10.9%	9.1%	9.0%	7.7%



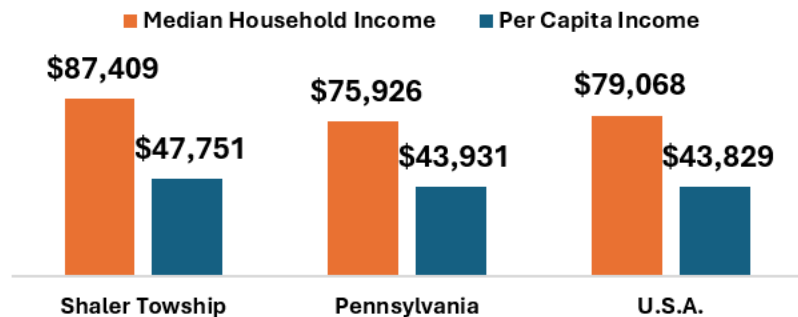
TABLE 2: Shaler Township’s Local Income Comparison

Income

The median household income is \$87,409, which is above the state and county averages. The per capita income is \$47,751. Both figures are expected to increase through 2039, suggesting a solid economic base and the potential for residents to support fee-based recreation programs and facilities. In the 2024 income comparison of neighboring boroughs and townships, Shaler Township positions itself in the middle-income range, with its median household income and per capita income.

Income Comparison		
Location	2024 Median Household Income	2024 Per Capita Income
O'Hara township, PA	\$117,766	\$69,423
Hampton township, PA	\$119,557	\$62,070
Indiana township, PA	\$125,229	\$56,750
Ross township, PA	\$88,239	\$52,290
Shaler township, PA	\$87,409	\$47,751
Reserve township, PA	\$75,954	\$40,554
Millvale borough, PA	\$55,686	\$36,596
Sharpsburg borough, PA	\$47,923	\$36,393
Etna borough, PA	\$51,752	\$32,352

FIGURE 4: Shaler Township’s Regional and National Income Comparison



Demographics Key Findings

While demographic data should not be the sole basis for recreation planning, it provides important context for understanding how parks and recreation can support broader community livability and appeal. Several implications emerge for Shaler Township:

- The Township’s aging population trend points to the need for age-friendly park amenities, fitness programming for older adults, and walkable park access.
- With a median household income above county and state averages and projections showing continued economic growth, Shaler Township residents may have the capacity to support enhanced recreation programming.
- The Township experienced a decrease in population from 2020 to 2024, from 28,132 people to 27,604. This population trend should be considered and accounted for when planning new amenities and program offerings for the community, as well as the maintenance, upkeep, and accessibility of current offerings.

RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

To support data-driven recommendations, this Plan includes a recreation trends analysis at both the national and local levels. Understanding how residents engage with recreation, and how those preferences are shifting, ensures the Township can meet current and future demands for parks, facilities, and programs.

National Trends

The Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) provide insights into the following national trends:

- » Outdoor activities, especially walking, hiking, and trail use, continue to rise in popularity post-pandemic.
- » Group, full-body workout activities such as tai chi, barre and Pilates saw the biggest increase in participation this past year.
- » Pickleball is now the fastest growing sport in the US, which is reflected in its rising popularity in Shaler Township and the installation of new courts at Kiwanis Park.

These trends support a need for both flexible indoor space and upgraded outdoor infrastructure that can accommodate a range of uses, from casual exercise to structured programs.



The SFIA 2024 Topline Participation Report features data from the largest single source sports, fitness, and leisure activity participation study in the country, tracking 124 sports, recreation, and fitness activities.

Local Sport and Leisure Market Potential

The Market Potential Index (MPI) data, provided by ESRI, provides insight into the likelihood that Shaler Township residents will participate in specific recreational activities compared to the national average. An MPI score above 100 indicates above-average participation potential — a useful metric when evaluating new programs, amenities, or facility investments. High scores suggest strong community interest and can help the Township anticipate usage and design offerings that align with local demand. The MPI data for Shaler Township shows that residents are more likely than the national average to participate in:

- » **General Sports:** Golf, pickleball, and softball
- » **Fitness:** Swimming, walking for exercise, weightlifting, and yoga
- » **Outdoor Activity:** Canoeing/kayaking, archery, fishing, backpacking, horseback riding, hiking, bicycling (road), and bicycling (mountain)
- » **Commercial Recreation:** Overnight camping, spending money on sports and recreation equipment, and attending live theater or sports events

These high MPI scores reinforce that residents are active and have diverse recreation interests. As the Township evaluates future investments in parks, facilities, and programs, MPI data can serve as a valuable tool for forecasting participation and ensuring offerings reflect community preferences.



TABLE 3: General Sports Market Potential Index (MPI)

GENERAL SPORTS ACTIVITY	SHALER TOWNSHIP	ALLEGHENY COUNTY	PENNSYLVANIA	NATIONAL AVERAGE (100)
Golf	124	91	85	100
Pickleball	115	96	93	100
Softball	105	96	97	100
Baseball	98	97	92	100
Football	98	96	98	100
Tennis	93	101	102	100
Volleyball	91	98	102	100
Basketball	86	106	101	100
Soccer	84	106	105	100

TABLE 4: Fitness Market Potential Index (MPI)

FITNESS ACTIVITY	SHALER TOWNSHIP	ALLEGHENY COUNTY	PENNSYLVANIA	NATIONAL AVERAGE (100)
Swimming	114	102	95	100
Walking for Exercise	112	101	93	100
Weight Lifting	106	98	96	100
Yoga	103	104	97	100
Aerobics	96	102	97	100
Jogging/ Running	93	103	102	100
Pilates	91	105	103	100
Zumba	78	85	85	100

TABLE 5: Outdoor Market Potential Index (MPI)

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY	SHALER TOWNSHIP	ALLEGHENY COUNTY	PENNSYLVANIA	NATIONAL AVERAGE (100)
Canoeing/ Kayaking	137	110	112	100
Archery	132	106	108	100
Fishing (fresh water)	132	107	114	100
Backpacking	118	109	100	100
Horseback Riding	116	98	102	100
Hiking	112	104	112	100
Bicycling (road)	111	105	101	100
Bicycling (mountain)	107	99	95	100
Fishing (salt water)	100	89	95	100
Rock Climbing	76	99	92	100



Image Sources (from top left to bottom): NEPA Outdoors, On The Water, and USA Archery.



TABLE 6: Commercial Recreation Market Potential Index (MPI)

COMMERCIAL RECREATION ACTIVITY	SHALER TOWNSHIP	ALLEGHENY COUNTY	PENNSYLVANIA	NATIONAL AVERAGE (100)
Went overnight camping	118	102	104	100
Spent \$100-249 on sports/rec equipment	115	104	104	100
Went to live theater	112	108	101	100
Spent \$250+ on sports/rec equipment	112	101	103	100
Attended sports event	111	104	102	100
Did photo album/scrapbooking	108	101	100	100
Dined out	107	102	101	100
Visited an indoor water park	107	107	102	100
Went to art gallery	105	106	99	100
Visited a zoo	105	106	101	100
Participated in a book club	103	107	97	100
Spent \$1-99 on sports/rec equipment	101	100	98	100
Went to museum	101	106	99	100
Flew a drone	95	92	92	100
Did painting/drawing	95	101	98	100
Did photography	93	96	96	100
Visited an aquarium	91	99	95	100
Attended adult education course	90	99	95	100
Played video/electronic game (console)	90	106	98	100
Visited a theme park	88	93	91	100
Played video/electronic game (portable)	86	100	96	100

LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

'Level of Service' refers to the amount and quality of public parks and recreation facilities relative to population size, expressed through metrics such as acres of parkland per 1,000 residents or facilities per capita. LOS comparisons help assess whether a community has adequate resources to meet current and projected demand.

The planning team evaluated Shaler Township's LOS in three key areas — park facilities, outdoor amenities, and recreation programming — and compared them to national benchmarks and peer communities to identify gaps and opportunities.

FIGURE 5: Level of Service Standards: Matrix Snapshot

SHALER TOWNSHIP PENNSYLVANIA Level of Service Standards (TOTAL POPULATION)											
Current Inventory				Current LOS		Metrics		Current Needs		2049 Forecasted Needs	
Item	Shaler Township Parks and Recreation Inventory	School Inventory	Other Providers	Total Inventory	Service Level Based on Current Population	NRPA Park Metrics Median Metric by Jurisdiction Population Size (2000-45,000)	Survey/Needs Assessment Priority	Assessment	Additional Need	Assessment	Additional Need
PARKLAND (ACRES)											
Community Parks	56.72	-	-	56.72	2.05	Acres per 1,000	1,000	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Neighborhood Parks	48.71	-	-	48.71	2.80	Acres per 1,000	1,000	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Open Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parklet	0.84	-	-	0.84	0.03	Acres per 1,000	1,000	Need	1.00	Need	1.00
Regional Park	93.65	-	-	93.65	3.39	Acres per 1,000	1,000	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Total Developed Park Acres	197.92	-	-	197.92	8.27	Acres per 1,000	1,000	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Undeveloped Parks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Park Acres	197.92	-	-	197.92	8.27	Acres per 1,000	1,000	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
TRAILS (MILES)											
Paved Trails	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Natural Trails	1.90	-	-	1.90	0.07	Miles per 1,000	1,000	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
OUTDOOR FACILITIES (SITES)											
Ball Diamond	9	1	-	10	1	Field per 2,675	2,675	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Basketball Courts	3	0.66	-	3.66	1	Court per 3,188	3,188	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Dog Parks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multi-Use Courts (Tennis & Pickleball)	2	-	-	2	1	Court per 13,902	13,902	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Outdoor Pool	1	-	-	1	1	Site per 27,604	27,604	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Pickleball Courts	3	-	-	3	1	Site per 9,201	9,201	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Playgrounds	11	1.65	-	13	1	Site per 2,182	2,182	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Rectangular Fields (Football, Soccer, Multipurpose, etc.)	3	1	-	4	1	Field per 2,962	2,962	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Shelters	8	0.33	-	8.33	1	Site per 4,361	4,361	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Skateboard Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Pad	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tennis Courts	6	-	-	6	1	Court per 4,601	4,601	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Street Hockey	5	-	-	5	1	Court per 5,821	5,821	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
INDOOR FACILITIES (SQ. FT.)											
Aquatic Space	-	3,079	-	3,079	0.11	SF per person	Person	Need	0.25	Need	0.25
Recreation Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior Center Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2024 Estimated Population					27,604						
2029 Estimated Population					27,150						

The Level of Service analysis illustrates how Shaler Township's parks and facilities compare to local and national benchmarks, helping to identify service gaps and opportunities for investment.

Notes:
 School inventory has been reduced to a third (0.33) based on availability to the general public.
 Other providers include: None at this time.
 NRPA Park Metrics for recreation and community centers are differentiated by the following criteria:
Recreation Centers: House spaces for active recreation such as pools, gyms, fitness centers, indoor tracks, etc. The facility is primarily for recreation activities, programs, and services.
Community Centers: Facilities may include meeting rooms, cold kitchen, social event space, etc.



Park Facilities, Budget, and Staffing

Currently, Shaler Township oversees a 12-park system totaling approximately 198 acres. The parks are managed and maintained under the leadership of the Assistant Township Manager, with programmatic support provided in partnership with the Shaler North Hills Library.

Key Findings:

- » **Parkland Acreage:** Shaler Township falls below national and peer community standards in terms of parkland per 1,000 residents, with specific gaps identified in community park acreage (59 acres needed), parklet space (1 acre), and regional park acreage (42 acres).
- » **Indoor Facilities:** The Township currently lacks dedicated indoor recreation facilities, including a recreation center, aquatics facility, or senior center — all of which are commonly found in peer communities.
- » **Staffing:** With a small administrative team, Shaler has fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) parks and recreation staff per 10,000 residents than other similar communities, limiting the capacity to expand services or take on new programming.
- » **Operating Budget:** Operating expenses per acre are relatively high, in part due to the cost of managing aquatics. These costs are consistent with total operating revenue but highlight the importance of defining cost recovery goals, particularly if a recreation center is developed.



Image Source: NEXT Pittsburgh

Park Classifications At a Glance

MINI PARK (PARKLET)	Pockets of green space with amenities that create a place for respite or reflection.
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK	Meet the day-to-day park and recreational needs of their immediate communities. Common facilities include playgrounds, walking paths, athletic courts, and open lawns.
COMMUNITY PARK	Serve the whole community in addition to visitors and offer more balanced opportunities for users to enjoy both passive and active recreational activities.
REGIONAL PARK	Draw users from across the Township and neighboring communities due to their size, natural features, or unique amenities. This park supports large-scale recreation opportunities and regional trail access.

Outdoor Facilities

The Township provides a baseline level of amenities across its parks, but several specific gaps remain when measured against national trends:

Outdoor Facility Needs Identified:

- » **Shelters:** More than 1 needed
- » **Splash Pad:** More than 1 needed
- » **Paved Trails:** An additional 6.79 miles are needed to meet access and connectivity expectations
- » **Natural Trails:** An additional 2.17 miles are needed

While many Township parks include core facilities such as courts, fields, and playgrounds, they are often fully built out, leaving limited room for expansion without repurposing space. As demand for diverse and specialized outdoor amenities grows, creative planning and potential land acquisition will be needed.

Programming

Program offerings in Shaler Township follow a social service model, prioritizing community-wide benefit over revenue generation. Programs are offered through the Library, aquatics, and seasonal events.

Key Findings:

- » Most offerings are introductory in nature, with limited programming that evolves into more advanced or long-term engagement. This results in a programming lifecycle heavily weighted toward entry-level participation.
- » The Township applies dynamic pricing for pool use and may consider this strategy for other facilities, such as a future recreation center.
- » A consistent cost recovery framework does not yet exist, but establishing recovery targets by program type will be essential for future budgeting and sustainable operations.
- » Cultural and wellness-based programming (e.g., theater, fitness, walking tracks) aligns well with local interests and may be expanded through partnerships or in a new indoor facility.



The Shaler North Hills Library plays a key role in activating park spaces through community-centered programming, including storytime events, outdoor classes, and seasonal activities. Image Source: Tribune-Review.



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03

Community Engagement



03

Community Engagement

OVERVIEW

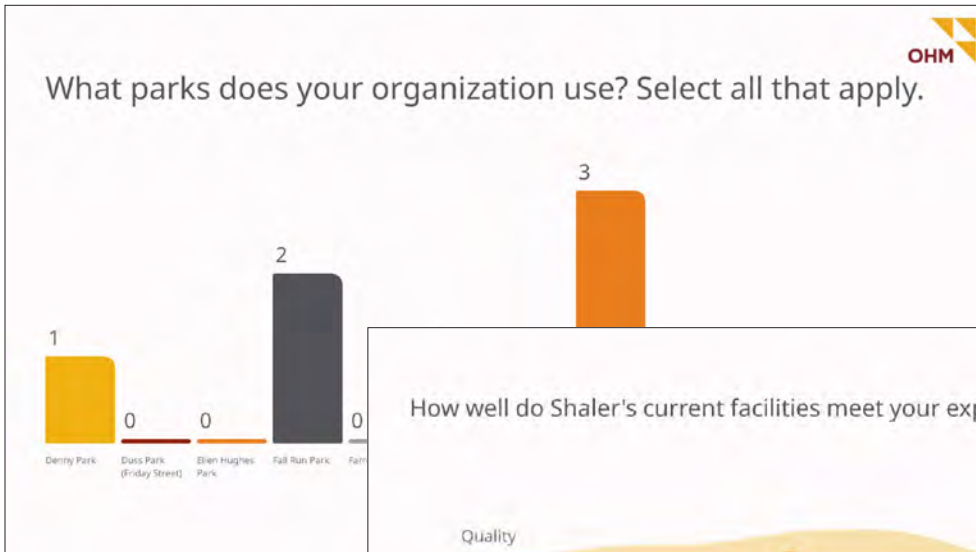
This Plan's recommendations are informed by feedback from an extensive community engagement process. This chapter synthesizes 'what we heard' from Shaler Township residents and stakeholders.

Several channels were established to conduct community engagement and gather input throughout the planning process. Participants included Shaler Township residents, specific parks and recreation stakeholders, and Township staff and elected officials. In total, there were three methods used to result in robust and meaningful community input:

- Focus Groups
- Online Survey
- Open House



The online survey and public open house were promoted via digital and print materials.



The focus groups gathered qualitative data through an interactive survey, while seeking deeper insights through facilitated discussions.

5

Focus Groups

Brought together community-facing individuals for facilitated discussions

400+

Survey Responses

Via online survey, which was conducted over the course of 12 weeks

1

Open House

Provided input through interactive boards and one-on-one conversations with the project team

FOCUS GROUPS

Overview

In the Spring of 2025, the consultant team met with five focus groups to conduct open-ended surveys and discussions. Participants shared their personal insights and experiences with Shaler Township's Parks and Recreation system, highlighting strengths and offering areas of improvement for the future. The following summary of these conversations reflects key themes that have informed the planning process.

Kiwanis Park Focus Group

- » Protect existing assets of Kiwanis Park to prevent displacement by new development
- » Consider the existing conditions of the library and neighboring school when planning parking for a new community center
- » Develop safer pedestrian routes to Kiwanis Park from the shopping center, library, and nearby bus route
- » Modernize and update existing facilities at Kiwanis Park
- » Include flexible, multi-use rooms and a kitchen into a future community center
- » Balance the public good with development costs when planning improvements



Library Staff Focus Group

- » Expand youth & teen programs to address gaps in relevant programming and young adult engagement
- » Create flexible, multi-purpose spaces with movable dividers (a full-access kitchen, affordable fitness areas, and performance venues)
- » Ensure programs remain low-cost and accessible by removing barriers like scheduling conflicts, transportation issues, and limited parking
- » Integrate technology & AI into library programming
- » Teach essential life skills, mental healthcare practices, media literacy, and provide tech support services to bridge knowledge gaps
- » Collaborate with school districts, daycares, senior centers, and local organizations to expand programming





Youth Sports Focus Group

- » Coordinate facility use between schools and township to improve access and reduce reliance on school-only fields
- » Improve communication channels for scheduling and field availability
- » Maintain fields with greater attention to detail and assess field conditions regularly
- » Plan long-term for multipurpose, flexible field development and parking solutions
- » Engage community through volunteer service hours and support infrastructure like pavilions and kitchens to strengthen recreation programs



125 Committee Focus Group

- » Many parks, including Kiwanis and Vienna Woods, have aging play equipment and visible maintenance issues that impact user experience
- » Restroom access is a top priority, noting that current facilities are often locked or only open during events
- » There's strong interest in increasing recreational offerings for teens and adults, as current programs primarily serve young children
- » A dedicated space for dogs was mentioned, due to the limited walkability and pet-friendly areas in the community
- » Attendees saw potential in collaborating with the Library Board and called for stronger branding to unify and promote Shaler's park system



Board of Commissioners Focus Group

- » Emphasis on the need to understand and potentially improve underutilized existing park facilities before considering major new investments like a community center
- » Ensure that new developments are sustainable and widely beneficial, with a cautious approach given to investing in short-term trends (like pickleball). Be mindful of avoiding redundant facilities, such as duplication with existing school district amenities.
- » Open to pursuing grants, naming rights, rental income, and limited tax increases to fund a community center, but are also highly sensitive to the community's existing tax and utility fee burdens. The goal is to "right-size" the facility to ensure affordability and alignment with real needs.



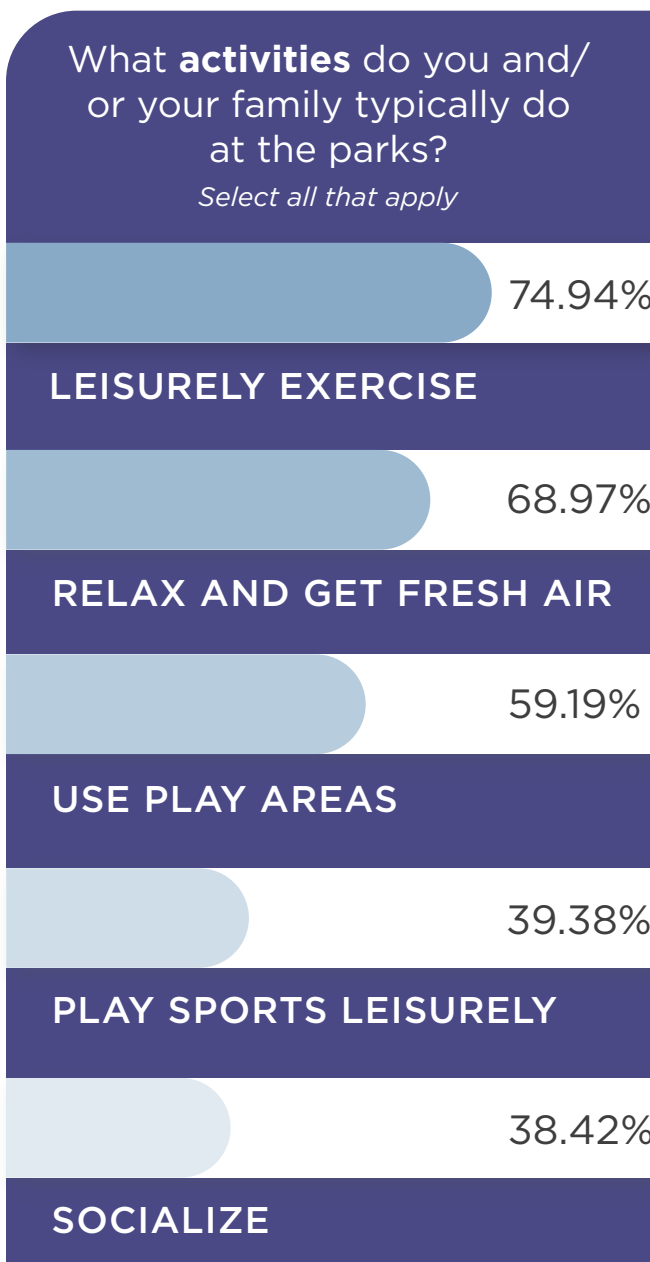
COMMUNITY SURVEY

Overview

A 25 question community survey, created by the consultant team and reviewed by Township staff, was published online on March 1, 2025 for residents to complete. The survey was advertised through social media and print materials and open for 12 weeks. The following shows key questions and results from the questionnaire, and in-depth results can be viewed in the plan appendix.

419

Survey Responses





Which three parks should be the **top priority for improvement?**

Top 3 Responses



Kiwanis Park

32%



Fawcett Fields

12%



Fall Run Park

11%

of respondents report visiting weekly

What is the biggest **barrier** preventing you from **participating in programs?**

Lack of **awareness**

What are the biggest **limitations** facing the Shaler North Hills **Library** currently?

Limited **space** for programs and events

When considering **programs and amenities for a new recreation center facility**, which of the following do you feel are:

Required

Multi-use courts
Childcare / Kids play area
Baseball diamond
Parking Lot
Playground

Desired

Cardio and weight training area
Group fitness studio
Locker room
After school programs
Teen center / Lounge
Event / Banquet space
Covered outdoor meeting space
Warming kitchen
Meeting / Classroom space
Theater, music, and dance performance space
Dedicated senior activity space
Softball diamond
Access Drive

Not Needed

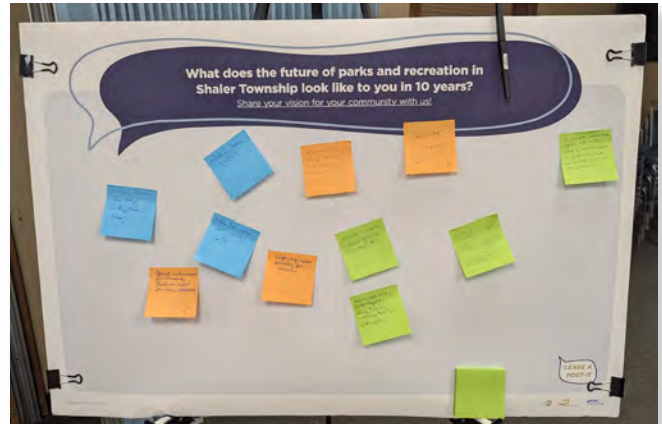
Golf simulator
Sledding Hill

OPEN HOUSE

Open House Board: Future of Parks and Rec

Overview

The in-person engagement used an open house format to maximize interaction and collect detailed feedback. Attendees explored materials that provided an in-depth overview of the parks system and were invited to envision what it could look like in 10 years. Boards prompted input on individual parks, the desired amenities for a potential community center at Kiwanis Park, and what tradeoffs participants would be willing to make with existing facilities.



What does the future of parks and recreation in Shaler Township look like to you in 10 years?

Enhancement of community parks that are better for new residents

A uniform look around all parks and community spaces

Upgrade and enhance current offerings at Kiwanis Park

More community greenspaces, bike trails, walking trails, and sidewalks

A reliable community space that can be used for events and gatherings with power (graduation parties, fundraisers, etc.)

Integrated elements for seniors in Shaler Township

A recreation center with indoor walking

Maintaining the existing library



RESIDENT PARK FEEDBACK

Not pictured: Glenshaw Valley Field (Tim Rogers Field)



Denny Park

- » Renovate pavilion to be a suitable party venue
- » Install power source and open bathrooms



Duss Park

- » Add benches or swinging seats for additional viewing points of the river



Ellen Hughes Park

- » Shelter is desired for community gatherings
- » Improved signage from Sundale Drive
- » Add youth-sized lacrosse fields
- » Defined trailways from the northeast to central park areas
- » Explore potential property acquisition to expand amenities



Fall Run Park

- » Restroom is needed
- » Build pavilion at the top of the park
- » Incorporate a story book walk
- » Turn empty lots into a dog park



Farrell Park

- » Enjoys using the baseball field
- » Parking challenges



Fawcett Fields

- » Turn field into an off-leash dog park
- » Share soccer fields with other sports
- » Community art along the trail



Gally Park

- » The playground structure needs to be lower to the ground for the age level of children it is intended for



Richter Park

- » Needs improved maintenance of facilities



Stoneridge Park

- » Enjoys the playground and swings
- » A sign is needed for the marble court
- » Desires connection to Fall Run Trail



Vienna Woods Parklet

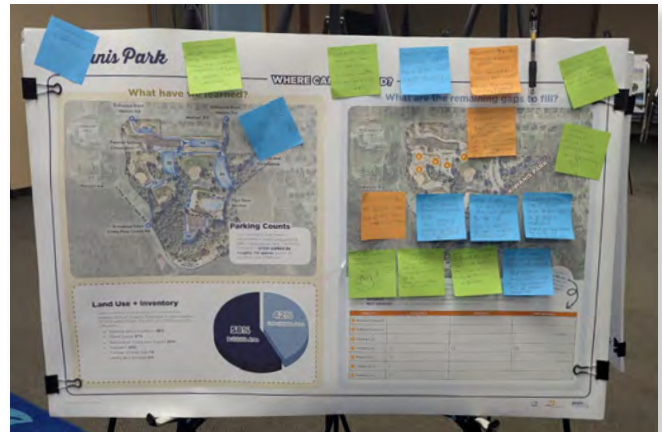
- » Enjoys the seasaw
- » Add more swings
- » Add shaded seating

OPEN HOUSE

Open House Board: Kiwanis Park

Kiwanis Park

Community members shared a range of ideas and priorities for a potential community center at Kiwanis Park. Participants expressed interest in preserving the parking areas and playground. There was some division over whether the sledding hill should remain or be repurposed. Overall, the community emphasized the importance for a facility that balances function with financial sustainability.



What are the issues, opportunities, or the big ideas that could help us identify improvements for Kiwanis Park?

Sidewalks that connect the boulevard with the community center and Kiwanis

Community Center incorporates other township services

Invest in the maintenance of current Kiwanis Park offerings

Rearrange parking lot and fix entrance / exit

Update and add sports facilities and courts

Additional seating and shelters, especially near sports facilities

Extend Eagle Trail along the south horn of Kiwanis

Level hillsides to provide more usable land for community center facilities

Childcare, indoor walking track, and senior space

Do you feel the following **existing facilities** are required, desired, or not needed?

Existing Facility	Required	Desired	Not Needed
Baseball Diamond		2	
Softball Diamond		2	
Parking Lot	1		1
Sledding Hill	2	2	4
Playground	2		3
Access Drive	1		
Parking Lot	2		



What does the future of Kiwanis Park look like to you in 10 years?

A community hub with easier access, better facilities for events, more visibility, and more chances to connect with neighbors

A more inclusive playground

Multi-use building and shelters

Nature and trail walks

An indoor walking trail and courts or an artificial turf field

Memberships and phased construction

When considering **programs and amenities for a new recreation center facility**, which of the following do you feel are required, desired, or not needed?

<i>Future Facility Options</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Desired</i>	<i>Not Needed</i>
Cardio and Weight Training Area		4	4
Group Fitness Studio	3	3	1
Multi-Use Court(s)	5	2	
Golf Simulator		1	8
Locker Room	2	3	2
Kid's Play Area	5	4	
After-School Programs	4	4	
Teen Center / Lounge	3	5	1
Small Book Lending Area		5	3
Small Library with Book Lending			8
Event / Banquet Space	8	1	2
Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	9		2
Warming Kitchen	7	1	1
Meeting / Classroom Space	7	1	1
Theater, Music, and Dance Space	6	1	1
Dedicated Senior Activity Space	3	6	

COMMUNITY PRESENTATION

Overview

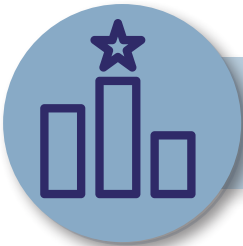
Once the major components of the plan were developed, a community presentation was held at Township Hall. This event was well attended and included an online Zoom option for hosting participants. This presentation covered findings of analysis, recommended parks improvements, programming and operational recommendations, and outcomes from the recreation center feasibility study.

Questions and discussion focused around:

- » Implementation pathways for park improvements
- » Understanding how the physical and operational constraints informed the outcomes of the feasibility study
- » Understanding the operational benefits of expanding park operations capabilities

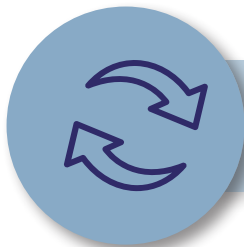
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT KEY TAKEAWAYS

The following key takeaways summarize ‘what we heard’ from residents, stakeholders, and community leaders throughout the engagement process. These insights reflect shared priorities, challenges, and aspirations that will guide the future of parks and recreation in Shaler Township.



Kiwanis Park is a Priority Site

- » Kiwanis Park is an ideal location for a community center due to its central location, size, and existing amenities.



Modernize Aging Facilities

- » Many parks, including Vienna Woods and Kiwanis, have outdated playgrounds or structures that residents want to see upgraded.



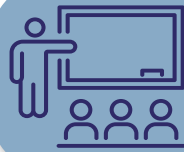
Support for a “Right-Sized” Community Center

- » The community favors a facility that is functional, flexible, and financially sustainable, without duplicating existing resources.



Protect and Maintain What Works

- » Residents want to see features preserved, renovated and enhanced before investment in a large project like a community center.



Interest in Indoor Amenities

- » The community expects a recreation center that can operate as a meeting space and event space, and requests event/banquet space, meeting/classroom space, a warming kitchen, and theater/music/dance classes.



Coordination with Other Entities is Essential

- » Residents and stakeholders see opportunities to collaborate with the library, schools, and local organizations.



Desire for More Inclusive and Multigenerational Spaces

- » The current parks and recreation system is geared toward younger children, and there is strong interest in expanding facilities and programs for teens, adults, and seniors.



Thoughtful Funding

- » There is openness to grants, partnerships, and modest user fees, but strong concern about overburdening residents with additional taxes.



04

Park, Facility, and Program Assessments



04

Park, Facility, and Program Assessments

OVERVIEW

Shaler Township is committed to providing year-round, memorable recreation experiences that contribute to a high quality of life for all residents. The Township's park system includes a variety of spaces, ranging widely in size and character, that offer opportunities to relax, play, and enjoy the outdoors. Recreation facilities include both indoor and outdoor built amenities, such as pools and community buildings, that support learning, socializing, and physical activity in all seasons.

Many parks and recreation systems set access goals informed by the Trust for Public Land's nationwide 10-Minute Walk program, which advocates that everyone should have access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of their home. Figure 1-1 shows the 10-minute watershed of existing parks in Shaler Township, generated using the ArcGIS Pro Spatial Analyst tool, which accounts for pedestrian barriers and park entrances. Shaler Township has a park walkability (47%) lower than the national median (55%).

PARK ACCESS AND WALKABILITY

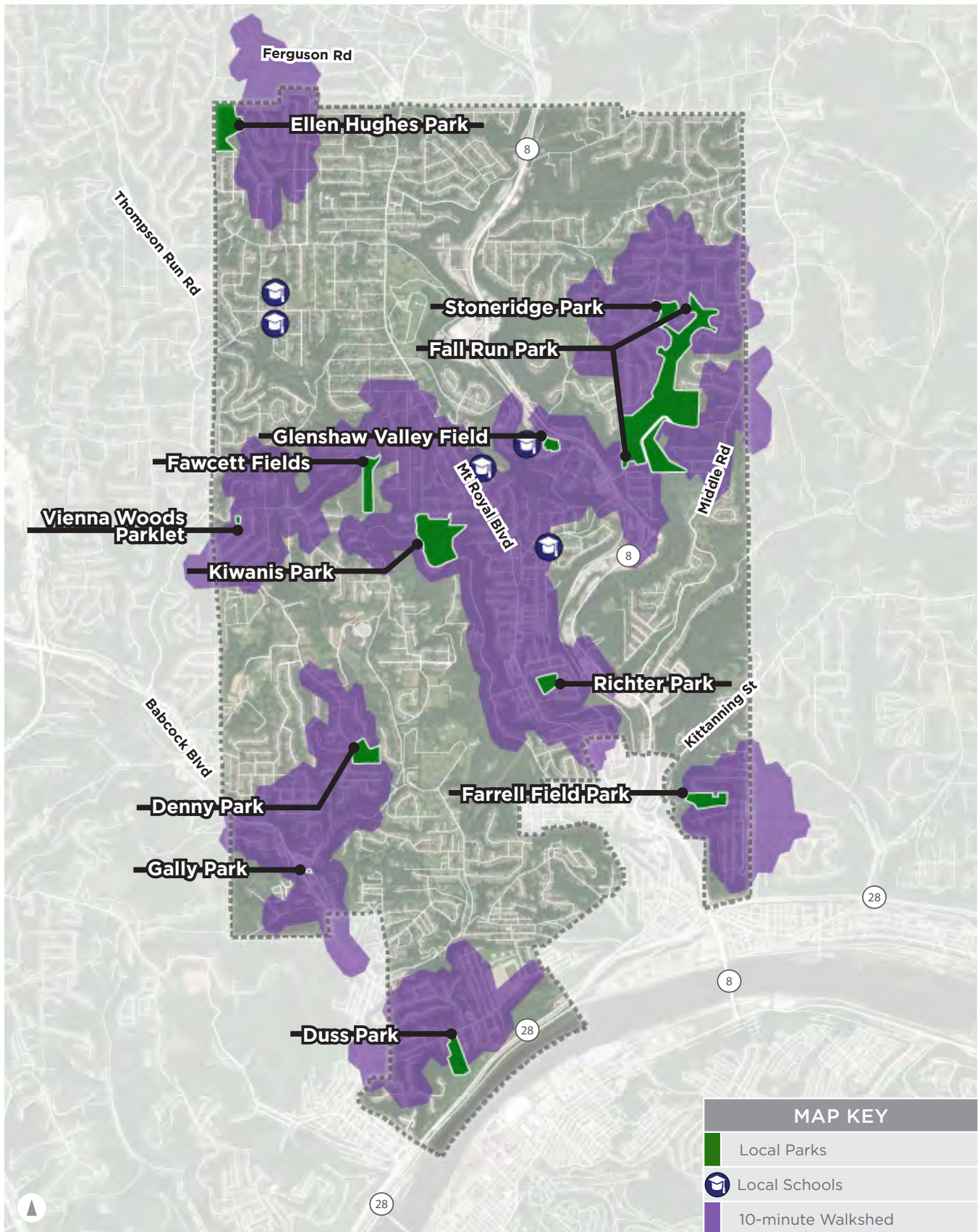
Park and recreation access is considered through multiple lenses, including:

- » Distance between Shaler Township residents and their parks and recreation assets
- » Walkability, or the ability of users with differing abilities to safely and comfortably reach parks and recreation facilities
- » The quality and universal design of spaces and activities to be welcoming and usable for all

Shaler's broader recreation network also includes the Shaler North Hills Library and local school facilities. While these spaces are not always fully open to the public, they offer amenities such as playgrounds, tracks, pools, gyms, and athletic fields. These resources have the potential to expand the community's recreational access through strategic partnerships. For this reason, school sites are included on the Walkability map to reflect areas where level of service gaps may be filled by school district amenities.



FIGURE 5: Walkability Map



PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY ASSESSMENT

An inventory and condition assessment of Shaler Township's existing parks and recreation facilities was conducted in fall 2024. Each of the parks were inventoried with the following three key objectives:



Evaluate the viability of existing site and structural improvements



Assess site and amenity accessibility for compliance with State and Federal requirements.



Document the quantity and types of amenities at each location

Each park in Shaler Township was evaluated using a standardized set of criteria to assess its overall condition, functionality, and user experience. The following six categories were reviewed and scored on a scale from 1 (low) to 3 (high):

- » **Site Access** – Is the park easy to find and does it have clear signage?
- » **Accessibility** – Is there signed and striped ADA parking, with accessible routes to park features?
- » **Facility Conditions** – Are park features in good condition?
- » **Park Amenities** – Does the park include support features for park facilities, such as restrooms, concessions, and seating?
- » **Usage and Maintenance** – Are there minimal signs of heavy usage and does the park meet the community's standard of care?
- » **Environmental Features** – Does the park take advantage of unique landscape features?

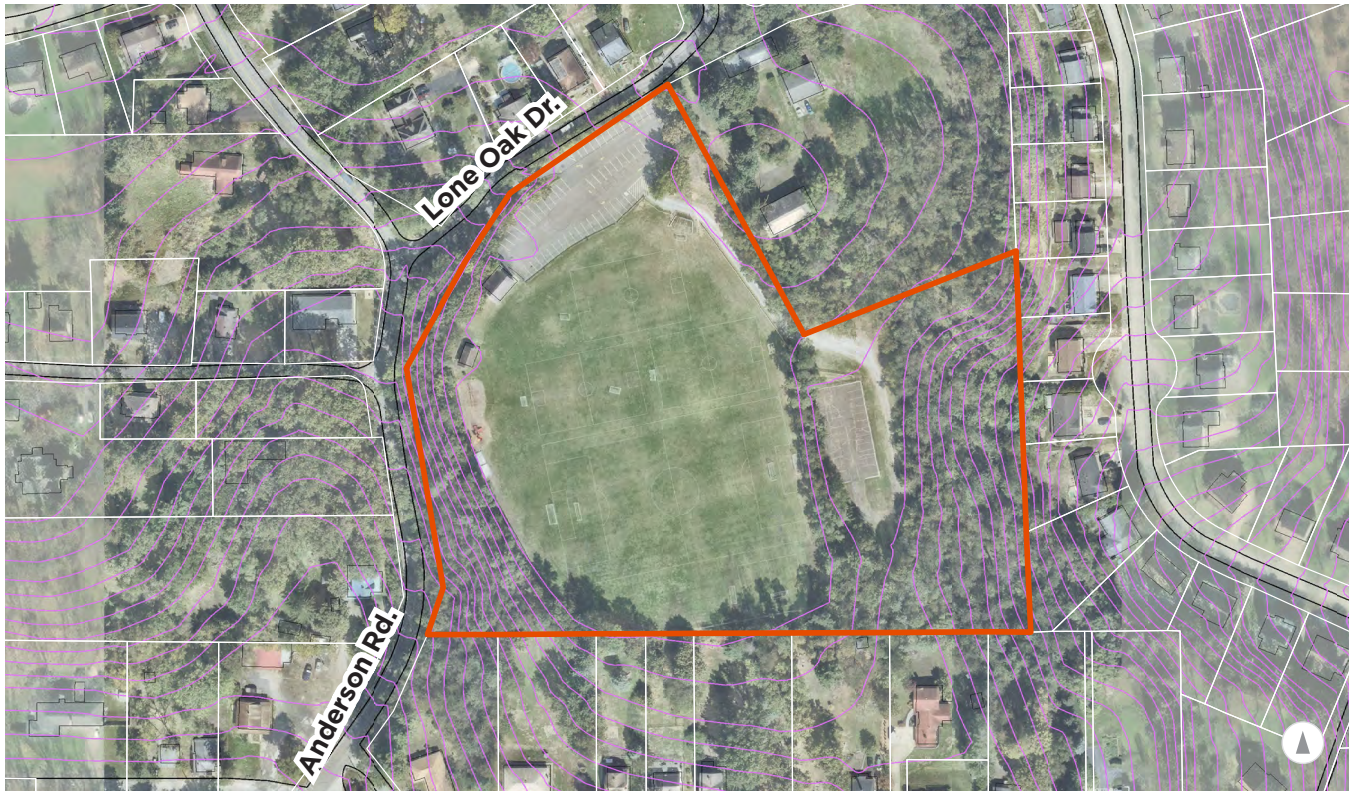
This evaluation helped identify common strengths, gaps, and opportunities across the system and will inform both the near- and long-term recommendations for park improvements.



The project team visited each park to assess site access, accessibility, including ADA parking, facility conditions, park amenities, maintenance needs, and environmental features.



Denny Park



Quick Facts:

Location:	1198 Anderson Road, Pittsburgh, PA, 15209
Acreage:	9 Acres
Park Classification:	Neighborhood Park
10-Minute Walkshed Population:	983 Residents

Park Amenities:

- » Pavilion
- » Grill
- » Concession Stand
- » Restroom, Three Seasons
- » Parking Lot, Paved
- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Play Equipment
- » Soccer Fields (4)

Condition Assessments:

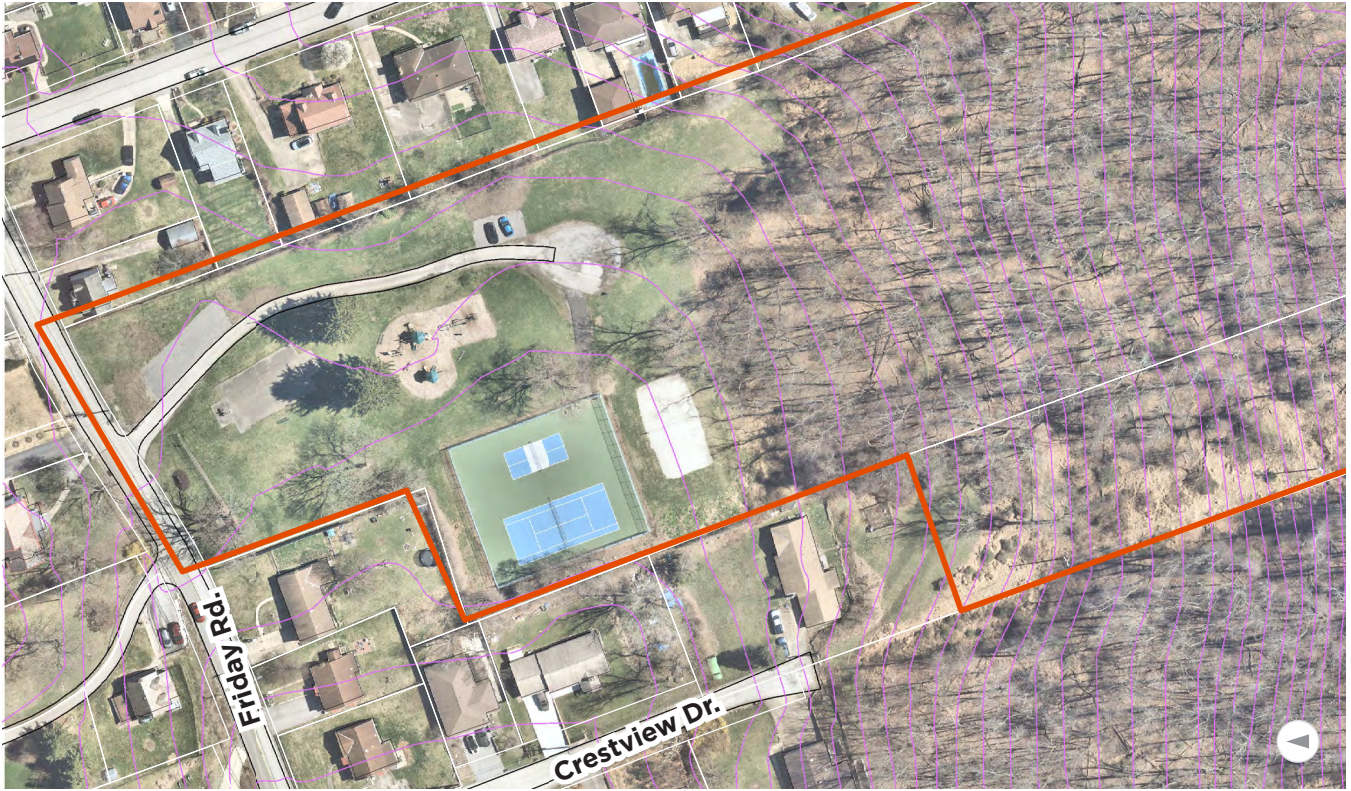
Site Access	● ● ○
Accessibility	● ● ○
Facility Conditions	● ● ○
Park Amenities	● ● ●
Usage and Maintenance	● ● ●
Environmental Features	● ○ ○

Observations:

- » Entrance signage lacks visibility and could benefit from enhancements
- » Pavilion structure shows signs of deterioration and requires repair or replacement
- » Rear parking area is currently unpaved - determine if paving is essential for accessibility purposes
- » Concession stand needs both a fresh coat of paint and roof replacement
- » Scheduling conflicts arise between soccer games and pavilion rentals



Duss Park (Friday Street Park)



Quick Facts:

Location: 380 Friday Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15209

Acreage: 7.6 Acres

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

10-Minute Walkshed Population: 1,392 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ● ● ●

Accessibility ● ● ○

Facility Conditions ● ● ○

Park Amenities ● ● ○

Usage and Maintenance ● ● ●

Environmental Features ● ● ○

Park Amenities:

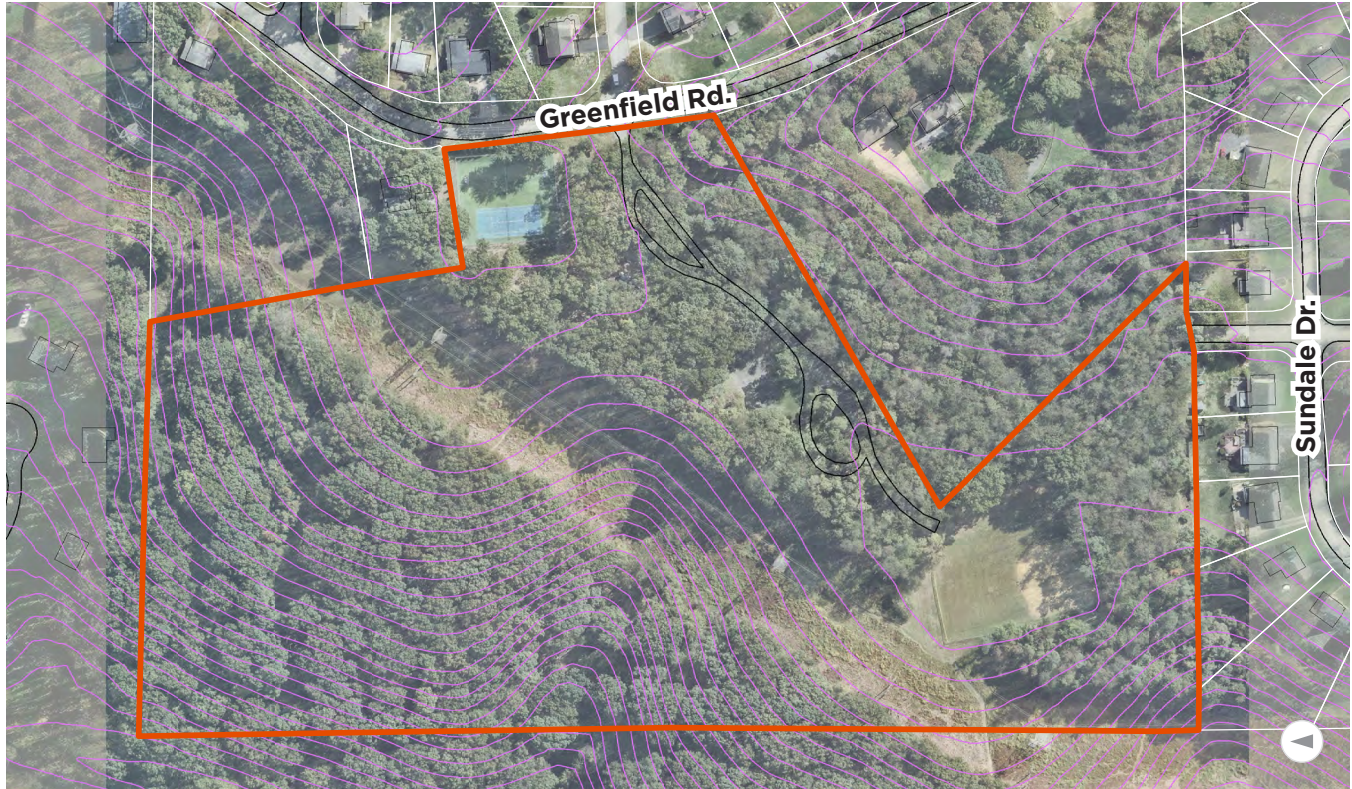
- » Porta Jon
- » Parking Lot, Paved
- » Basketball Court, Regulation
- » Sand Volleyball Court
- » Street Hockey Court
- » Tennis/Pickleball Court
- » Play Equipment

Observations:

- » Access pathway to courts does not meet ADA accessibility
- » New parking lot pavement requires striping
- » Perimeter fencing needs replacement or removal



Ellen Hughes Park



Quick Facts:

Location: 3225 Greenfield Road,
Glenshaw, PA 15116

Acreage: 15.79 Acres

Park Classification: Community Park

10-Minute Walkshed Population: 1,917 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ● ● ●

Accessibility ● ○ ○

Facility Conditions ● ● ○

Park Amenities ● ● ○

Usage and Maintenance ● ● ●

Environmental Features ● ● ●

Park Amenities:

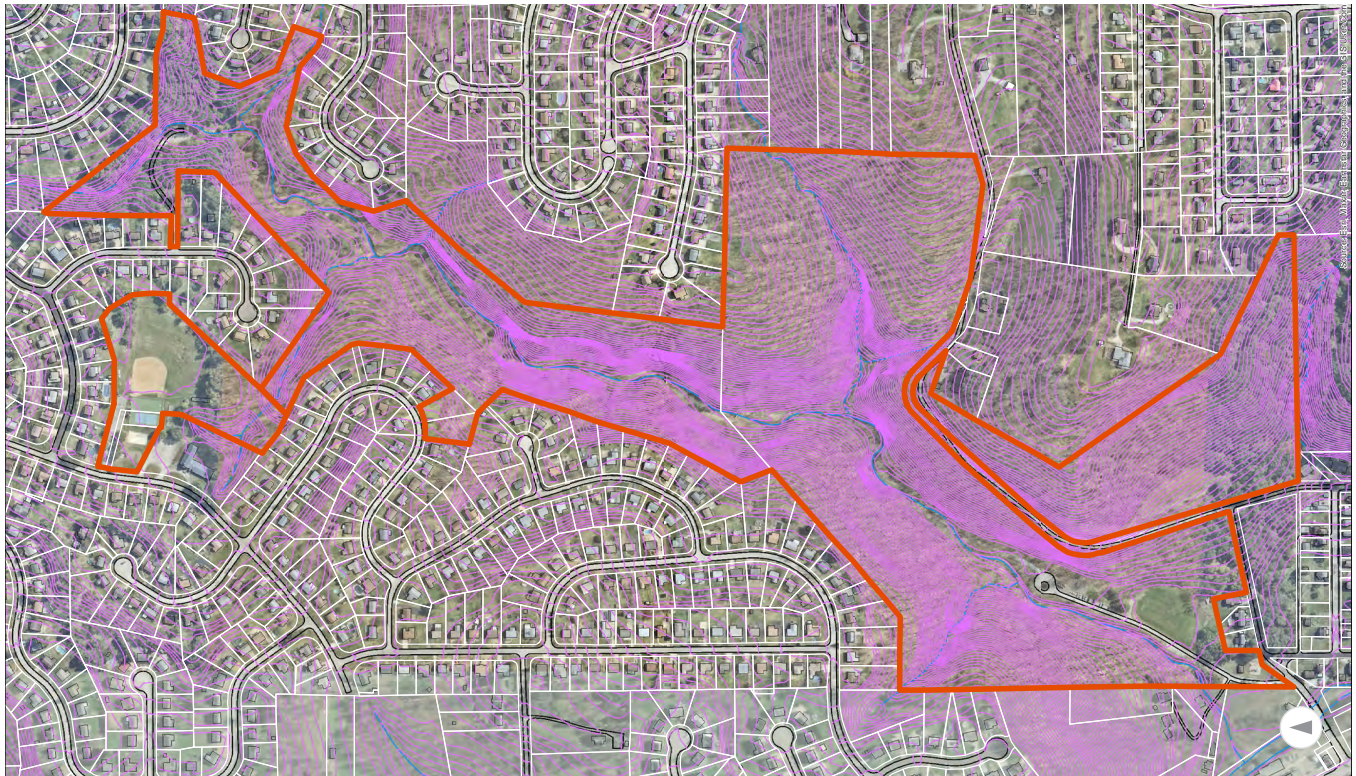
- » Porta Jon
- » Parking Lot, Paved
- » Baseball Diamond, Little League
- » Basketball Court, Regulation
- » Street Hockey Court
- » Play Equipment
- » Tennis/Pickleball Court
- » Nature Trail
- » Uncovered Picnic Area

Observations:

- » Rear baseball diamond is difficult to access and needs maintenance
- » Residents favor mown and/or informal trails throughout park
- » No designated ADA parking



Fall Run Park



Quick Facts:

Location:	187 Fall Run Road, Glenshaw, PA 15116
Acreage:	93.65 Acres
Park Classification:	Regional Park
10-Minute Walkshed Population:	3,020 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access	● ● ●
Accessibility	● ○ ○
Facility Conditions	● ● ○
Park Amenities	● ● ○
Usage and Maintenance	● ● ●
Environmental Features	● ● ●

Park Amenities:

- » Porta Jon
- » Parking Lot, Paved
- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Basketball Court, Regulation
- » Play Equipment
- » Soccer Field, Regulation
- » Nature Trails
- » Pavilion
- » Grill
- » Covered Seating Area

Observations:

- » Gravel parking does not have ADA spaces
- » Pavilion and playground need updating
- » Soccer field has drainage issues
- » Narrow bridges limit maintenance abilities
- » LSA Improvements – Prefab restroom, paved parking, pavilion, and associated paving and utility work forthcoming



Farrell Field



Quick Facts:

Location: 1550 Etna Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15215

Acreage: 9.8 Acres

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

10-Minute Walkshed Population: 663 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ● ○ ○

Accessibility ● ○ ○

Facility Conditions ● ● ○

Park Amenities ● ○ ○

Usage and Maintenance ● ● ●

Environmental Features ● ○ ○

Park Amenities:

- » Porta Jon
- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Baseball Diamond, Little League
- » Batting Cages
- » Basketball Court, Regulation
- » Play Equipment
- » Street Hockey Court
- » Tennis Court, Regulation
- » Pavilion

Observations:

- » Park is difficult to find, even with roadway signage
- » Parking lot lacking ADA parking and shows evidence of drainage issues
- » Ball field is wet and needs drainage improvements
- » Knotweed invading park
- » Pavilion needs improvement



Fawcett Fields



Quick Facts:

Location: 485 McElheny Road,
Glenshaw, PA 15116

Acreage: 10 Acres

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

10-Minute
Walkshed Population: 857 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ● ● ●

Accessibility ● ● ●

Facility Conditions ● ● ●

Park Amenities ● ● ●

Usage and Maintenance ● ○ ○

Environmental Features ● ● ●

Park Amenities:

- » Restroom, Three Seasons
- » Nature Trail
- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Covered Seating Areas
- » Soccer Field, Regulation (2)
- » Children's fishing area

Observations:

- » Floods often, requiring continued maintenance
- » Grazing goats managing invasive Japanese Knotweed

Gally Park



Quick Facts:

Location:	1537 Evergreen Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15209
Acreage:	0.22 Acres
Park Classification:	Parklet
10-Minute Walkshed Population:	983 Residents

Park Amenities:

- » Parking, Street
- » Play Equipment

Condition Assessments:

Site Access	● ● ○
Accessibility	● ○ ○
Facility Conditions	● ○ ○
Park Amenities	● ● ○
Usage and Maintenance	● ● ○
Environmental Features	● ● ○

Observations:

- » Leased by Shaler Township
- » Minimal programming to attract residents
- » Fencing does not appear welcoming
- » Located near picturesque creek



Glenshaw Valley Field (*Tim Rogers Field*)



Quick Facts:

Location:	1520 Butler Plank Rd, Glenshaw, PA 15116
Acreage:	7.33 Acres
Park Classification:	Community Park
10-Minute Walkshed Population:	904 Residents

Park Amenities:

- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Baseball Diamond, Little League
- » Soccer Field, Regulation

Condition Assessments:

Site Access	● ● ●
Accessibility	● ● ○
Facility Conditions	● ○ ○
Park Amenities	● ○ ○
Usage and Maintenance	● ● ○
Environmental Features	● ● ○

Observations:

- » Leased by Shaler Township
- » Ball diamond and soccer field are in poor condition and in need of attention
- » Located in very picturesque setting
- » Gravel parking has ADA spots, however could be paved



Kiwanis Park



Quick Facts:

Location: 1 Meyer Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15223

Acreage: 33.6 Acres

Park Classification: Community Park

10-Minute Walkshed Population: 1,662 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ●●●

Accessibility ●●○

Facility Conditions ●●○

Park Amenities ●●●

Usage and Maintenance ●●●

Environmental Features ●●○

Park Amenities:

- » Concession Stand
- » Restroom, Four Seasons
- » Parking Lot, Paved
- » Baseball Diamond, Little League (3)
- » Basketball Court, Regulation (2)
- » Batting Cages (2)
- » Pickleball Court (2)
- » Tennis Court, Regulation (2)
- » Play Equipment (2)
- » Swimming Pool (1)
- » Pavilion (2)
- » Grill

Observations:

- » Little League field needs drainage improvements
- » Plethora of memorials throughout park which lack consistency
- » Significant electrical utilities located in very close proximity to larger playground
- » Park entrance sign located far into the park
- » Pickleball courts are difficult to access and have limited clearance, new pavement beginning to crack
- » Tennis courts are showing signs of wear



Richter Park



Quick Facts:

Location: 25 Kenneth Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15223

Acreage: 4.81 Acres

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

10-Minute Walkshed Population: 1,257 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ● ○ ○

Accessibility ● ○ ○

Facility Conditions ● ● ○

Park Amenities ● ● ●

Usage and Maintenance ● ● ●

Environmental Features ● ○ ○

Park Amenities:

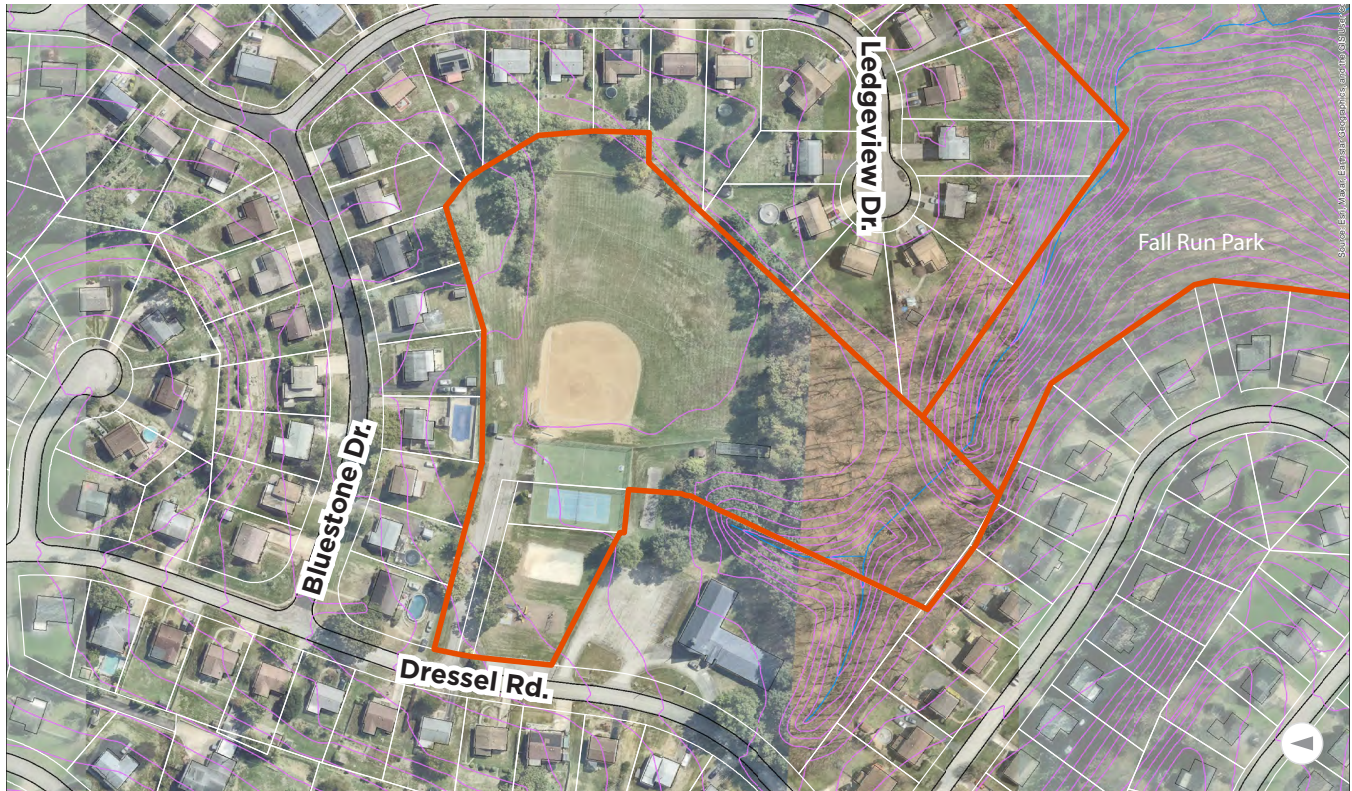
- » Restroom, Three Seasons
- » Porta Jon
- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Baseball Diamond, Little League (2)
- » Basketball Court, Half Court (2)
- » Batting Cages (2)
- » Play Equipment
- » Street Hockey Court
- » Tennis Court, Regulation
- » Pavilion

Observations:

- » Rear ball field requires drainage improvements to address water management issues
- » Concession and restroom facilities need modernization to enhance usability and appearance
- » The combination street hockey, basketball, and tennis court is outdated and should be evaluated for replacement
- » Gravel parking lot would benefit from paving ADA spots to improve accessibility and maintenance
- » Extensive chain link fencing is in poor condition



Stoneridge Park



Quick Facts:

Location: 807 Dressel Road, Allison Park, PA 15101

Acreage: 5.5 Acres

Park Classification: Neighborhood Park

10-Minute Walkshed Population: 3,481 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ●●●

Accessibility ●●●

Facility Conditions ●●○

Park Amenities ●●○

Usage and Maintenance ●●●

Environmental Features ●○○

Park Amenities:

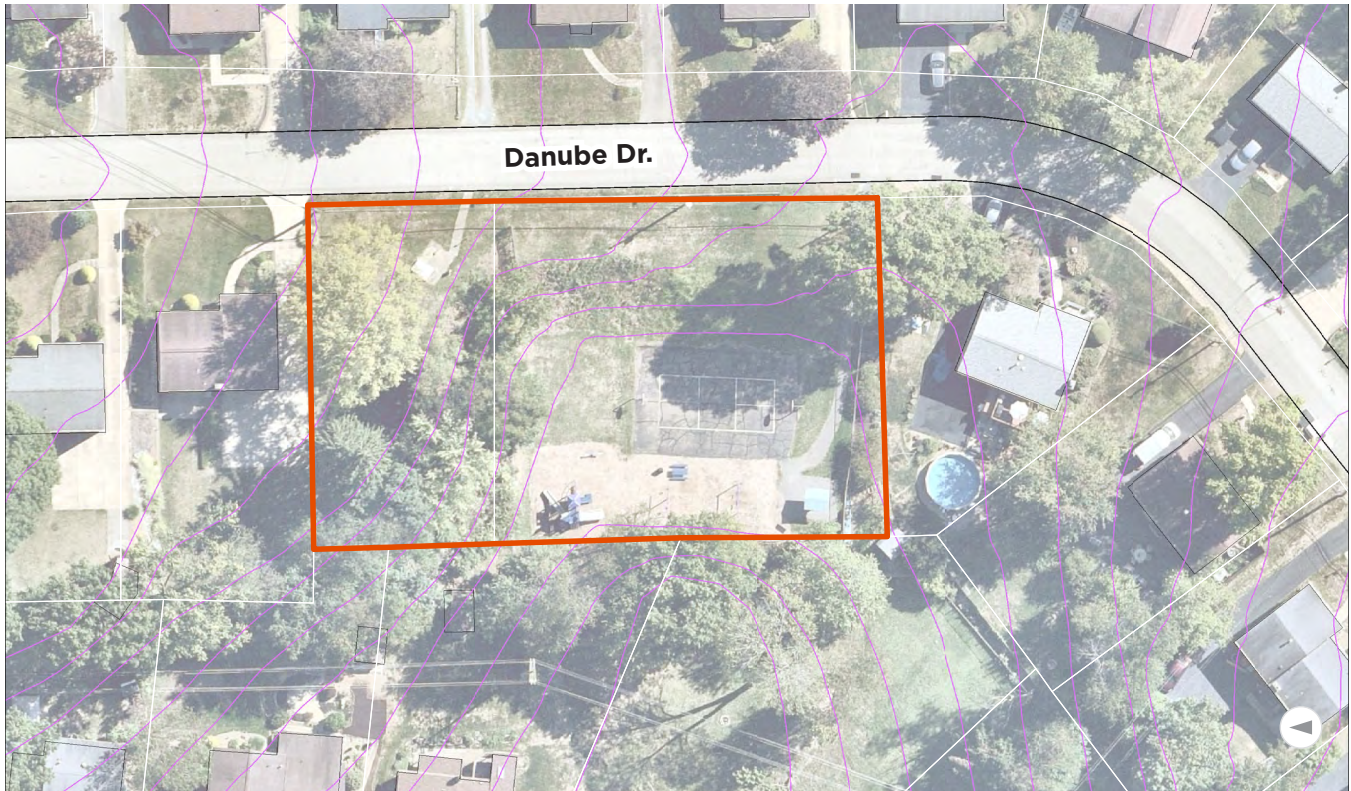
- » Porta Jon
- » Parking Lot, Paved
- » Parking Lot, Unpaved
- » Baseball Diamond, Regulation
- » Batting Cages
- » Bocce Court
- » Marble Court
- » Pickleball Court (1)
- » Sand Volleyball Court
- » Street Hockey Court
- » Tennis Court, Regulation
- » Play Equipment

Observations:

- » Bocce court is partly on church property
- » One of few parks with ADA access routes
- » Marble court may intrude on playground clear zone
- » Ball field needs drainage improvements



Vienna Woods Parklet



Quick Facts:

Location: 143 Danube Drive,
Pittsburgh, PA 15209

Acreage: 0.62 Acres

Park Classification: Parklet

10-Minute
Walkshed Population: 1,507 Residents

Condition Assessments:

Site Access ● ○ ○

Accessibility ● ○ ○

Facility Conditions ● ● ○

Park Amenities ● ● ●

Usage and Maintenance ● ● ○

Environmental Features ● ● ○

Park Amenities:

- » Parking, Street
- » Basketball Court, Regulation
- » Play Equipment

Observations:

- » Playground needs drainage improvements
- » Basketball court pavement needs replacement
- » Entrance path is not ADA accessible
- » Does not have entrance sign



KEY TAKEAWAYS

There is room to build on the strengths and opportunities and address critical gaps to achieve Shaler Township's goals. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan highlights critical insights into the Township's demographic trends, recreational assets, and areas of need. These findings form the foundation for shaping a responsive, inclusive, and sustainable parks and recreation system for the coming decades:



Strong Community Use

- » Parks are well-loved and generally well-kept, but many are in need of modernization.



Accessibility is a Rising Priority

- » Accessibility is emerging as an important priority, particularly as park use grows among seniors and families with children.



High-Impact Opportunities at Kiwanis Park

- » Kiwanis Park has strategic potential for new investment, especially in supporting a potential recreation center and expanding regional trail access.



System-Wide Standards Can Enhance User Experience

- » Formalizing maintenance practices, signage, and design standards could elevate the overall user experience across the park system.



Many of Shaler Township's parks are located in picturesque settings, which is considered a major strength of the park system that draws in the community.



05

Plan Framework



05

Plan Framework

OVERVIEW

The Shaler Township Plan Framework outlines the key themes and priority projects developed throughout the planning process. Building on comprehensive assessments of existing conditions and community engagement initiatives, the goals, objectives, and

action items of the Plan Framework identify elements that support the mission and vision of the parks and recreation system in Shaler Township. These action items align with the key goals of the plan and detail responsible parties, estimated costs, and priority levels.

our community mission:

"To provide quality recreational facilities, parks, and programs, which are safe, diverse, sustainable, and enriching to the community through our commitment to public service"

our parks vision:

"The Shaler Township Parks and Recreation Program will create a lifetime of memorable experiences for residents and visitors."



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

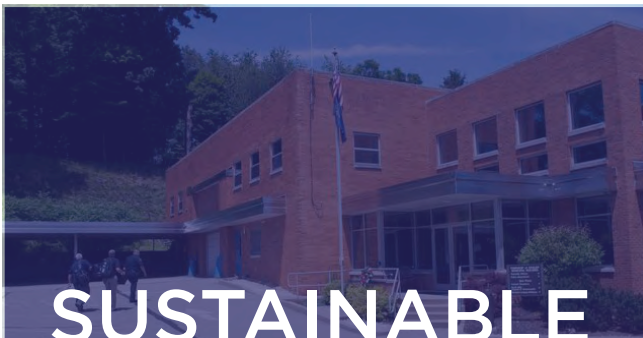
The planning process, and its resultant recommendations, are guided by the four key principles below:



A safe parks system allows people of all ages and abilities to access and enjoy public space without barriers or discomfort. In Shaler Township, highways, railroads, waterways, steep slopes, and other features create disjointed or unsafe walking routes between neighborhoods and parks. A future-ready system will address these physical challenges by improving trail connections, crossings, visibility, and on-site infrastructure — making parks feel not only physically secure, but also socially welcoming and navigable for everyone.



Parks should offer more than open space — they should provide meaningful experiences that enrich daily life and promote wellness. Many Shaler Township residents live within a 10-minute walk of a public park, but the quality and functionality of those spaces vary. Without consistent design standards, clear investment priorities, or sufficient funding for care and upkeep, many parks lack the amenities needed to serve as true neighborhood or community destinations. In a community survey, only 54% of respondents said they were satisfied with park quality, reinforcing the need for more enriching, engaging, and well-equipped spaces.



A sustainable parks system balances what the community wants with what it can realistically operate and maintain over time. That means aligning new investments with staff capacity, maintenance budgets, and lifecycle costs. It also means streamlining underused or redundant features, using durable materials, and clustering amenities strategically. In Shaler Township, a long-term plan for operational sustainability is essential to ensure that parks remain functional, attractive, and responsive to future generations.



A diverse parks system meets the needs of a wide range of users — across age, ability, interest, and background. Shaler Township's parks must serve toddlers and teens, active adults and older adults, organized sports leagues and casual visitors alike. Diversity is about offering different types of spaces and experiences — from quiet natural areas to vibrant community hubs — while also designing inclusively and equitably so that no resident feels left out of the parks system.

Goal 1:

PRESERVE AND ENHANCE EXISTING PARK ASSETS

Prioritize maintaining and improving current parks before pursuing major new development.



OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Improve accessibility and comfort in all parks to ensure equitable use for all residents.
- ✓ Strengthen neighborhood and community connectivity through enhanced signage, sidewalks, crossings, and trail linkages.
- ✓ Keep park assets in good repair through a systematic lifecycle replacement and reinvestment program.

Goal 2:

ENSURE PARKS AND FACILITIES REMAIN ADAPTABLE, RELEVANT, AND RESPONSIVE TO EVOLVING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Design parks to meet a wide range of current uses and adapt to future demands.



OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Invest in new amenities that enhance quality of life and strengthen Shaler's appeal to current and prospective residents.
- ✓ Create flexible, multi-use spaces that support varied activities and reduce single-purpose facilities.
- ✓ Develop clear guidelines for community-initiated park additions to promote transparency and ensure thoughtful integration.



Goal 3:

ENHANCE AND EXPAND COMMUNITY PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Build on the township's strong programming foundation to reach a broader range of residents.



OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Expand programs for underserved and underrepresented age groups, including teens and middle-aged adults.
- ✓ Deliver programs in new and alternative locations, both indoors and outdoors.
- ✓ Improve library access and parking to strengthen its role as a program and resource hub.
- ✓ Coordinate between the library and township to share resources and extend community reach.

Goal 4:

FORMALIZE AND STRENGTHEN PARKS OPERATIONS

Position the parks function as a distinct, visible, and well-supported community service.



OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Establish a dedicated parks department structure with clear leadership and staffing.
- ✓ Diversify revenue streams and cost recovery methods to ensure long-term sustainability.
- ✓ Implement modern maintenance and management systems to boost efficiency and service quality.

Goal 5:

ELEVATE KIWANIS PARK AS THE TOWNSHIP'S SIGNATURE GATHERING SPACE

Build on Kiwanis Park's role as the heart of community life with targeted, year-round improvements.



OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Provide dedicated, all-season gathering space based on feasibility study results.
- ✓ Improve parking, circulation, and pedestrian connections to reduce conflicts and support large events.
- ✓ Upgrade event infrastructure, including electrical service, lighting, and amenities, to better accommodate gatherings.
- ✓ Add seasonal and comfort features such as shade, seating, and winter activation to encourage year-round use.
- ✓ Reinvest in the aquatics center by modernizing the bathhouse and addressing aging infrastructure to preserve it as a community treasure.



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06

Park Improvements



06

Park Improvements

OVERVIEW

This chapter builds from the mission, vision, goals, and objectives established in the framework to describe strategies that can guide physical improvements across Shaler Township’s park system.

Together, they form the bridge between the Township’s long-term aspirations and the tangible enhancements that shape everyday experiences in parks.

STRATEGIES



Enhance Park Accessibility, Safety & User Comfort



Develop Flexible Multi-Use Facilities that Accommodate a Range of Community Activities and Events



Expand Trails and Connectivity





Enhance Park Accessibility, Safety & User Comfort

As spaces that serve the public, Shaler's parks should strive to meet the accessibility needs of all users, regardless of age or ability. At a minimum, all parks should meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines and strive to achieve the higher standard of Universal Design, which creates unified experiences for all users rather than separate facilities for those with disabilities. This can be achieved through the following features:

- » **Striping and signing barrier free parking stalls**
- » **Creating smooth, firm surfaces suitable for wheeled or assistive devices with slopes meeting ADA guidelines**
- » **Accessible seating areas, including companion seating pads near benches (paved areas adjacent to benches for users of assistive devices)**
- » **Inclusive play equipment, such as ground level features, sensory panels or companion swings**

While accessibility provides the means for access, comfort considerations provide the means for enjoyment. User comfort should be considered in all park planning decisions, and specific features could include:

- » **Shaded seating and play features to avoid summer heat**
- » **Seating located intermittently along pathways for respite during park usage**
- » **Seating amenities that include backs and armrests to provide support to those that need it**
- » **Access to water fountains for hydration**
- » **Restrooms readily accessible within the park with accessibility features such as clear turning radii, grab bars and lever hardware**

Develop Flexible Multi-Use Facilities that Accommodate a Range of Community Activities and Events

As park use intensifies and available land becomes more limited, Shaler's parks should be designed to support multiple activities within a shared footprint. Flexible facilities allow the Township to respond to changing recreation trends, host a range of programs and events, and maximize the usefulness of existing park assets. This can be achieved through the following approaches:

- » **Designing outdoor spaces such as multi-use courts that can accommodate multiple uses, including programs, informal gatherings, and special events**
- » **Incorporating shelters, power access, and clear signage to ensure spaces are programming-ready**
- » **Ensuring all flexible spaces are accessible to users of all ages and abilities**

As demand for Library programming continues to grow and on-site capacity is constrained, parks can serve as complementary venues that bring programs closer to neighborhoods and activate underutilized areas of the system. When designed intentionally, these spaces can support shared use while maintaining clear scheduling and management expectations.

Expand Trails and Connectivity

Trails play an important role in connecting residents to parks, neighborhoods, and everyday destinations while supporting recreation, mobility, and overall community wellness. Resident engagement and peer benchmarking indicate that while Shaler Township performs in line with comparable communities in many park system areas, it lags behind regional and national peers in trail mileage and connectivity. Strategic investment in trails represents a key opportunity to strengthen system performance and remain competitive as a desirable place to live.

Expanding the trail network can improve access to park assets and community facilities that are currently difficult to reach due to roadway barriers, topography, or limited sidewalk infrastructure. Connected trails allow residents to experience parks as part of a broader network rather than isolated sites, supporting both recreational use and functional, everyday movement. These connections also enhance access for users of all ages and abilities when designed with safety, visibility, and accessibility in mind.

Trail investments should focus on expanding overall mileage, improving neighborhood access, and closing gaps between existing assets while balancing environmental constraints and long-term maintenance considerations. When coordinated with capital planning, partnerships, and grant opportunities, trail expansion can strengthen Shaler’s competitiveness, improve quality of life, and reinforce the identity of its parks as accessible, interconnected community spaces.

Key approaches include:

- » **Prioritizing trail segments that expand mileage and improve regional and neighborhood connectivity**
- » **Strengthening access to parks through improved crossings, trailheads, and sidewalk connections**
- » **Using feasibility analysis and benchmarking to guide alignment, phasing, and investment decisions**



Source: City of Cambridge



Source: Dane County



Dog Parks

The Shaler community has expressed interest in developing a dog park facility to provide dedicated off-leash recreation space for residents and their pets. When the infrastructure for successful operations exists, dog parks can serve as valuable community amenities that promote active lifestyles, provide socialization opportunities for both pets and owners, and create gathering spaces that strengthen neighborhood connections.

However, successful dog park operations depend on effective management systems, clear regulations, and enforcement capacity to ensure public safety and maintain facility quality over time. Key administrative considerations include:

- » **Licensing and permitting systems to verify vaccination requirements and establish user accountability**
- » **Enforcement capacity to address behavioral issues, manage conflicts between users, and respond to incidents**
- » **Maintenance protocols for regular cleaning, waste management, and facility upkeep**
- » **Liability management including insurance coverage and user agreements**
- » **Rule development and posting covering hours, size separation, prohibited behaviors, and owner responsibilities**

In order to understand the feasibility of a dog park, the Township should conduct due diligence prior to committing resources to facility development. Operational requirements, staffing implications, liability considerations, potential partnership opportunities, and long-term maintenance costs should be assessed to determine whether a dog park aligns with the Township's service delivery capacity and priorities.



Source (Above): Philadelphia Dog Park Guide. Source (Below): Pups on Passynuk.



PARK IMPROVEMENTS

The strategies in this section represent guiding ideas for enhancing Shaler’s parks as a system. The following sections apply these ideas to individual parks among other improvements, identifying where and how these broader strategies can take shape on the ground.

SYSTEM WIDE IMPROVEMENTS

Shaler Township is home to a range of parks and community fields, each with their own distinct purpose and offerings to residents. System wide improvements are suggested to bring consistent quality and accessibility to all parks.

Recommendations

A Implement ADA improvements across all parks, including pathways and designated parking

B Develop parks and recreation standard site furnishings guidelines and implement across parks system

C Develop and implement a consistent wayfinding system across parks and trails

D Conduct system-wide park access study to identify park access improvements from adjacent neighborhoods

Character Imagery



Source: Piper-Wind Architects (Top), Pro Playgrounds (Middle), Studio Binocular (Bottom)



DENNY PARK

Located in the southwest quadrant of the Township, Denny Park is a soccer-oriented park with concessions, restrooms, a pavilion, and play equipment. The park is well-loved and could benefit from a variety of refurbishments.

Recommendations

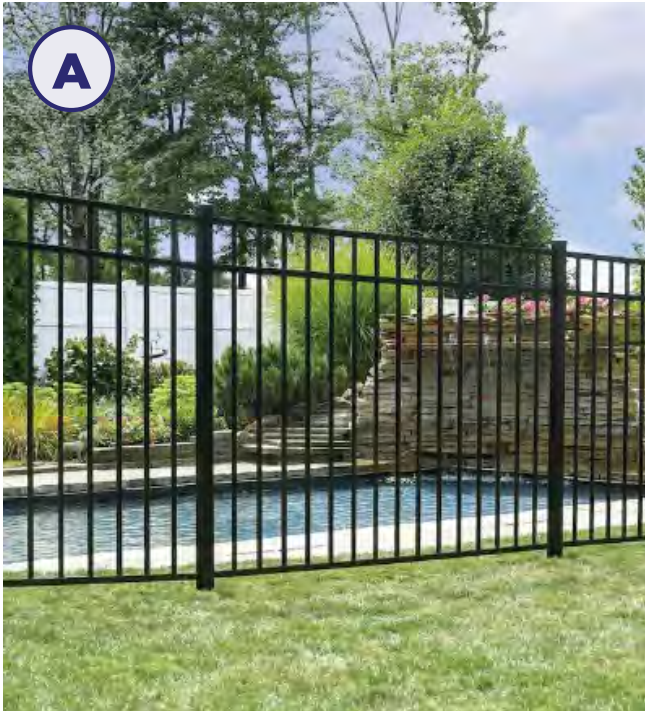
- A** Upgrade pavilion and add power access to support rental use.
- B** Upgrade entrance sign.
- C** Retrofit restrooms for year-round accessibility.
- D** Repurpose former basketball court/paved pad for multi-use activities when not needed for overflow parking.
- E** Acquire new property to expand parking capacity.
- F** Perform maintenance repairs on concessions, including new roof and paint.

Character Imagery



Source: Adventures From Kansas (Top), City of Hastings, MN (Second), Public Restroom Company (Third), FlexCourt (Bottom)

Character Imagery



Source: Lowes



DUSS PARK

Duss Park, located on the southern end of Shaler Township, is a residential park featuring a playground and a variety of sports courts including basketball, volleyball, tennis/pickleball, and street hockey. It is used frequently by residents and is well kept.

Recommendations



Replace or remove perimeter fencing to improve appearance.



FAWCETT FIELDS

Fawcett Fields is a long park situated in a wooded region of Shaler with notable topography. The park has soccer fields as well as a nature trail, fishing area, and restrooms. The location of the park makes it prone to flooding and negative effects of the surrounding nature.

Recommendations



Apply binder to aggregate pathway to minimize washout during flood events.



Continue invasive species control with grazing goats to limit spread of Japanese Knotweed.

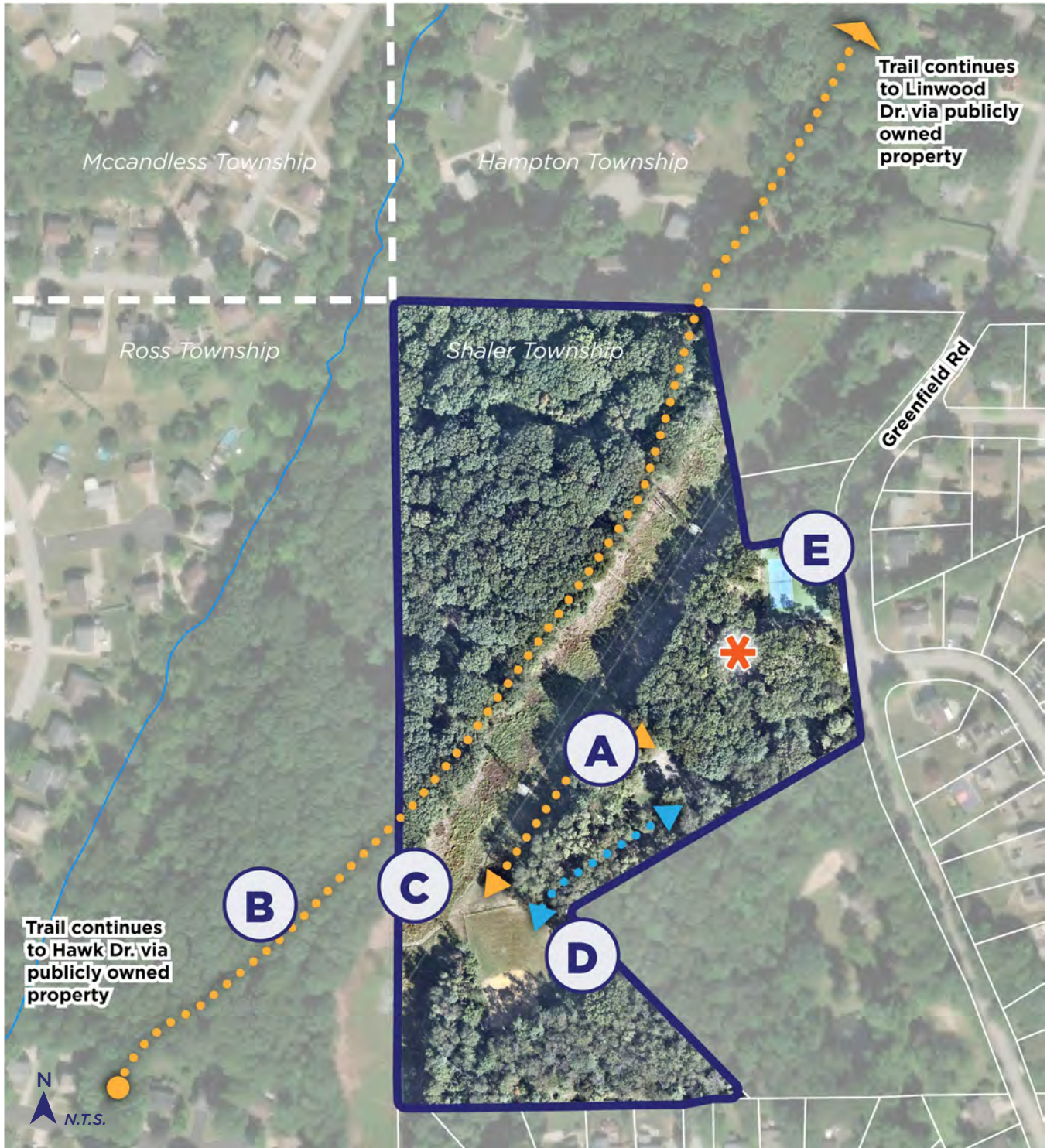
Character Imagery



Source: Veratec Engineered Products



FIGURE 6: Ellen Hughes Park Improvements Diagram





ELLEN HUGHES PARK

Ellen Hughes Park is a residential park situated in the northwest corner of Shaler Township. It currently offers residents a variety of fields and courts for sports as well as passive recreation options. The proposed park improvements are intended to enhance the current uses of the park and fulfill the desires of the community more effectively.

Recommendations

A

Add parking capacity and improve connection between parking and open space

B

Formalize trails through utility coordination and evaluate potential for regional trail connections

C

Build a small community pavilion in a flat, accessible area

D

Repurpose baseball diamond for other use

E

Improve entrance sign

Character Imagery

C



E



Source: Park District of Oak Park (Top), Vacker Sign (Bottom)



FIGURE 7: Farrell Fields Improvement Diagram





FARRELL FIELD

Farrell Fields is a park in the less developed southeast corner of the Township that offers many athletic opportunities for residents. The purpose of the improvement plans is to refine the accessibility and functionality of the park.

Recommendations

- A** Improve connection to baseball diamond
- B** Replace and modernize playground equipment
- C** Consolidate parcels and purchase outstanding properties
- D** Remove pavilion
- E** Update parking area for designated ADA parking and improved circulation
- F** Upgrade deck hockey to be multi-use court, including basketball, deck hockey, tennis and pickleball
- G** Add terraced seating for spectators

Character Imagery



Source: Inside Local Government (Top), Kadilak Homes (Middle), The Leisure Complex at Lough Lannagh (Bottom)



FALL RUN PARK

The largest of all of the parks in Shaler Township, Fall Run Park is a spacious, largely undeveloped natural asset of the community. The park is accessible to many residents in the northeast region of Shaler. The park includes trails, a basketball court, soccer field, pavilion, and other smaller amenities.

The park recently received a grant for the installation of expanded parking, permanent restrooms, pathway improvements, and a picnic shelter. This investment will focus on maintaining a high level of service for park users. The recommendations intend to enhance the existing infrastructure and make Fall Run Park a destination for visitors.

Recommendations

A Complete improvement project to add pavilion, four season restrooms, expanded parking and trail connectivity.

B Widen bridges to support ADA access and maintenance vehicle needs.

C Activate trails with public art or interpretive signage about native plants and wildlife.

D Construct pavilion at north end of park.

E Modernize playground.

Character Imagery



Source: GR Design & Construct (Top), C&G Partners (Second), Site Office (Third), Landscape Structures (Bottom)

Character Imagery



Source: Family Handyman

 **GALLY PARK**

Leased by the Township, Gally Park is situated in the southwest corner of Shaler along a commercial road. The parklet's sole amenity is play equipment, but it has potential to be reimagined and revived.



Recommendations

-  Explore new park uses.
-  Replace chain-link fencing with mid-height decorative fencing.

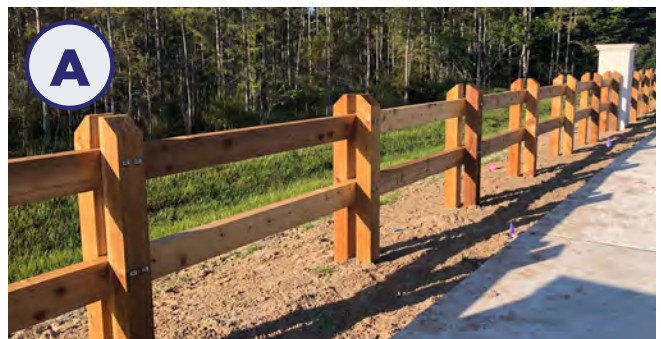
 **GLENSHAW VALLEY FIELD
(TIM ROGERS FIELD)**

Glenshaw Valley Field, also known as Tim Rogers Field, is a largely underdeveloped recreational area in a scenic region leased by Shaler Township. The park currently has a Little League baseball diamond and soccer field, but both are not high quality.

Recommendations

-  Upgrade with new fences and play equipment.
-  Study baseball diamond further for drainage improvements.

Character Imagery



Source: Lake Mac Family Life (Top), Best Fence (Bottom)



FIGURE 8: Kiwanis Park Improvements Diagram





KIWANIS PARK

Located in the center of Shaler, Kiwanis Park is the heart of active recreation and sports for the community. The park currently has facilities for basketball, baseball, pickleball, tennis, and swimming. The community pool serves as a gathering place for residents in the summer,

and other amenities like the pavilion, concession stand, grill, and year-round restrooms make Kiwanis a hub for all four seasons.

The improvements intend to make use of the land more efficiently, connect the park with other parts of Shaler, and build innovative facilities so that residents can further enjoy all that Kiwanis has to offer.

Recommendations

A Improve parking

- A1** New parking with turnaround loop (30 spaces)
- A2** Turf overflow parking (30 spaces)
- A3** ADA route to parking
- A4** Reconfigured parking (110 spaces)

B Realign park entrance

C Expand path connections

- C1** Connect to Township Hall
- C2** Connect to Mt Royal Blvd.
- C3** Connect to Eagle Canyon Trail

D Build a rentable shelter

Character Imagery



Source: MetaEfficient (Top), HC Company (Bottom)



FIGURE 9: Kiwanis Park Improvements Diagram





KIWANIS PARK

Recommendations

E Construct a non-rentable outdoor classroom structure with terraced seating

F Replace bathhouse (in progress)

G Relocate basketball courts

H Enhance landscaping

H1 Screening for residences

H2 Additional playground buffering

I Expand open spaces

I1 Remove drive for open space

I2 Expanded greenspace

J Reconstruct two combo tennis / pickleball courts with shaded seating

Character Imagery



Source: Western Timber Frame (Top), Pinterest (Second), Gardner Landscaping, LLC (Third), Wood+Partners (Bottom)



FIGURE 10: Shaler Township Park Access and Connectivity Diagram





KIWANIS ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

Residents of the Township have a desire for parks and recreational facilities to be better connected to each other and to the natural environment. Increased connectivity would create an expansion of outdoor recreation opportunities for Shaler residents and visitors, and could bolster the community’s reputation and encourage growth, beginning with Kiwanis Park and the surrounding district.

Recommendations

A

Establish a dedicated trail link between Kiwanis Park, Fawcett Fields, and the school campus to connect key recreation, gathering, and sports destinations.

B

Develop a pedestrian route linking Kiwanis Park, Township Hall, and the Library as part of a walkable community core network.

Character Imagery



CRAWFORD POOL

Crawford Swimming Pool is an asset of the Township that provides exciting summer recreation for Shaler families and visitors. Given the pool's age and current condition, additional study is warranted to better inform long-term capital planning and prepare for renovation costs.

Recommendations

C

Conduct a Detailed Conditions Assessment of Pool Facility and Develop Long-Term Capital Reinvestment Plan.



Source: Rails to Trails Conservancy (Top), Crawford Pool (Bottom)



FIGURE 11: Richter Park Improvements Diagram





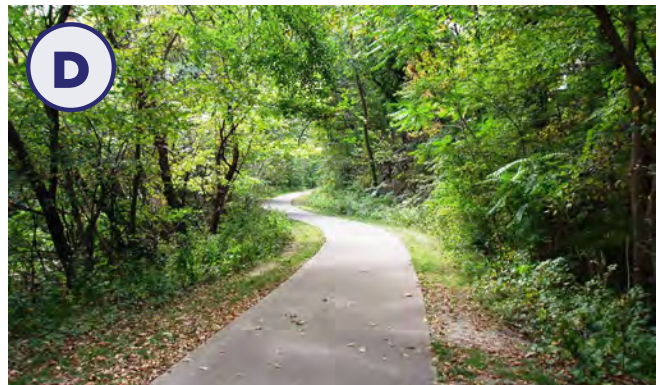
RICHTER PARK

Richter Park, which lies in the center of the Township, is a smaller, more densely packed park. Its existing amenities include baseball diamonds, batting cages, basketball courts, tennis courts, concessions and restrooms. To fully realize the potential of the space, the proposed projects suggest renovations and exploring the value of the woods along the western park boundary.

Recommendations

- A** Perform maintenance upgrades on concessions and restroom structure to modernize
- B** Upgrade deck hockey to be multi-use court, including basketball, deck hockey, tennis and pickleball
- C** Mark crosswalk between playground and parking
- D** Study feasibility of trail through wooded area
- E** Reconfigure parking for improved circulation/capacity and demarcate/pave ADA parking stalls

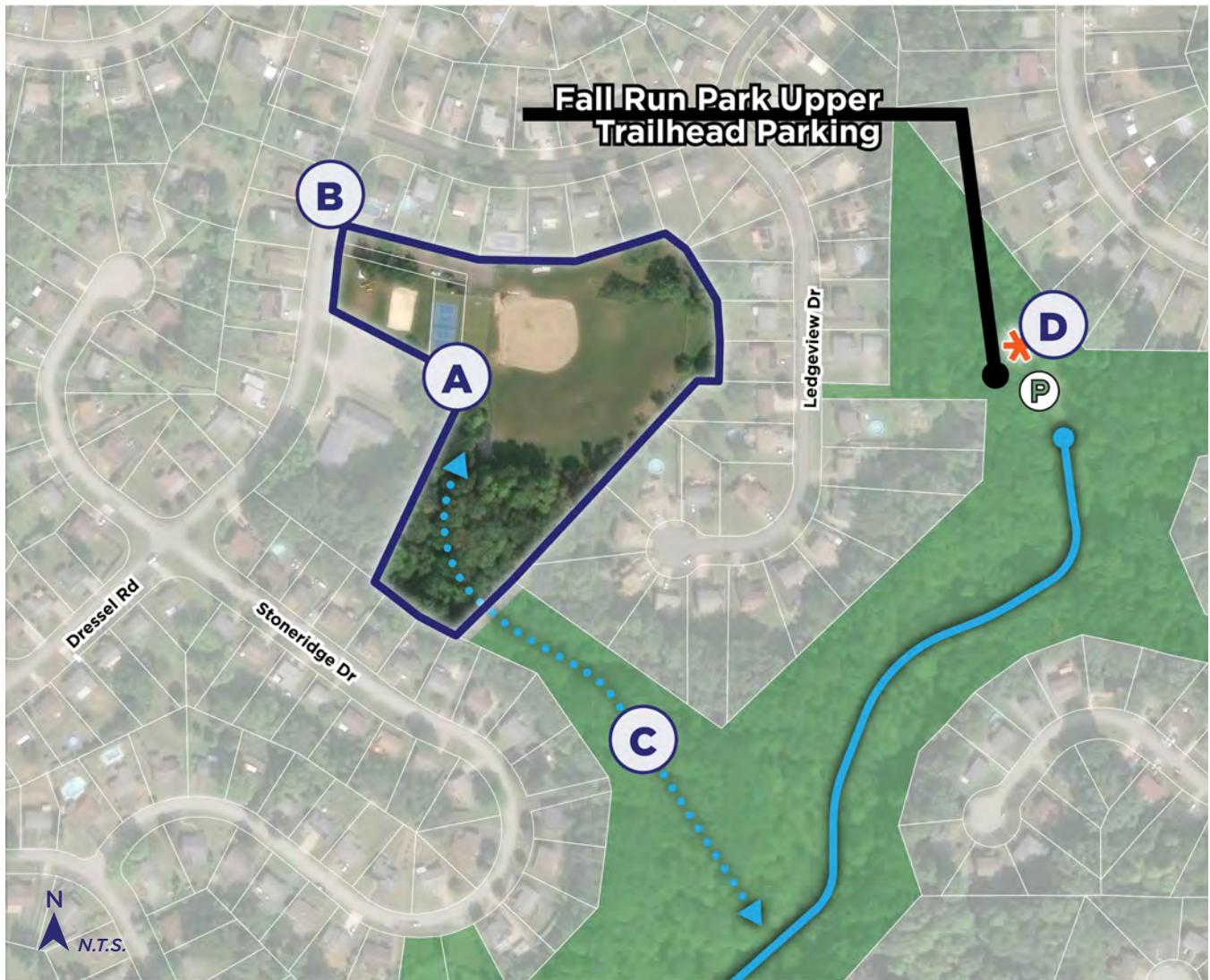
Character Imagery



Source: Public Restroom Company (Top), Supreme Sports of Chicago (Middle), Beaverdale Neighborhood Association (Bottom)



FIGURE 12: Stoneridge Park Improvements Diagram





STONERIDGE PARK

In the northeast quadrant of Shaler sits Stoneridge Park. The park has a plethora of sports and recreation opportunities offered to the public in the form of fields, courts, and play equipment. The suggested upgrades are centralized in bolstering the passive recreation options at Stoneridge Park and improving the user experience.

Recommendations

A

Formalize agreement for Bocce court encroachment on church property

B

Add signage for marble court

C

Study feasibility of trail connection to Fall Run Park

D

Add pavilion

Character Imagery



Source: SmartSign (Top), Issuu (Bottom)



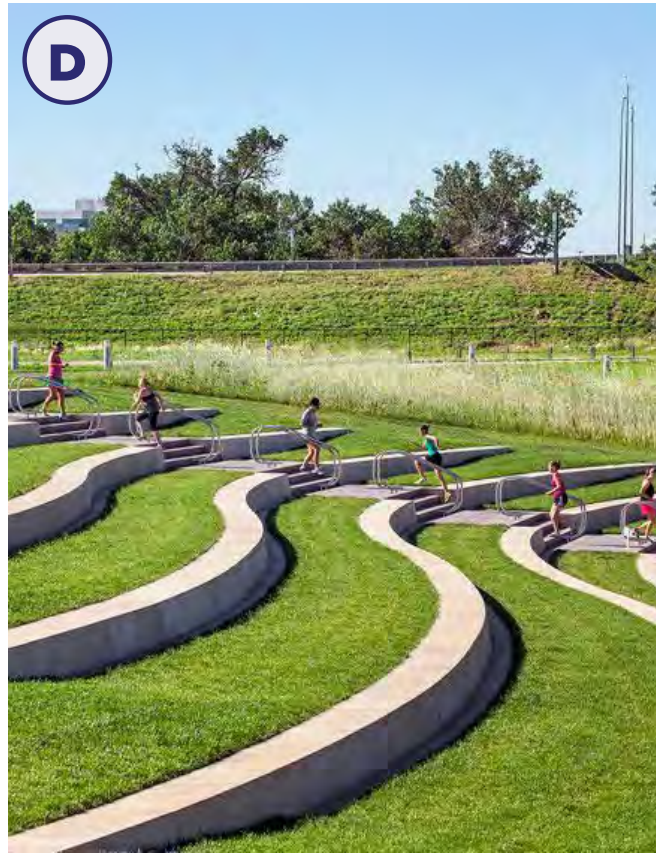
VIENNA WOODS PARKLET

Vienna Woods Parklet is a small recreational space nestled in a residential neighborhood. Its current offerings are humble, consisting of a full-size basketball court and playground.

Recommendations

- A** Repave basketball court.
- B** Reconfigure entrance pathway for ADA accessibility
- C** Improve drainage around playground equipment.
- D** Create informal gathering space by terracing or activating hillside slope.

Character Imagery



Source: Sasaki



LIBRARY

Shaler North Hills Library, located in the heart of the Township, is a center of connection and learning in the community. The suggested improvements capitalize on the untapped value of the Library and the opportunities to expand its reach.

Recommendations

- A** Develop parking strategy to expand capacity and mitigate conflicts with school.

Shaler North Hills Library





07

Programming and Operations



07

Programming and Operations

OVERVIEW

This chapter builds from the Township's current programming and operational landscape using findings from the Program Assessment, Staff Engagement Summary, and community engagement. These inputs identify the parks and recreation system's needs, which are addressed through a series of proposed strategies and actions.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline clear, forward-looking recommendations for strengthening Shaler Township's parks and recreation operations. The recommendations that follow provide direction for staffing, policies, programming development, service delivery, maintenance, cost recovery, and partnership management.

By investing in operational capacity today, the Township positions itself to deliver high-quality recreation experiences, activate new facilities effectively, and respond to evolving community expectations with confidence and flexibility. These strategies and actions provide a clear roadmap for building a parks and recreation system that is responsive, sustainable, and prepared for future opportunities.

PROGRAMMING AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Findings from the Program Assessment, Staff Engagement Summary, and community feedback reveal several capacity needs that will strengthen the Township's ability to deliver high-quality, sustainable parks and recreation services.

Key needs include:

- Dedicated organizational capacity to coordinate programming, scheduling, partnerships, facility operations, and customer service.
- Modern administrative systems for registration, reservations, communication, program evaluation, and maintenance tracking.
- A structured programming framework to identify gaps, pilot new offerings, evaluate participation, and align programs with community needs.
- Sustainable funding and pricing practices, including cost recovery expectations and diversified revenue to support current services and future facilities.
- Consistent policies and partnership tools, such as standard agreements, memorial guidelines, volunteer protocols, and procedures for community-initiated improvements.



PROGRAMMING AND OPERATIONS CONTEXT

The programming and needs assessment highlights a parks and recreation system that has evolved incrementally in response to community interest, available facilities, and staff capacity. Shaler Township has successfully delivered programs and events through a combination of Township-led efforts, strong partnerships, and dedicated maintenance support. This model has allowed the Township to provide valued services while remaining flexible and responsive within a limited operational footprint. At the same time, the assessment and staff engagement findings make clear that the system is operating near the limits of its current organizational structure, particularly as expectations for parks, programs, and facilities continue to grow.

STAFFING, ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE

The programming and needs assessment highlights a parks and recreation system that has evolved incrementally in response to available facilities, staffing capacity, and community partnerships. This evolution has allowed the Township to deliver valued services efficiently within a limited operational footprint. However, staff engagement and operational review

findings consistently indicate that the system is now operating near the edge of its current capacity.

Parks and recreation services in Shaler Township are delivered through a distributed organizational model. Responsibilities related to aquatics, events, programming coordination, and facility oversight have historically been managed alongside other municipal functions rather than through a dedicated parks and recreation department. Park maintenance is provided by a skilled Department of Public Works team that supports multiple Township facilities and properties. Programming is delivered through a combination of Township-led activities, Library-led programs, and partner-supported offerings. This structure reflects how the system has developed over time and has been appropriate for a primarily seasonal, outdoor-focused set of services.

As services have expanded, this model has placed increasing pressure on a small number of individuals. Aquatics operations at Crawford Pool provide a clear illustration of these dynamics. The pool is a highly valued community asset and a longstanding tradition, but its aging infrastructure, reliance on part-time staffing, and need for consistent oversight create ongoing operational demands. Experiences with aquatics operations provide a practical reference point for understanding the staffing, oversight, and maintenance requirements associated with facility-based recreation services. These lessons are particularly relevant as the Township considers additional facilities.

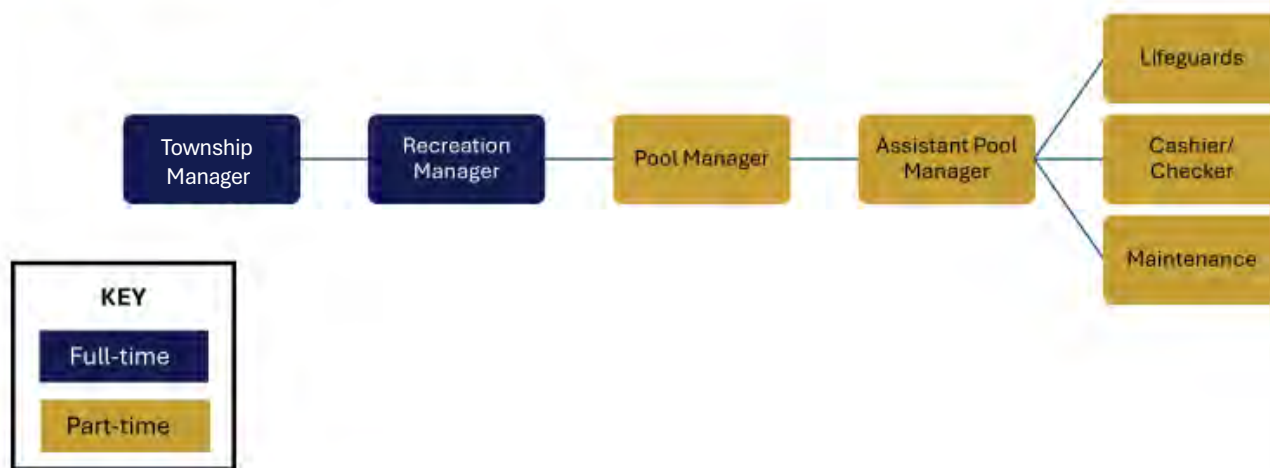


FIGURE 6: Parks and Rec Proposed Organizational Chart

Maintenance operations represent another important, and often understated, constraint. Maintenance staff take pride in their work and have successfully supported expanding park acreage and aging assets. However, new amenities and facilities permanently increase maintenance responsibilities and operating demands. Unlike programs, which can be adjusted seasonally or discontinued, capital investments create long-term obligations that must be supported year after year.

The Township benefits from strong external partners, most notably the Shaler North Hills Library, which operates with its own governance structure, professional staff, and dedicated funding sources. Library programming is well aligned with community demographics and plays a central role in literacy, family engagement, and civic life. While these offerings complement Township-led recreation services, they are not intended to address the full range of parks and recreation functions typically provided by a municipal system. Continued reliance on the Library without corresponding Township capacity would place unrealistic expectations on a partner that is already fulfilling its mission effectively.

Taken together, these conditions point to organizational capacity as a foundational consideration for the future of parks and recreation in Shaler Township. Staffing, governance, and internal coordination are system-wide factors that influence service quality, continuity, and the Township’s ability to respond to growth or change.

OPERATIONAL READINESS FOR EXPANDED FACILITIES AND SERVICES

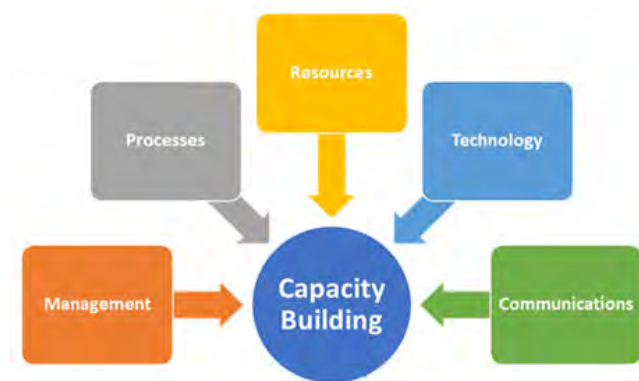
Current programming is shaped by the availability of space as much as by community interest. Township-led recreation programs primarily occur outdoors, at the Crawford Pool, or in shared and borrowed indoor facilities. While these arrangements have supported a range of successful programs and events, they limit scheduling flexibility, program diversity, and year-round offerings. Library facilities provide high-quality indoor space aligned with the Library’s mission, but they do not replace the need for broader recreational facilities

capable of supporting active and multi-generational programming.

The potential development of a community center would represent a significant shift in the Township’s parks and recreation system. Such a facility would expand the scale and diversity of programming, extend operating seasons and hours, and introduce new expectations related to customer service, scheduling, and facility management. It would also amplify staffing, maintenance, and administrative demands that are already present in existing operations.

Experience with current facilities demonstrates that successful operations depend on having appropriate staffing, systems, and oversight in place before services expand. Facilities introduced without corresponding operational readiness place strain on staff, increase maintenance risk, and can lead to inconsistent program delivery. Proactively considering operational implications alongside facility planning allows the Township to better align staffing, systems, and policies with future investments, reducing risk and supporting long-term sustainability.

These considerations do not assume that a community center will move forward, but they provide essential context for understanding what such an investment would entail. By identifying current constraints and lessons learned from existing operations, the Township is better positioned to make informed decisions about future facilities and services.





CORE PROGRAM AREA	PRESCHOOL (5 AND UNDER)	ELEMENTARY (6-12)	TEENS (13 - 17)	ADULT (18-34)	ADULT (35 - 50)	ADULT (51-69)	ADULT (70+)
Arts and Crafts	P	P	P	S	S	S	S
Basic Literacy	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Civic/Social Literacy	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Crawford Pool Programs	P	P	S	S	P	P	P
Family Programs	P	P		P	P		
Financial Literacy				P	P	P	P
Health and Fitness				P	P	P	P

TABLE 7: Shaler Township Age Segments Served

AGE SEGMENTS SERVED

The Figure above depicts each Core Program Area from the Program Assessment, with the most prominent age segments they serve. ‘P’ denotes primary market, and ‘S’ denotes secondary markets. Primary refers to the main target of programs within a core program area, the age segment that benefits the most. Secondary refers to an age segment(s) that is not the primary target of services but are enticed to participate from either interest or specific marketing. The Township provides services to all age segments with only a few unserved Core Program Areas, which is appropriate considering teens are not typically interested in health and wellness programming.

STRATEGIES

Strengthen Community Partnerships and Outreach

Shaler Township benefits from strong external partners, most notably the Shaler North Hills Library and youth sports organizations. These organizations collectively deliver a significant portion of community programming. Strengthening and formalizing these relationships will allow the Township to expand offerings sustainably while preparing for future facilities.

This strategy emphasizes leveraging partners intentionally, co-developing programs where appropriate, and establishing clear agreements and communication channels. Doing so provides consistency for residents, clarity for partners, and operational stability for the Township.

Define and Strengthen System Structure and Operations

Sustainable system growth requires a coordinated internal structure supported by trained staff, consistent policies, and modern administrative tools. This strategy builds the organizational backbone necessary to support capital investments, respond to community needs, and manage facilities and programs effectively.

This includes staffing, volunteer systems, maintenance planning, digital tools, scheduling systems, and policy alignment. These are all essential prerequisites for delivering high-quality recreation experiences and preparing for future operational responsibilities.

Align Funding and Cost Recovery Targets with Development Goals

As operations expand and new facilities come online, the Township will need a more structured funding philosophy. Intentional cost recovery practices, transparent pricing, and diversified revenue sources will support long-term sustainability without compromising accessibility.

This strategy focuses on using financial data to guide decision-making, preparing the Township for the operational realities of enhanced parks, expanded programming, and potential future facilities such as a recreation center.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Operations

Shaler has an opportunity to enhance operations through updated systems, consistent policies, and tools that support effective management of a growing parks system.

- Develop a standard policy for memorials and dedications to ensure consistent placement, design, and long-term management across all parks.
- Benchmark expenses per acre and per FTE annually and introduce efficiency metrics linked to staffing, maintenance, and facility use (i.e., memberships, program participation).
- Implement annual intercept surveys at programs and events; analyze results to refine offerings and share key findings with Township leadership.
- Update Township policies for event safety, cancellation, and facility use.
- Create volunteer onboarding, training, and recognition systems for both youth and adult volunteer roles.
- Improve digital registration and facility reservation systems to streamline scheduling and improve user experience.

Programming

Township-led programming should grow strategically and intentionally, focused on building capacity for future facilities, especially a potential recreation center and complementing the strengths of existing partners.

- Expand family and intergenerational programming, prioritize programs for health and literacy.
- Co-brand select programs with the Library to strengthen shared identity.
- Ensure ADA access and inclusive participation across programs.

Cost Recovery

Developing a transparent funding philosophy will support sustainable operations, allow thoughtful expansion, and prepare the Township for managing premium facilities.

- Establish cost recovery targets for each program type.
- Expand dynamic pricing beyond pool operations.
- Introduce resident vs. non-resident fee structures where appropriate.
- Explore diversified revenue sources such as expanded rentals, memberships and sponsorships.
- Monitor cost recovery at the program level and adjust based on data.

Staff Development

As the system evolves, staffing will play a pivotal role in maintaining service quality and supporting future programming or facility expansion.

- Hire a Parks and Recreation Manager/Director to oversee all services.
- Add staff capacity in alignment with facility and program needs.
- Invest in staff development through state association conferences, seminars, etc.
- Expand seasonal and part-time support during peak periods.
- Create career advancement pathways, including for lifeguards and aquatics staff.
- Maintain peer relationships to facilitate idea-sharing and best practices.



Communications and Engagement

Clear communication practices will help the community understand Township services, program value, policies, and opportunities to participate.

- Create a process for community-driven park improvements that occur between formal capital planning cycles, including vetting, approval, and funding protocols.
- Develop unified departmental branding and marketing assets.
- Improve digital presence and promote program value clearly.



08

Recreation Center Feasibility Study



Recreation Center Feasibility Study

OVERVIEW

Interest in a recreation center has been expressed by Shaler’s residents and Township leadership, prompting the need for a more detailed evaluation of its feasibility. This study builds from the demonstrated community interest in expanded indoor recreation and year-round programming and includes analysis of the long-term operational and financial sustainability of such a facility.

This study builds from the prior community-led Kiwanis Park Focus Group report while applying a data-informed analysis of site constraints, operational needs, staffing

implications, and financial considerations. The resulting findings clarify trade offs, test assumptions, and provide Township leaders and residents with the information necessary to make an informed decision about whether and how to proceed.

This chapter summarizes the process and findings, and more detail is available within the Similar Provider and Comparative Analysis attachments within the appendix.

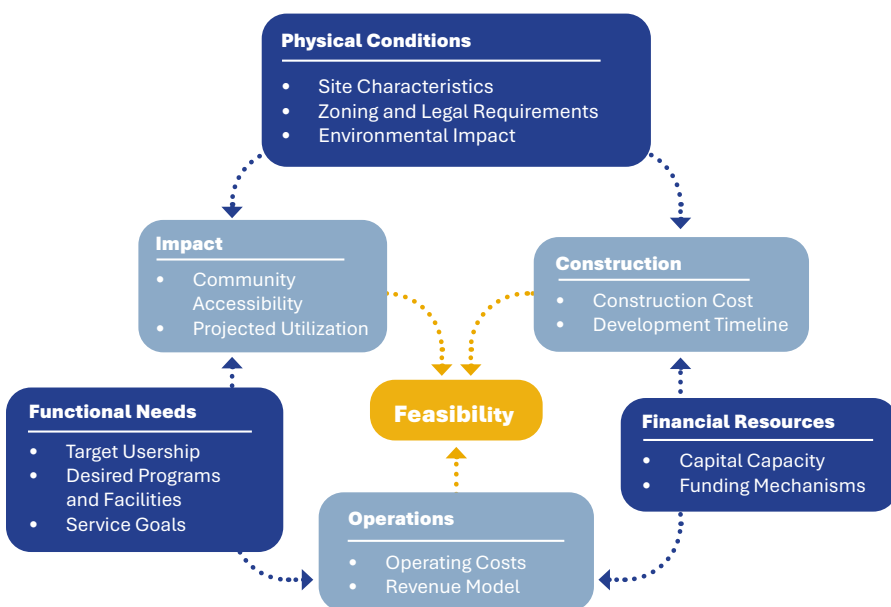


FIGURE 7: Feasibility Process Diagram; This diagram illustrates the relationship of the study components and how they are synthesized to test overall feasibility



KIWANIS PARK FOCUS GROUP & 2022 SURVEY		COMMUNITY SURVEY		OPEN HOUSE
INDOOR AMENITIES	PROGRAMS	REQUIRED	DESIRED	
Flexible Rental Space	Activity Classes	Multi-use Courts	Group Fitness Studio	Covered Outdoor Meeting Space
Catering Kitchen	Workout Classes	Parking Lot	Locker Room	Event/Banquet Space
Outside Deck with Roof	Meeting Space Rentals		Event Banquet Space	Warming Kitchen
Basketball Courts	Educational Classes		Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	Multi-Use Courts
Classroom	Senior Programming		Warming Kitchen	
Walking Track	Open Gym		Meeting/Classroom Space	
Pickleball Courts	Walking Groups		Dedicated Senior Activity Space	
	Youth Sports Classes			
	Adult Sport Classes			
	Bingo			
	Basketball Leagues			
	Pickleball Leagues			
	Volleyball Leagues			

TABLE KEY	
	Amenities
	Program
	Exterior
	Support Space

TABLE 8: Shaler Township Community Center Analysis: Amenities and Programs

COMMUNITY INPUT

Throughout engagement residents expressed desire for indoor space that supports year-round programming and recreation. As the table above illustrates, desires are spread across exterior, sports and rec focused, specific programs and food service / support spaces.

The analysis also revealed that residents value adaptability. Desired uses included health and wellness programming, youth and adult recreation, enrichment classes, drop-in activities, and community events that can adjust to changing trends over time.

This input informed both the type and scale of spaces evaluated, reinforcing the need for flexible rooms, sub-dividable areas, and scheduling models that can accommodate varied hours and uses rather than fixed program blocks. This also informed the staffing and operations model, as both amenities and program drive the resources levels required for the facility to function sustainably.

MARKET ANALYSIS

A market analysis was conducted that compared surrounding community centers and community rental spaces. This analysis provides important context for the construction of a new facility, benchmarking the Township against other organizations. This allows Shaler to better determine gaps, overlaps and possible market opportunities relative to facility scale, programming focus, and operational approach in the provision of various amenities, attractions and services.

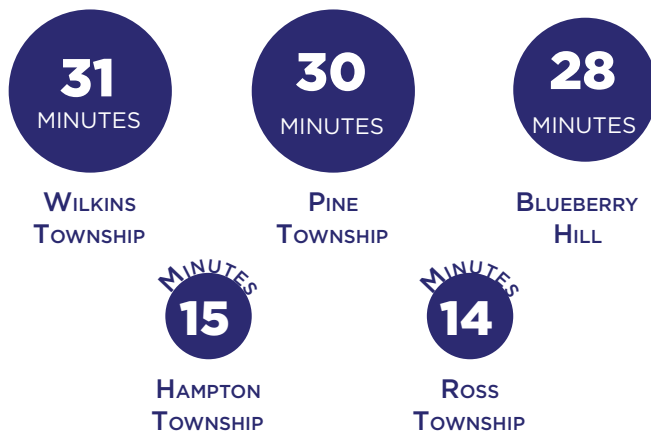
The assessment focused on similar providers in nearby communities. Components of the study included:

- Amenities and attractions
- Major programs and services
- Rental spaces and fees
- Memberships

Findings from this study ultimately informed the programming, operations, and financial performance assumptions of the resulting recommendations, including the staffing and operational expenses models.

Similar Providers

Five comparable community facilities in the Pittsburgh area were studied to define peer centers. The two closest to Kiwanis Park are the Ross Township Community Center and the Hampton Township Community Center. The remaining three facilities are located beyond a 15-minute drive, which residents expressed exceeded the desired travel time.



Amenities and Attractions

Of the spaces studied, rental space and a warming kitchen were the only features consistently offered by all evaluated facilities. Other commonly provided amenities include basketball courts and pickleball courts. The analysis suggests that while many core amenities are available within the region, no single nearby facility offers the full combination of flexible indoor space, rental capacity, and centrally located access identified by the community. This creates an opportunity for Shaler to selectively differentiate through flexible, multi-purpose indoor space and centrally located access, rather than replicating larger or more specialized facilities.

Rental Space	5
Warming Kitchen	5
Basketball Courts	4
Pickleball Court	4
Walking Track	3
Classroom	2
Outside Deck Without Roof	2

TABLE 9: Regional Core Amenities

Rental Spaces and Fees

Rental fees vary by facility based on room type, residency status, and duration of use. Several facilities offer bundled packages for multiple rooms or discounted rates for extended hours. Many comparable facilities rely on a mix of rentals and programmed use rather than exclusively on membership-based access, reinforcing the feasibility of a program-centered operational model. These fee ranges provide the basis for setting rental rates of the new facility.

Blueberry Hill	\$110.49
Pine Township	\$82.08
Hampton Township	\$81.50
Wilkins Township	\$28.57
Ross Township	\$25.42

TABLE 10: Average 1-Room Rental Fee/Hour



SITE ANALYSIS

Kiwanis Park was evaluated as the site for this feasibility study due to its central location within the Township, proximity to other community assets, and its existing role as a focal point for recreation, aquatics, and special events. Its location supports the concept of using the park as a year-round program hub and expanding or relocating select programs and events into an indoor facility. Site analysis identified significant constraints that materially shaped feasibility outcomes.

Parking

Parking functions under a shared-use model that generally performs adequately day to day, but experiences stress during peak programming and major events. The addition of new parking, however will necessarily reduce the availability of open space, reinforcing the need to carefully manage facility size and program overlap.

Topography and Buildable Area

One of the largest opportunities within Kiwanis Park is the recent demolition of the Jeffery School, leaving valuable flat unprogrammed open space available within the park. This is especially valuable given that large portions of the park contain steep slopes that are unsuitable for development.

Analysis estimates that **only 58% of the total park acreage is suitable for building**. With less than 10% of that area being the Jeffery School site, it will likely be necessary to remove existing park functions in order to accommodate the new uses needed to service the new recreation center.

Site Utilities

While utility infrastructure was not studied in depth, the identified location for the recreation facility is adjacent the Jeffery School site and utilities likely remain accessible to extend service to the new facility.



FIGURE 8: Photo of ideal building placement.

FIGURE 9: Kiwanis Park Existing Facilities



FIGURE 10: Kiwanis Park Circulation and Parking Counts





FACILITY RIGHT-SIZING

Using program priorities and site constraints as inputs, multiple facility scales were tested. Initial concepts were designed to fully accommodate all identified program desires, utilizing a Recreation Center model. This resulted in outcomes that were not feasible with specific impacts being:

- Elimination of remaining open space
- Intensification of existing parking conflicts
- Disruption of existing park operations
- Staffing levels beyond what could be reasonably supported

This led to shifting to a Program Center model which better balances site impacts and operational demands with core community priorities. The refined scale supports year-round programming and provides the Township with the ability to more directly link facility size to cost recovery goals and staffing capacity. This is assumed to be owned and operated by the Township.

The table below demonstrates the best practices for assessing programs and making decisions regarding cost recovery targets considering overall community value.

What's the Difference Between a Program Center and Recreation Center?

RECREATION CENTER

A larger, multi-purpose facility that operates on a balanced model, offering both structured programs and self-directed activities, with revenue generated from a combination of program fees and general membership dues.

PROGRAM CENTER

A facility primarily operated through achieving scheduled utilization of spaces (**around 70% activation**). Revenue relies more heavily on program fees and rentals than memberships.

TABLE 11: Program Classification Best Practices

PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION			
FACTORS	ESSENTIAL	IMPORTANT	VALUE-ADDED
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	High public expectation	High public expectation	High individual interest and group expectation
Benefits (health, safety, protection of assets etc.)	Substantial public benefit / negative consequences if not provided	Public and individual benefit	Primarily individual benefit
Access	Open access by all	Open access / Limited access to specific users	Limited access to specific users
Financial Sustainability	Free, nominal fee tailored to public needs, Requires public funding	Fees cover some direct costs, requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target	Fees cover most direct and indirect costs, Some public funding as appropriate
Competition to the Market	Limited or no alternative providers	Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need	Alternative providers readily available
Best Practice Cost Recovery Goal	0 - 50%	50 - 75%	75 - 100%

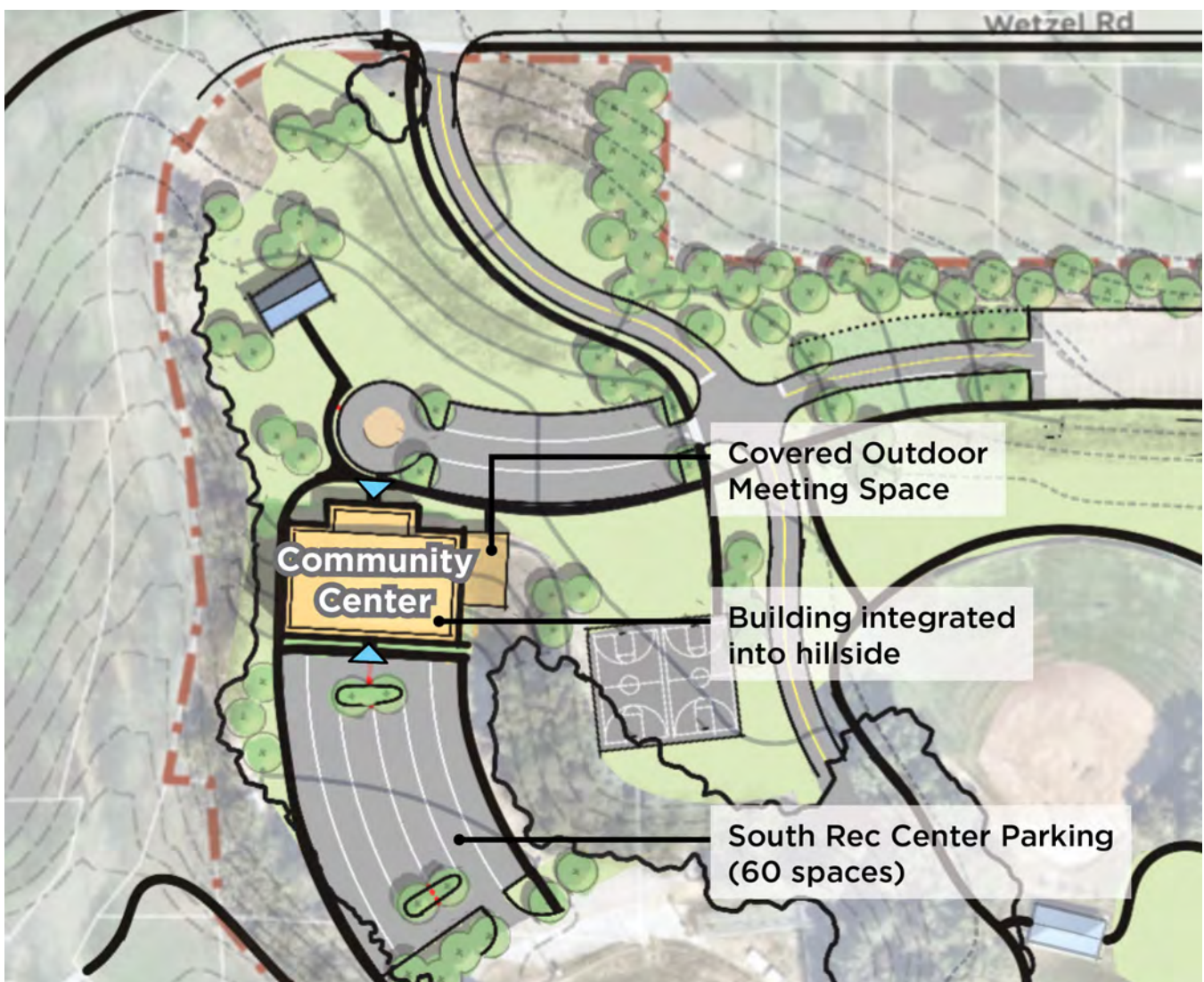
BUILDING REQUIREMENTS AND USE

This section translates the preceding analysis into a preferred building concept by synthesizing site conditions, community needs, market context, and operational considerations. The preferred concept is intended to serve as a practical basis for evaluating feasibility, understanding costs, and identifying key considerations and next steps required to advance the project toward implementation.

Building Placement

Multiple locations were considered on the site, and ultimately it was determined that the most flat open space with the least disruption or negative impacts was along the park's western edge. Although this location displaces the softball field, it allows the Township to take advantage of the Jeffery School site to minimize additional disruption throughout the park. Additionally, the slope between the two sites is approximately 30' in height, allowing the building to be integrated into the hillside and provide at-grade access to both upper and lower floors. The excavated soil volumes can be used to balance on-site cut and fill.

FIGURE 11: Recreation Center Conceptual Site Plan





Building Program

The ideal building program establishes the core spaces, sizes, and functional relationships necessary to create a versatile, community-oriented facility. This program is designed to balance diverse recreational, social, and event needs while maintaining flexibility to accommodate varying group sizes and activities. Each space includes minimum and expanded size options, allowing for scalable development based on funding availability, site constraints, and long-term growth objectives.

Three primary areas emerge to meet programming demand:

- **Multi-Purpose Rooms:** Flexible spaces for a variety of activities; the primary room can be subdivided into smaller rooms and serve as a banquet hall for rentals. Located advancement the warming kitchen.

- **Covered Outdoor Patio:** Extends the banquet hall for three-season rental opportunities, also located adjacent warming kitchen.
- **Multi-Activity Court (MAC Room):** A soft-surface recreational sport court that can be adapted for basketball, pickleball, and volleyball, with capacity for additional programming to maximize use. Can be subdivided into smaller rooms.

This results in a two story building of approximately **20,000 to 27,000 square feet**. Uses are primarily program space that can accommodate scheduled events and rentals. Additional space includes circulation, equipment storage rooms, a welcome lobby and reception area, offices, public restrooms and elevator. This structured approach will ensure the center will be capable of meeting Shaler Township’s evolving recreation and event needs.

TABLE 12: Shaler Township Ideal Building Program

SPACE	NOTES	SF RANGE	EST. CAPACITY
UPPER FLOOR			
Entrance Lobby / Office	<i>Includes front desk & office, waiting, signage</i>	1,300 - 3,000	1 - 2 Staff
Circulation and Restrooms	<i>Accessible</i>	2,000 - 2,200	-
Elevator	-	200 - 300	-
Multi-Purpose / Flexible Rental Room	<i>Dividable for rentals and meetings, or one large room</i>	5,200 - 6,000	200 - 340
Warming Kitchen	<i>Multi-purpose for programs, rentals, and events</i>	800 - 1,000	3 - 5
Storage	<i>Storage for chairs, equipment, sports gear etc.</i>	500 - 1,000	-
LOWER FLOOR		10,000 - 13,500	175-200
Multi-Activity Court (MAC) Room	<i>Pickleball, volleyball with a 2-lane elevated walking track</i>	8,700 - 11,600	175 - 200
Circulation and Restrooms	<i>Accessible</i>	400 - 600	-
Walking Track	<i>If resulting floor to floor elevations allow</i>	-	-
Elevator	-	200 - 300	-
Storage	<i>Storage for chairs, equipment, sports gear</i>	700 - 1,000	-
		TOTAL	439 - 647
EXTERIOR SPACE		1,500 - 2,000	60 - 100
Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	<i>Power access, optional enclosures for seasonality</i>	1,500 - 2,000	60 - 100

OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

Operational feasibility was a defining component of this study and offers insights into the impacts of a new center. The Operations and Programming chapter outlines considerations for growing operational capacity across parks, and adding a new center may further require augmentation of staff. Early concept testing demonstrated that larger facility models would require staffing levels that were determined to be not feasible.

These findings reinforced a central conclusion that the facility scale must align with realistic staffing capacity and operational philosophy. Expanding Township- or partner-led programming coupled with administrative capacity is a prerequisite to operating a recreation center successfully. Scheduling coordination, program oversight, rentals, memberships, and daily operations all require dedicated management, policies and systems. This is especially important to mitigate any scheduling conflicts between other uses within Kiwanis Park, such as aquatics, events, and outdoor recreation.

Hours of Operation

The operational assumptions and expense models were developed with the assumption that the facility will be open six days a week. It will be closed major holidays and for one week to conduct deep cleaning and repairs. This results in total center operating hours to be 63 hours per week.

TABLE 13: Community Center Hours of Operation

DAY	OPENING TIME	CLOSING TIME	TOTAL HOURS
Tuesday - Thursday	9 AM	8 PM	11
Friday	9 AM	7 PM	10
Saturday - Sunday	8 AM	6 PM	10
TOTAL WEEKLY HOURS			63

Staffing

Cost containment measures can be applied through active staffing management, with staffing levels adjusted based on daily facility use and activity demand. The Township can retain flexibility to scale staffing up or down during operations when utilization is low, and certain responsibilities may be absorbed by existing Township staff where appropriate.

Facility start-up requires intentional staffing lead time to ensure smooth operations. The staffing model assumes full operational capacity at opening, and key positions should be onboarded approximately four to nine months in advance, depending on the level of support available from existing staff. This approach allows the Township to establish systems, refine procedures, and scale programming responsibly prior to opening.

TABLE 14: Staffing Model

CATEGORY	POSITION	MINIMUM	EXPANDED	NOTES
Leadership and Administration	Recreation Manager	1	1	Daily operations, programming, and scheduling
	Administrative Support		0.5	Existing Township staff
Guest Services & Frontline	Custodian	0.5	1	Accounted for in pro forma, may be existing Township staff
Recreation & Programming	Part-time/contract instructors	PT/Contract	0.5	Specialized programs, accounted for in pro forma
Maintenance & Facility Support	Public works support	As needed	1	Major repairs and grounds support
TOTAL FTES		1.5	4	



TABLE 15: Operational Expenses

CATEGORY	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
Expenditures					
Personnel Services	\$127,814.43	\$132,927	\$138,244.08	\$145,211.58	\$155,550.65
Operations	\$77,632	\$81,513.60	\$85,589.28	\$90,767.43	\$99,118.04
Other Services & Charges	\$55,893.76	\$59,247.39	\$62,802.23	\$67,236.07	\$74,121.04
Total	\$261,340.19	\$273,687.99	\$286,635.59	\$303,215.08	\$328,789.40

Pricing Strategy

The Shaler Township Community Center pricing strategy should be designed to balance affordability for residents with sustainable revenue generation to support operations. Memberships can provide discounted access to programs and rentals, while programs and events can be priced to encourage broad participation across age groups and interests. Rental rates should reflect space size and market value, with resident discounts ensuring equitable community access. This structured approach can create a clear framework that supports cost recovery, promotes consistent usage, and enhances the overall value of the Center for the community.

Partnership with the Library should continue to be expanded to bring valuable programming to Shaler residents, however it should be recognized that these programs will most likely not recover costs and displace use by those that may pay rental fees. This should be considered when establishing the facility program.

Financial modeling should emphasize setting cost recovery goals by program and space, rather than relying on broad general fund support. Potential revenue sources should include memberships, rentals, program fees, sponsorships, naming rights, and external funding. Rental structures should be evaluated with consideration for resident and non-resident rates, tiered room options, bundled offerings, and weekday versus weekend pricing to balance access with fiscal responsibility.

Detailed revenue modeling, including projected revenues relative to operating costs, is documented in the Comparative Analysis Report included in the Appendix. The model presented there represents one potential operating approach and is intended to inform decision-making rather than prescribe a single outcome.

Operational Expenses Model

The five-year operational expense model above illustrates the anticipated costs associated with operating the proposed center. The model focuses on major cost drivers, including staffing, utilities, routine operations, and contracted services. Personnel costs represent the largest ongoing expense and scale directly with facility size, operating hours, and programming intensity.



FIGURE 12: Shaler Township Ideal Building Program

TABLE 13: Program Center Order-of Magnitude Opinion of Probable Cost

ITEM	NOTES	LOW	HIGH
Community Center Building	<i>Two-story indoor recreation and community facility, including core building systems and interior build-out</i>	\$13,500,000	\$16,500,000
Site Preparation and Earthwork	<i>Demolition, earth moving, and general site preparation</i>	\$450,000	\$700,000
Parking and Vehicular Improvements	<i>Approx. 60-space parking lot, pavement, curbing, striping and ADA accommodations</i>	\$300,000	\$450,000
Pedestrian Circulation and Access	<i>Internal walkways, crosswalks, and paved connections between parking and building</i>	\$100,000	\$150,000
Stormwater Management	<i>Drainage infrastructure and erosion and sediment control measures</i>	\$50,000	\$250,000
Landscaping and Restoration	<i>Tree planting, seeding and site restoration</i>	\$30,000	\$60,000
Design Contingency (20%)	<i>Allowance for refinement as design advances</i>	\$1,250,000	\$1,500,000
TOTAL RANGE		\$15,680,000	\$19,610,000

Notes:

- *Soft costs (15%) and construction general conditions (10%) are included within the line item costs*
- *Contingency (20%) is taken from base construction costs without soft costs and general conditions included*
- *Pricing developed using unit pricing from recent similar construction, as well as rough order of magnitude estimates.*
- *Planning-level cost estimates intended for feasibility testing rather than final construction pricing.*
- *Final costs will vary based on building size, interior build-out, site improvements, and parking requirements.*
- *Costs included are opinion of the preparer only and are in no way a guarantee.*

CAPITAL EXPENSE

The above planning-level capital opinion of cost was developed to establish an understanding of the investment required for the construction of a new center at Kiwanis Park. These estimates reflect conceptual assumptions related to building size, site conditions, parking, and supporting infrastructure and are intended to support feasibility testing and decision-making rather than detailed budgeting.

Cost figures are presented as a range to reflect the ongoing decision making required to guide projected costs. The lower end of the range reflects a compact,

program-oriented facility aligned with current staffing capacity, while the upper end reflects expanded building area, parking, and interior build-out. These figures should continue to be updated to reflect current market conditions, especially as it pertains to labor and material availability and cost.

Further advancement of the project may warrant the use of a Construction Manager delivery model, in which a construction contractor manages the design process alongside the designers and engineers. This brings real-time market insight to the planning and design process, limiting variability between project delivery phases.



KEY CONSIDERATIONS

This feasibility study clarified the scale, operational implications, site constraints and order of magnitude capital expense associated with introducing an indoor recreation facility at Kiwanis Park. While community interest exists, the study demonstrated that facility feasibility is driven as much by operational capacity and site limitations as by program demand. Below are key considerations identified throughout the course of the study that should be utilized to continue to drive the conversation regarding the recreation center. They include:

- **Operational capacity must precede facility development.**
The study demonstrated that staffing, management systems, and programming oversight must be expanded in advance of construction to avoid underutilization and unsustainable operating costs.
- **A program-centered facility model best aligns with Township capacity.**
A facility focused on scheduled programming, rentals, and facilitated activities is more operationally achievable than a membership-heavy recreation model.
- **Existing facilities and parking constraints reinforce the need for careful program and schedule coordination.**
Shared parking can function effectively if facility size and programming are managed to avoid peak overlap with aquatics, events, and outdoor recreation.
- **Site topography and existing uses materially limit buildable area.**
Steep slopes and existing facilities restrict feasible construction zones, with the former Jeffery School site representing a rare and valuable flat area for development.
- **Flexibility in space design is essential for long-term viability.**
Multi-purpose rooms, sub-dividable spaces, and adaptable courts allow the facility to respond to evolving recreation trends without requiring future expansion.
- **Cost recovery should be developed to align with Township goals.**
Program and space-specific cost recovery targets are necessary to understand potential levels of long-term subsidization.
- **Multiple revenue streams should be pursued for sustainable operations.**
Memberships, rentals, program fees, sponsorships, and partnerships must work together to offset operating costs and stabilize annual budgets.
- **Partnership programming provides community value but may displace revenue-generating uses.**
Library and civic programming should continue but must be intentionally balanced against rental demand and operational cost recovery goals.
- **This feasibility study does not represent a commitment to construction.**
The findings are intended to inform discussion, clarify trade offs, and support transparent decision-making rather than advance a predetermined outcome.
- **Next steps must test community willingness to fund both construction and operations.**
The Township should survey residents to evaluate support for the funding levels required to sustain a facility at the scale identified as feasible.



09

Implementation



09

Implementation

OVERVIEW

This chapter provides a clear roadmap for implementing the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan over the next ten years. It identifies the highest-priority actions for the Township to pursue in the near term, organizes all system-wide and park-specific improvements into a structured implementation matrix, and outlines a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to guide budgeting and phasing.

This chapter's purpose is to translate the high level aspirations into actionable steps the Township can take to achieve the plan's goals and objectives. These are then further supported by strategies that are applied across the parks and recreation system. As a result, these actions will strengthen departmental capacity, improve park conditions, advance major projects such as Kiwanis Park, and position the Township for competitive grant opportunities.

Because needs, funding, and community priorities will continue to evolve, the implementation framework is designed to be flexible and should be updated regularly to reflect progress and new information.



FIGURE 13: Plan Framework Diagram



PRIORITY ACTIONS

The actions below are pulled from the implementation plan as the highest priority. These actions will deliver the highest level of impact in achieving the goals of the plan.

1 Conduct a statistically valid survey on recreation center funding.

Use findings from the feasibility study to develop the survey and determine public support for construction and ongoing operations.

2 Complete a detailed facilities assessment for the Kiwanis Park Pool.

Use results to understand remaining life-cycle, safety needs, and long-term capital investment requirements.

3 Establish dedicated Parks & Recreation leadership and implement key policies.

Develop and adopt key policies that will improve service delivery and expand capacity to enable additional parks and recreation system opportunities.

4 Deliver priority maintenance, safety, and aesthetic improvements across early-action parks.

Implement restroom locks and building repairs at Richter and Denny; apply binder to the Eagle Canyon Trail; upgrade signage at Denny and Vienna Woods; and enhance the entrance and street presence at Duss Park.

5 Deliver ADA and site furnishings improvements across at least three parks.

Focus on visible, foundational upgrades that build momentum and support system-wide accessibility.

6 Advance Phase 1 planning and improvements for Kiwanis Park.

Prioritize circulation and safety upgrades and integrate the Jeffery School site while developing a funding and phasing strategy. Incorporate findings from statistically valid survey and pool facilities assessment.

7 Support programming through enhancing and expanding outdoor covered spaces.

Construct the small pavilion at Duss Park and add power to Denny Park pavilion.

8 Develop consistent branding and communication for the department.

Create unified visual identity and messaging to highlight investments, improve visibility, and support public engagement.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

This matrix translates the recommendations of this plan into a clear, actionable roadmap for the Township to follow over the next ten years. Each action is organized under a corresponding strategy that is tied to the overall plan goals. The matrix is intended to serve as a flexible management tool to guide annual budgeting, staff work plans, and future capital planning decisions.

Cost bands are provided for each action to reflect the anticipated scale of investment:

- \$ Can be completed within existing operating budgets
- \$\$ Fits within an annual capital allocation
- \$\$\$ Exceeds a single-year allocation and likely requires grant support
- \$\$\$\$ Requires substantial investment with phasing plan

These cost ranges represent planning-level estimates and are intended to support prioritization, budgeting, and funding strategy development. Actual costs will vary based on project scope, design decisions, market conditions, and site-specific factors.

The Implementation Matrix also assigns each action to a time horizon based on anticipated readiness, impact, and alignment with departmental capacity:

Short Term (1-3 Years)

Foundational actions that build capacity, deliver early wins, or address immediate needs

Mid Term (4-7 Years)

Actions of mid-range priority, those requiring further planning, design, or phasing, or those dependent on short-term progress

Long Term (7+ Years)

Lower priority actions or those that are larger, more complex, or grant-dependent improvements

ID	ACTION	COST	TIMEFRAME
1	ENHANCE PARK ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY & USER COMFORT		
1.1	Develop parks and recreation standard site furnishings guidelines and implement across parks system	\$\$\$	Ongoing
1.2	Implement ADA improvements across all parks, including pathways and designated parking	\$-\$\$	Ongoing
1.3	Develop and implement a consistent wayfinding system across parks and trails	\$	Ongoing

CONTINUES ON THE ADJACENT PAGE

ID	ACTION	COST	TIMEFRAME	
1.4	Improve park entrance and instruction signage	\$\$	Short	
1.5	Increase availability of year-round restrooms and install programmable locks	\$-\$\$\$	Short	
1.6	Implement beautification enhancements and necessary non-routine maintenance in parks	\$-\$\$\$	Short	
1.7	Improve and expand parking to address maintenance issues and improve circulation	\$\$-\$\$\$	Mid, Long	
2	EXPAND TRAILS AND IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY			
2.1	Coordinate with key partners, including utility companies, adjacent municipalities, and affected residents, to explore alignment options and address constraints for priority trail connections	\$	Ongoing	
2.2	Evaluate the physical feasibility of priority trail connections by assessing topography, environmentally sensitive areas, and right-of-way limitations to identify viable alignments and next steps	\$	Ongoing	
2.3	Conduct system-wide park access study to identify park access improvements from adjacent neighborhoods	\$	Short	
3	DEVELOP FLEXIBLE MULTI-USE FACILITIES THAT ACCOMMODATE A RANGE OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS			
3.1	Develop multi-use courts that can accommodate multiple recreational activities	\$\$ - \$\$\$	Ongoing	
3.2	Reconfigure selected parks to create larger, flexible open lawn/event spaces	\$\$	Ongoing	
3.3	Conduct statistically valid survey to gauge resident desires for funding the construction and operation of a new recreation center	\$-\$\$\$	Short	
3.4	Design and construct new outdoor covered program spaces that support a variety of uses throughout the year	\$\$	Mid, Long	

CONTINUES ON THE ADJACENT PAGE



DENNY	DUSS	FAWCETT FIELDS	ELLEN HUGHES	FARRELL FIELD	FALL RUN	GALLY	TIM ROGERS FIELD	KIWANIS	RICHTER	STONERIDGE	VIENNA WOODS	OTHER	NOTES	DCNR SCORP ALIGNMENT
			●					●	●	●				2, 3, 4
●					●				●					
●	●	●						●			●			
			●	●	●			●	●				Include necessary stormwater management for new impervious surfaces	
SHALER PLAN GOALS 1 2 3 4 5														
			●		●			●		●		●	Right-of-way and utility coordination may extend timelines. Use findings to identify grant-eligible segments.	1, 2, 3, 5
					●			●				●		
—————													Study findings may shift prioritization of trail segments and access points. Reevaluate matrix sequencing upon completion.	
SHALER PLAN GOALS 1 2 3 4 5														
				●					●		●			1, 2, 4
			●	●	●			●	●		●			
								●					If findings are supportive, develop plan for completing initial design phases; If not supportive, adjust strategy to provide programming and recreational opportunities through other strategies in this plan	
●	●		●		●			●					Should complement programming needs identified in staff and community engagement; evaluate potential for rentals.	

CONTINUES ON THE ADJACENT PAGE

ID	ACTION	COST	TIME-FRAME	NOTES	DCNR SCORP ALIGNMENT	
4		STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING, PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH				
		SHALER PLAN GOALS				1 2 3 4 5
4.1	Collaborate with the Shaler North Hills Library to identify and pursue opportunities to improve parking and access as opportunities arise	\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Ongoing		1, 2, 3	
4.2	Establish, expand and formalize agreements with nearby communities to help fill gaps in parks and recreation	\$\$-\$	Ongoing			
4.3	Expand family and intergenerational programming, prioritize programs for health and literacy, and ensure ADA access and participation access	\$	Ongoing			
4.4	Work with third party instructors to offer new recreational programs to residents	\$	Ongoing	Include cost recovery targets to establish Township subsidization		
4.6	Implement annual intercept surveys at programs and events; Analyze results to refine offerings and share key findings with Township leadership	\$	Ongoing			
4.7	Maintain peer relationships to facilitate idea-sharing and best practices	\$	Ongoing			
4.8	Develop unified department branding and marketing	\$	Short			
4.9	Improve digital presence and promote program value clearly	\$	Short			
4.5	Create volunteer onboarding, training, and recognition systems for both youth and adult volunteer roles	\$	Mid			
5		UTILIZE DATA TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS AND DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE				
		SHALER PLAN GOALS				1 2 3 4 5
5.1	Benchmark program and facility fees against peer communities, establish cost recovery targets, and update pricing on a recurring cycle	\$	Ongoing		1, 4	
5.2	Monitor cost recovery at the program level and adjust based on data	\$	Ongoing			

TABLE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



ID	ACTION	COST	TIME-FRAME	NOTES	DCNR SCORP ALIGNMENT
5.3	Benchmark expense per acre and per FTE annually and introduce efficiency metrics linked to staffing, maintenance, and facility use (i.e., memberships, program participation)	\$	Ongoing		1, 4
5.4	Explore diversified revenue sources such as expanded rentals, memberships and sponsorships	\$	Short		
5.5	Expand dynamic pricing beyond pool operations. Introduce resident vs. non-resident fee structures where appropriate	\$	Short		
5	UTILIZE DATA TO IMPROVE OPERATIONS AND DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE			SHALER PLAN GOALS	1 2 3 4 5
5.6	Track grant and funding opportunities on a recurring basis, including application cycles, eligibility requirements, and match obligations	\$	Ongoing	Develop and maintain annual grant calendar that tracks federal, state, and regional funding cycles and identifies priority park projects	1, 4
5.7	Maintain current plans, project documentation and advance necessary preliminary design and coordination for priority projects to position for competitive funding and construction readiness	\$	Ongoing	Actions positioned for DCNR should show at least 30% design (or project readiness equivalent).	
6	DEFINE AND STRENGTHEN PARKS STAFF STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS			SHALER PLAN GOALS	1 2 3 4 5
6.1	Add staff capacity in alignment with facility and program needs	\$\$	Ongoing		2, 3, 4
6.2	Invest in staff development through training, conferences and seminar attendance	\$\$	Ongoing		
6.3	Develop career advancement pathways for staff	\$	Ongoing		
6.4	Expand seasonal and part-time support during peak periods	\$\$	Ongoing		

TABLE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

ID	ACTION	COST	TIME-FRAME	NOTES	DCNR SCORP ALIGNMENT
6.5	Improve digital registration and facility reservation systems to streamline scheduling and improve user experience	\$	Ongoing		2, 3, 4
6.6	Hire a Parks and Recreation Manager/Director to oversee all services	\$\$-\$	Short	Structure pool operations to fall under purview of Parks and Recreation Director	
6.7	Develop a standard policy for memorials and dedications to ensure consistent placement, design, and long-term management across all parks	\$	Short		
6.8	Develop standard agreements for all partner organizations that outline roles, responsibilities, facility use expectations, and cost-sharing to ensure consistent and sustainable partnerships	\$	Short	All agreements should include term lengths, renewal triggers, cost-sharing, and expectations for facility care.	
6.9	Develop a standardized park maintenance protocols, including safety inspection schedules and lifecycle cost planning	\$	Short		
6.10	Adopt asset management tools to track park conditions and support proactive maintenance planning	\$	Short		
6.11	Conduct a detailed conditions assessment of the pool facility to evaluate remaining useful life, identify safety and code deficiencies, and develop a long-term capital reinvestment plan	\$\$	Short	Assessment should clarify remaining life, code deficiencies, accessibility needs, and investment ranges to inform long-term decisions for Kiwanis Park.	
6.12	Update Township policies for event safety, cancellation, and facility use	\$	Short		
6.13	Establish guidelines and process for community-initiated park improvements to ensure alignment with the Township's park goals and maintenance capacity	\$	Mid	Policy should require review against this plan, Township maintenance capacity, safety standards, and long-term costs.	
6.14	Evaluate the operational, staffing, and liability requirements associated with managing a dog park to determine departmental capacity	\$	Mid	Assessment should include insurance, maintenance, rules enforcement, and alignment with staff capacity. Findings may support a "do not pursue" decision.	



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) organizes recommended improvements across short-term (1–3 years), medium-term (4–7 years), and long-term (7+ years) implementation horizons. The CIP includes capital improvements across all parks and non-routine maintenance. The CIP functions as a living roadmap for budgeting, phasing, and grant readiness. It should be revisited on a recurring basis to incorporate updated cost information, grant outcomes, operational needs, and community priorities.

Cost estimates are planning-level and intended to support budgeting, prioritization, and informed decision-making. They reflect anticipated construction

costs, professional services, and typical overhead necessary to deliver each improvement. Actual costs will vary based on final scope, design decisions, site conditions, and market fluctuations.

With the Township’s capacity to support between \$200,000 and \$250,000 annually for capital improvements, the CIP exceeds available annual funding by approximately 30%. This underscores the need for ongoing prioritization, smart scoping and construction decisions and pursuit of additional funding sources like grants.

Kiwanis Park represents the Township’s most significant planned investment and is separated from the main CIP schedule to support clear decision-making. Advancing Kiwanis improvements will require funds outside the Township’s base CIP.

ACTION	2026 - 2028	2029 - 2032	2033 - 2035	TOTAL
System-Wide Improvements				
Implement site furnishings guidelines	\$150,000	\$200,000	\$150,000	\$500,000
Implement ADA improvements	\$100,000	\$120,000	\$100,000	\$320,000
Conduct system-wide park access study and improve park connections to neighborhoods	\$40,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$90,000
Totals	\$290,000	\$345,000	\$275,000	\$910,000

Denny Park				
Upgrade entrance sign	\$3,000			\$3,000
Add controlled locks for restrooms	\$3,000			\$3,000
Perform building maintenance on concessions, including new roof and paint	\$50,000			\$50,000
Add new pavilion	\$100,000			\$100,000
Add power to pavilion		\$40,000		\$40,000
Totals	\$156,000	\$40,000	\$--	\$196,000

Duss Park				
Remove perimeter fencing	\$5,000			\$5,000
Add small pavilion	\$35,000			\$35,000
Totals	\$40,000	\$--	\$--	\$40,000

TABLE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

ACTION	2026 - 2028	2029 - 2032	2033 - 2035	TOTAL
Ellen Hughes				
Upgrade parking lot		\$80,000		\$80,000
Develop trails		\$15,000	\$150,000	\$165,000
Build small pavilion		\$35,000		\$35,000
Repurpose baseball diamond	\$15,000			\$15,000
Improve entrance sign	\$3,000			\$3,000
Totals	\$18,000	\$130,000	\$150,000	\$298,000

Fall Run Park				
Construct shade structure at north end of park			\$20,000	\$20,000
Modernize playground	\$120,000			\$120,000
Totals	\$120,000	\$--	\$20,000	\$140,000

Farrell Field				
Update parking		\$15,000	\$100,000	\$115,000
Remove pavilion			\$10,000	\$10,000
Modernize playground			\$60,000	\$60,000
Add terraced seating		\$10,000	\$40,000	\$50,000
Create multi-purpose court and remove basketball			\$120,000	\$120,000
Totals	\$--	\$25,000	\$330,000	\$355,000

Fawcett Fields				
Apply binder to pathway	\$30,000			\$30,000
Totals	\$30,000	\$--	\$--	\$30,000

Gally Park				
Conduct park master plan to explore new uses	\$10,000			\$10,000
Invest in new park uses		\$100,000		\$100,000
Totals	\$10,000	\$100,000	\$--	\$110,000

Kiwanis Park				
Pathway to Library	\$50,000	\$500,000		\$550,000
Pathway to Eagle Canyon Trail	\$25,000	\$250,000		\$275,000
Totals	\$75,000	\$750,000		\$825,000

TABLE CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



ACTION	2026 - 2028	2029 - 2032	2033 - 2035	TOTAL
Richter Park				
Improve entrance sign	\$3,000			\$3,000
Improve parking lot		\$80,000		\$80,000
Walking trail		\$50,000		\$50,000
Multi-use court		\$120,000		\$120,000
Building maintenance upgrades	\$30,000			\$30,000
Totals	\$33,000	\$250,000	\$--	\$283,000

Stoneridge Park				
Marble court signage	\$2,000			\$2,000
Trail connection to Fall Run		\$15,000	\$80,000	\$95,000
Totals	\$2,000	\$15,000	\$80,000	\$97,000

Vienna Woods Parklet				
Multi use court	\$40,000			\$40,000
Totals	\$40,000	\$--	\$--	\$40,000

Aquatics				
Conduct facility assessment of aquatics	\$40,000			\$40,000
Totals	\$40,000	\$--	\$--	\$40,000

CIP SUBTOTAL	\$939,000	\$1,655,000	\$855,000	\$3,650,000
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Kiwanis Park Master Plan Improvements				
Main Entry Drive / Jeffery School Site Integration	\$900,000			\$900,000
West Parking Lot (New)	\$400,000			\$400,000
Pedestrian Connectivity	\$100,000			\$100,000
Tennis / Pickleball Modifications	\$500,000			\$500,000
Outdoor Classroom		\$300,000		\$300,000
East Parking Lot Reconstruction		\$900,000		\$900,000
Rentable Pavilion			\$250,000	\$250,000
Relocated Basketball Courts			\$300,000	\$300,000
Totals	\$1,900,000	\$1,200,000	\$550,000	\$3,650,000

CIP TOTAL	\$2,839,000	\$2,855,000	\$1,405,000	\$7,099,000
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GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The following section summarizes the primary state funding programs available to support implementation of this Parks and Recreation Plan. These programs offer opportunities to advance planning, park development, trail connectivity, staffing, and major capital improvements. Each grant type varies in eligibility, match requirements, and ideal project scale. The Township should use this summary as a strategic guide when preparing annual budgets, timing applications, and aligning projects with the most competitive funding sources.



DCNR COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM

Community Recreation and Conservation Planning

Planning projects prepare for future land acquisition, development and/or management of parks, recreational facilities, critical habitat, open space, natural areas, greenways; and river, stream, and waterway watersheds.

GRANT DETAILS

50% match, \$30,000 – \$75,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Kiwanis Pool facility assessment
- » Park access / trail feasibility studies



Source: PA Environment Digest Blog

Park Rehabilitation and Development

These projects involve the rehabilitation and development of public parks, recreation facilities, greenways and river conservation projects.

GRANT DETAILS

50% match, \$100,000 – \$250,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Kiwanis Park Phase 1 improvements
- » Duss Park pavilion & entrance improvements
- » ADA upgrades across parks
- » Multi-use courts
- » Wayfinding system implementation



Non-Motorized Trails

Covers the range of activities needed to plan, develop, and maintain a robust trail system, including:

- » Acquisition
- » Planning
- » Development, Rehabilitation or Maintenance

GRANT DETAILS

50% match, capped at \$500,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Fall Run to Stoneridge trail connection feasibility
- » Library to Kiwanis to Fawcett Fields feasibility
- » Neighborhood-to-park access studies

Land Acquisition and Conservation

These projects involve the purchase and/or donation of land for park and recreation areas, greenways, critical habitat areas and/or open space.

GRANT DETAILS

50% match, \$150,000 - \$500,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Strategic parcels that support trail connectivity or park expansion opportunities

Community & Watershed Forestry Grants

Program provides financial assistance to identify locations in need of riparian forest buffers, conversion of lawn to habitat, and community tree planting, and to design, implement, and establish those practices.

GRANT DETAILS

20% match, \$50,000 – \$250,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Invasive species management
- » Shade tree planting
- » Environmental improvements in Fall Run and other natural areas

State and Regional Partnerships

Regional planning, shared recreation initiatives, intergovernmental agreements, multi-municipal park or trail studies.

GRANT DETAILS

20% - 50% match, \$150,000 – \$300,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Multi-municipal trail feasibility
- » Shared programming or facility planning with neighboring communities



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Gaming Economic Development Tourism Fund (GEDTF)

Supports planning, design, and capital investments that strengthen community assets and quality of life across Allegheny County.

GRANT DETAILS

- » Competitive grant program administered by the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County (RAAC)
- » No required local cash match (subject to annual program guidelines)
- » Award amounts typically range from \$100,000 to \$500,000

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » • Park renovations and facility upgrades (playgrounds, shelters, recreation amenities)
- » Trail, sidewalk, and pedestrian connectivity improvements
- » ADA accessibility upgrades and site infrastructure improvements
- » Community-focused capital projects aligned with adopted planning documents



PA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DCED)

Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP)

GTRP supports a wide range of park, trail, and recreation development projects, including:

- » Park improvements (parking, restrooms, circulation, pavilions)
- » Trail feasibility, design, and construction
- » Open space and greenway projects

GRANT DETAILS

15% local match, \$250,000 maximum award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Park improvements like restroom upgrades, signage, trail segments

Multimodal Transportation Fund

Funds may be used for the development, rehabilitation and enhancement of transportation assets to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development.

GRANT DETAILS

Match varies, \$100,000 – \$3,000,000 award

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Trail and pedestrian safety improvements
- » Kiwanis connectivity projects



REDEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE CAPITAL PROGRAM (RACP)

RACP funds large-scale, regional-impact capital projects. These projects must demonstrate economic impact.

Typical Project Types:

- » Recreation centers
- » Major park redevelopments
- » Large-scale pool reconstruction
- » Trailheads or anchor facilities with community/economic benefits

GRANT DETAILS

50% match, Minimum \$1 million award

Requires legislative sponsorship and a multi-step review process.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

- » Major Kiwanis Park capital phases (pool replacement or significant expansion)
- » Potential future recreation center if justified by survey results



10

Appendix



PARK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

TABLE 19: Parks and Recreation Facilities Summary

PARK	ADDRESS	ACREAGE	CLASSIFICATION	SITE ACCESS	ACCESSIBILITY	CONDITIONS	PARK AMENITIES	USAGE AND MAINTENANCE	ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES	TOTAL
DENNY PARK	1198 Anderson Road, Pittsburgh, PA, 15209	9	Neighborhood Park	2	2	2	3	3	1	13
DUSS PARK	380 Friday Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15209	7.6	Neighborhood Park	3	2	2	2	3	2	14
ELLEN HUGHES PARK	3225 Greenfield Road, Glenshaw, PA 15116	15.79	Community Park	3	1	2	2	3	3	14
FALL RUN PARK	187 Fall Run Road, Glenshaw, PA 15116	93.65	Regional Park	3	1	2	2	3	3	14
FARRELL FIELD	1550 Etna Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15215	9.8	Neighborhood Park	1	1	2	1	3	1	9
FAWCETT FIELDS	485 McElheny Road, Glenshaw, PA 15116	10	Neighborhood Park	3	3	3	3	3	3	16
GALLY PARK	1537 Evergreen Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15209	0.22	Parklet	2	1	1	2	2	2	10
GLENSHAW VALLEY FIELD	1520 Butler Plank Rd, Glenshaw, PA 15116	7.33	Community Park	3	2	1	1	2	2	11
KIWANIS PARK	1 Meyer Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15223	33.6	Community Park	3	2	2	3	3	2	15
RICHTER PARK	25 Kenneth Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15223	4.81	Neighborhood Park	1	1	2	3	3	1	11
STONERIDGE PARK	807 Dressel Road, Allison Park, PA 15101	5.5	Neighborhood Park	3	3	2	2	3	1	14
VIENNA WOODS PARKLET	143 Danube Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15209	0.62	Parklet	1	1	2	3	2	2	11
TOTAL		197.92								

Demographics and Recreation Trends Report



Demographics and Trends Analysis

Introduction

A key component of the Master Plan for Parks and Recreation is a Demographics and Recreation Trends Analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to provide Shaler Township Parks and Recreation with insight into the makeup of the population they serve and identify market trends in recreation. The report also helps to quantify the market in and around Shaler Township, Pennsylvania (“Township”) and assists in providing a better understanding of the types of parks, facilities, and services used to satisfy the needs of residents.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

This analysis is two-fold; it aims to identify the *who* and the *what*. First, it assesses the demographic characteristics and population projections of the Township residents to understand *who* it serves. Second, recreational trends are examined on a national and local level to understand *what* the population may want to do. Findings from this analysis establish a fundamental understanding that provides a basis for prioritizing the community’s need for parks, trails, facilities, and recreation programs. This assessment is reflective of the Township’s total population and its key characteristics such as age, race, and income levels. It is important to note that future projections are based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the analysis and could have a significant bearing on the validity of projected figures. **Figure 1** provides an overview of the Township populace based on current estimates of the 2024 population. A further analysis of each of these demographic characteristics can be found in **Section 1.1.3**.

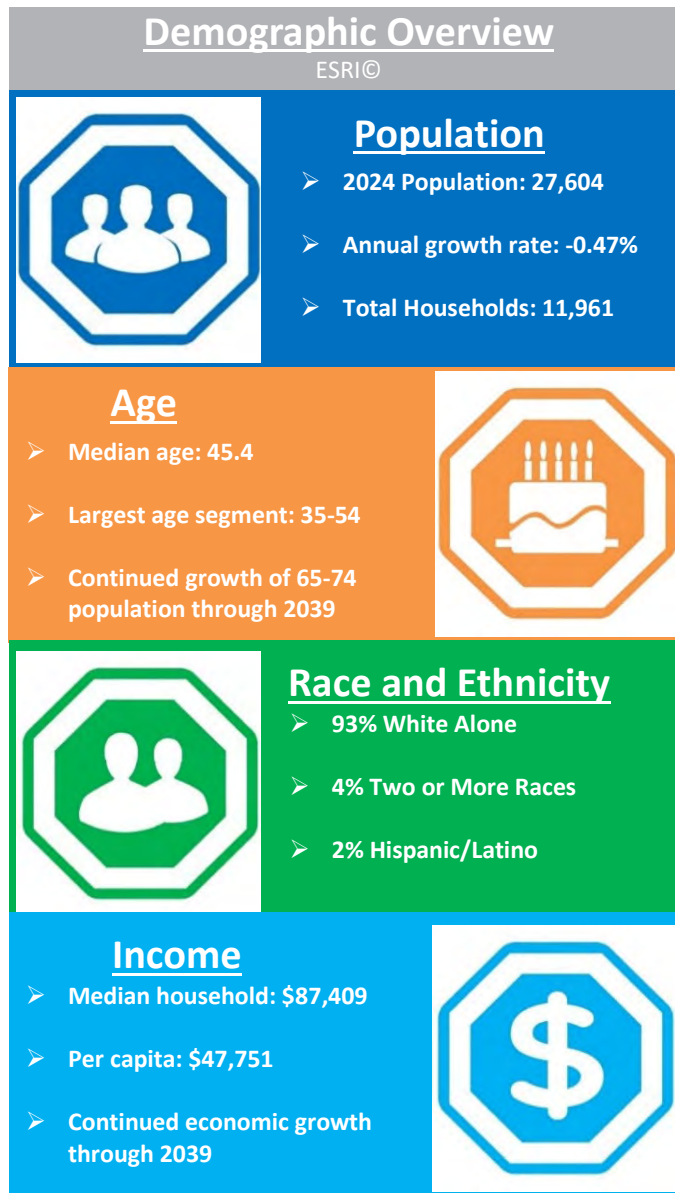


Figure 1: Demographic Overview of Shaler Township, PA





1.1.2 METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in October 2024 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2020 Census. ESRI then estimates the current population (2024) as well as a 5-year projection (2029). PROS then utilized straight line linear regression to forecast demographic characteristics for 10 and 15-year projections (2034 and 2039).

RACE AND ETHNICITY DEFINITIONS

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined below. The Census 2020 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2010 Census and earlier censuses; therefore, caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time. The latest (Census 2020) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

- **American Indian or Alaska Native:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- **Asian:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American:** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic or Latino:** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- **White:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

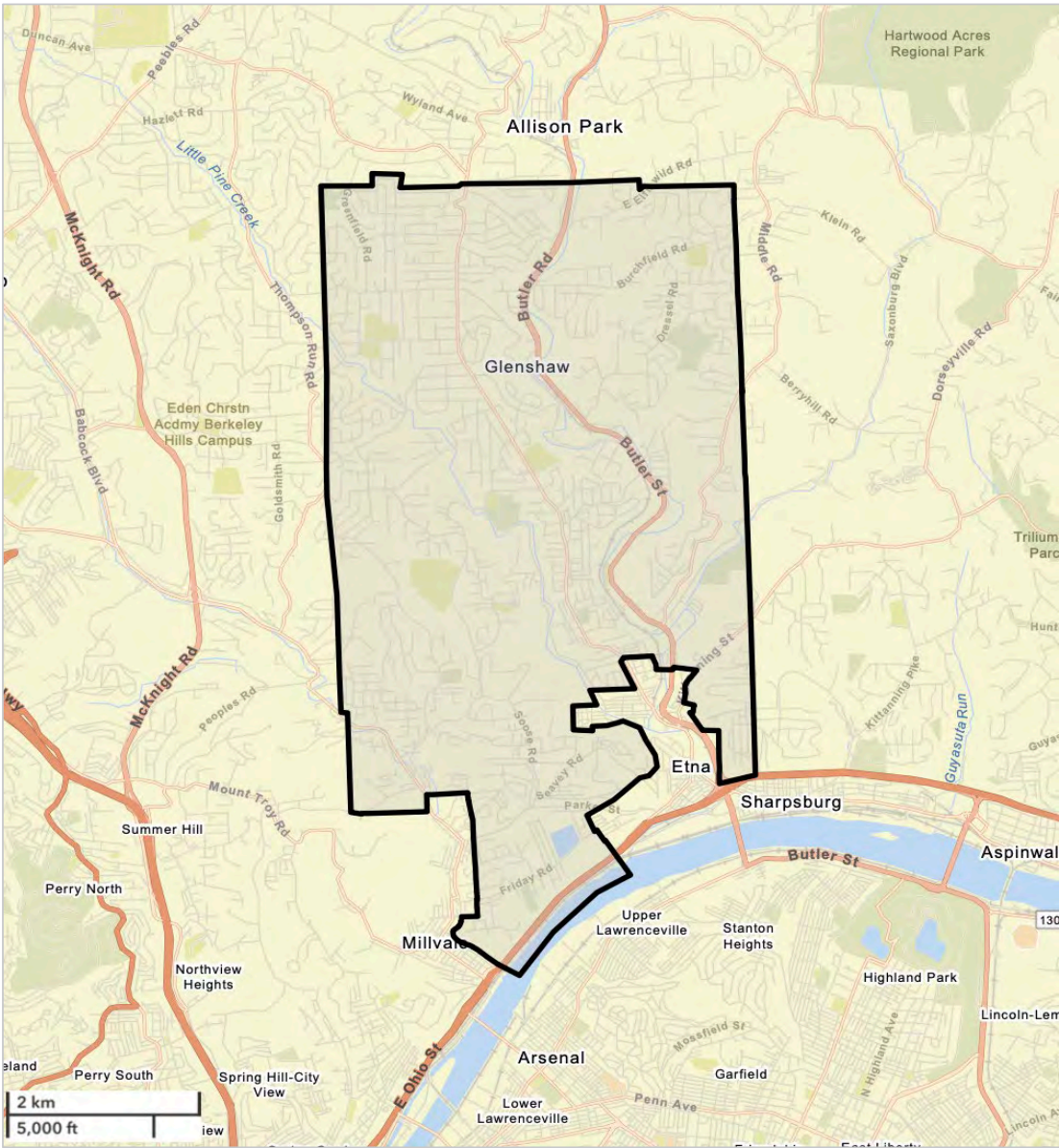
Census states that “the race and ethnicity categories generally reflect social definitions in the U.S. and are not an attempt to define race and ethnicity biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. We recognize that the race and ethnicity categories include racial, ethnic, and national origins and sociocultural groups.”

Please note: The Census Bureau defines Race as a person’s self-identification with one or more of the following social groups: White, Black, or African American, Asian, American Indian, and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, some other race, or a combination of these. Ethnicity is defined as whether a person is of Hispanic / Latino origin or not. For this reason, the Hispanic/Latino ethnicity is viewed separate from race throughout this demographic analysis.



DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS BOUNDARY

The Township boundaries shown below were utilized for the demographic analysis (**Figure 2**).



ESRI©

Figure 2: Service Area Boundaries





1.1.3 TOWNSHIP POPULACE

POPULATION

The Township has a stagnant population with a small decrease in the yearly rate of change from 2020 to 2024. The Township's population is expected to continue to decrease slightly in the following 15 years, where it is projected to reach **26,361 residents by 2039 (Figure 3)**. The total number of households has also decreased at a rate proportional to the population growth, falling from 12,162 in 2020 to an estimated **11,961 in 2024**. By 2039, it is estimated that there will be **11,782 total households** within the Township (Figure 4).

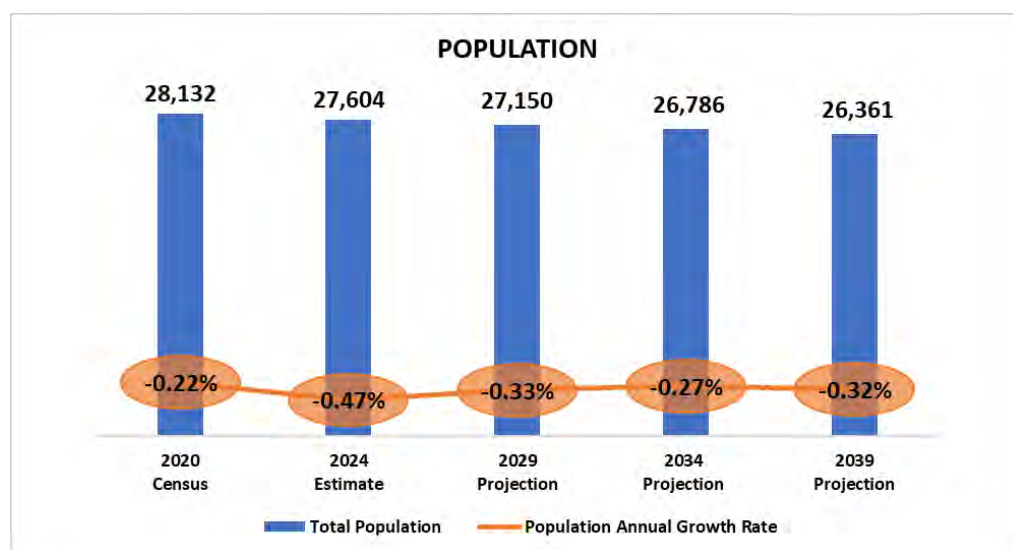


Figure 3: Shaler Township's Total Population and Annual Growth Rate

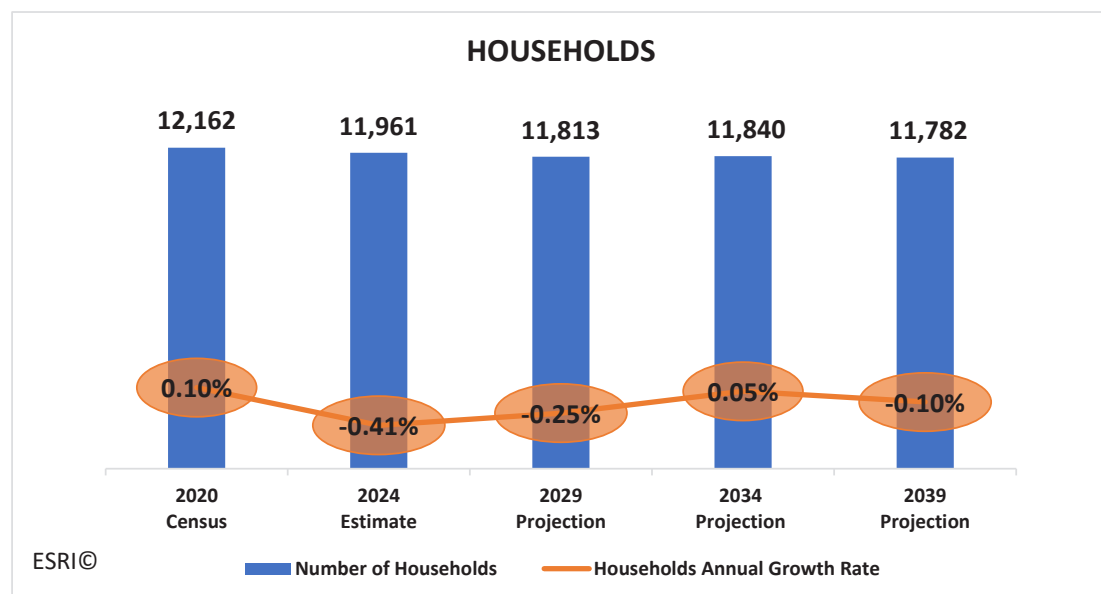


Figure 4: Shaler Township's Total Households and Annual Growth Rate



AGE SEGMENTATION

The largest age segments of the Township’s current population are **35-54** (25%), **18-34** (19%), and **55-64** (15%), comprising a relatively well-distributed population. Within the community, there is an aging trend, with people between the ages of 18-34, decreasing from making up 19% of the population in 2020 to making up **15% of the population by 2039**; meanwhile, the ages of 35-54 are also decreasing in percentage, going from 25% of the population in 2020 to making up **23% in 2039**. To accompany these decreases is an increase in the two oldest age ranges (Ages 65-74 and 75+) from 24% in 2020 to 31% by 2039. There is also a slight increase in the youngest segment (2% from 2020-2039). The median age has remained relatively the same from 45.2 in 2010 to **45.4 in 2024** but is projected to increase in the coming years. This would suggest a slight increase in senior programming, while either maintaining youth programming, or increasing youth programming to attract more families to the township - this should be reviewed to align with township goals. Determining whether or not the population is more active or inactive will help the Township plan out new programs that fit to the aging demographic (Figure 5).

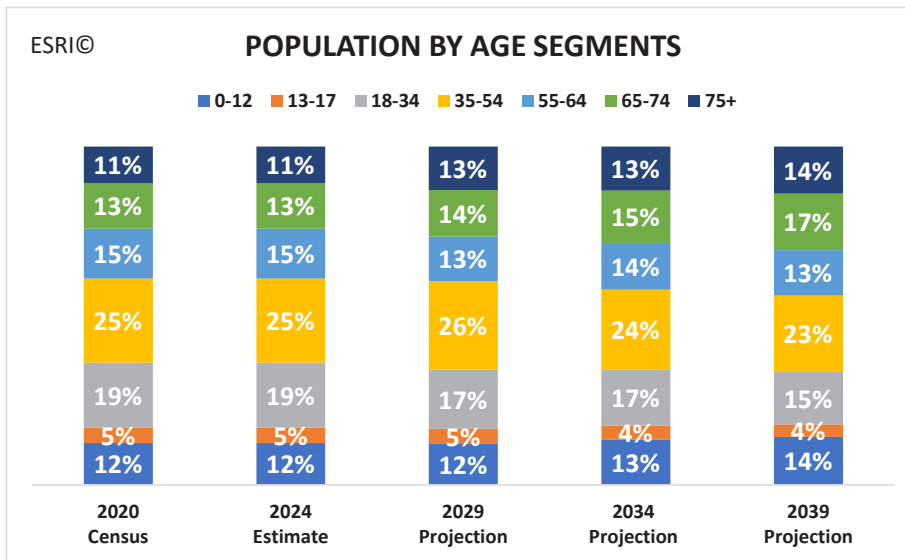


Figure 5: Shaler Township’s Population by Age Segments





RACE

Analyzing race, the Township’s current population makeup is **majority White**, with the 2024 estimate showing 93% of the population being White Alone, along with ‘**Two or More Races**’ (4%) representing the next largest category. Predictions for 2029 and beyond expect the population race to stay roughly the same, with a decrease in the White Alone population (4%). A minor increase in the ‘**Two or More Races**’ category is also expected, moving from 4% to 7% by 2039 (Figure 6).

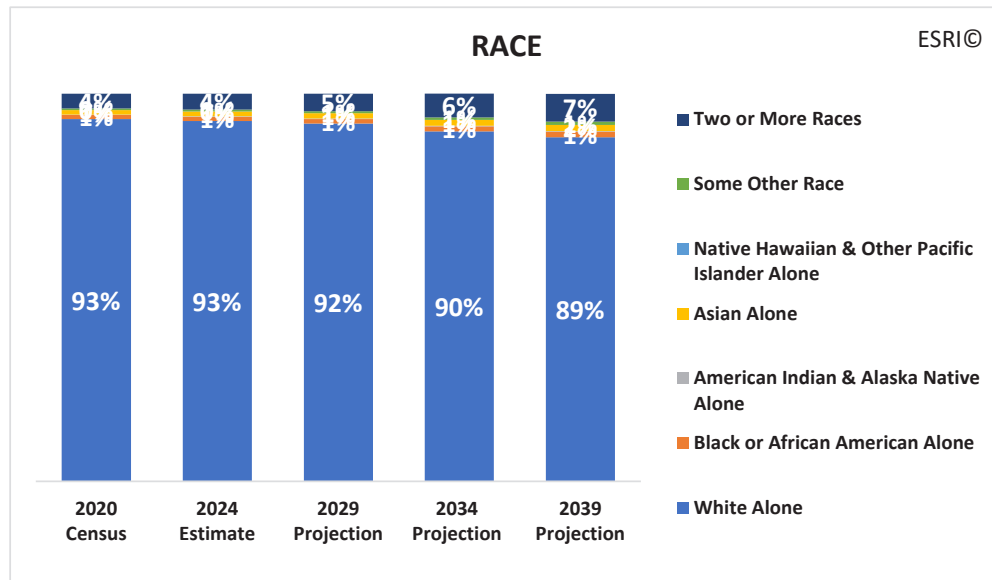


Figure 6: Shaler Township’s Population by Race

ETHNICITY

The Township’s population was also assessed based on Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, which by the Census Bureau definition is viewed independently from race. **It is important to note that individuals who are Hispanic/Latino in ethnicity can also identify with any racial categories identified above.**

Based on the 2024 estimate, people of Hispanic/Latino origin represent **2% of the Township’s population**, which is below the national average (19% Hispanic/Latino) and the state of Pennsylvania average (8.8% Hispanic/Latino). Although this is only projected to be a 1% change, in this context, this magnitude of change does seem significant because it represents a 50% increase in this demographic’s population (Figure 7).

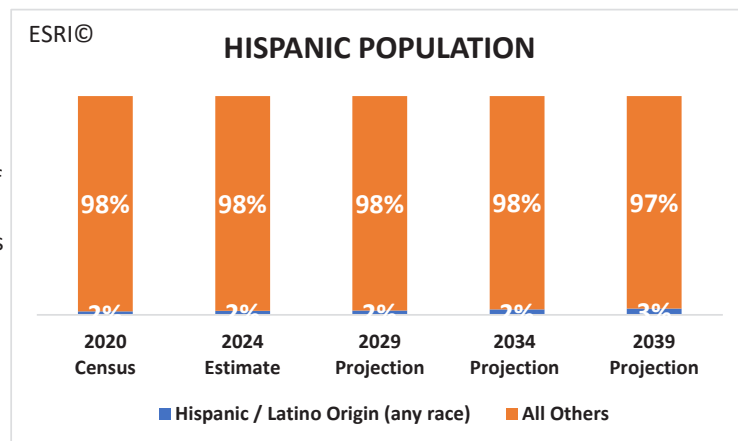


Figure 7: Shaler Township’s Hispanic Population



INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

When analyzing income, the per capita income is that earned by an individual while the median household income is based on the total income of everyone over the age of sixteen living within the same household. The Township’s **per capita income (\$47,751)** is slightly above the Pennsylvania average (\$43,931), while the Township’s **median household income (\$87,409)** is well above the Pennsylvania median (\$75,926). The Township projects to increase in both median household and per capita income, where the averages are expected to increase to **\$133,492 and \$74,673 respectively by 2039**. These relatively significant income projections should be taken into consideration when the Township is pricing out programs, calculating cost recovery goals, or planning out amenities for potential parks and trail systems (**Figures 8 and 9**).

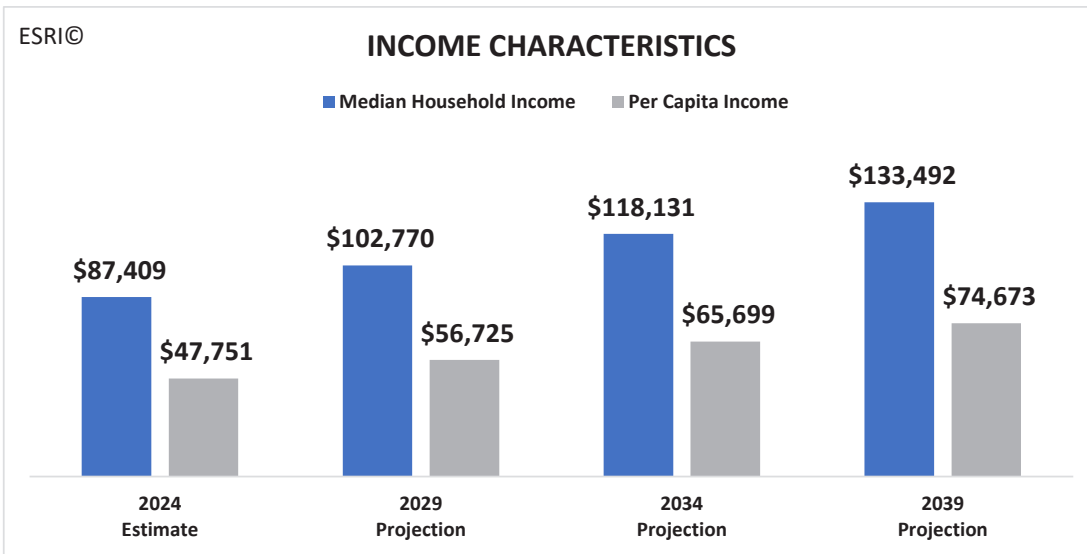


Figure 8: Income Characteristics of Shaler Township

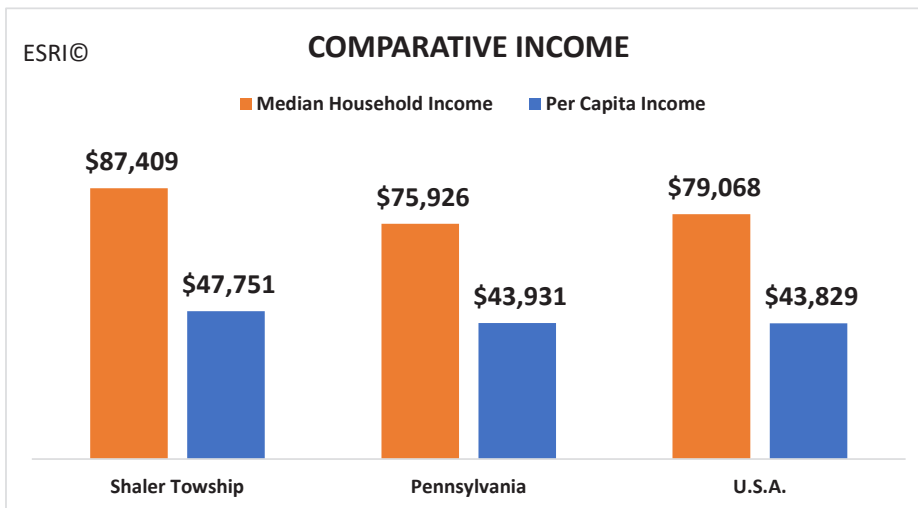


Figure 9: Comparative Income Characteristics of Shaler Township





EDUCATION

Assessing education, approximately 42.5% of the Township’s residents (aged 25+ years old) have attained up to a bachelor’s degree or higher. 25.1% of the population hold a High School Diploma, while smaller portions of the population hold a graduate degree (15.3%) or an associate’s degree (13.3%). Alternatively, 14% of the population is estimated to have started yet never finished college, while it is estimated that just 2.5% of the population never attained a high school diploma (**Figure 10**).

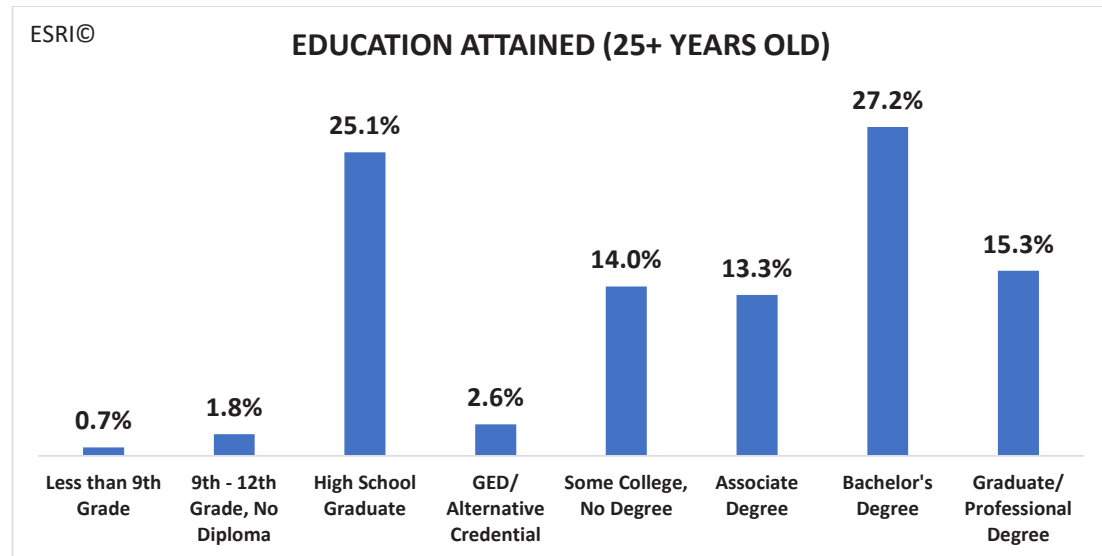


Figure 10: Shaler Township’s Educational Attainment



1.1.4 COUNTY AND STATE COMPARISON

POPULATION

While the population of Shaler Township is decreasing, so is the population of Allegheny County. There are not any significant changes in population. However, the population of the County is decreasing at a slower rate (-0.06%) than the Township (-0.47%) and is expected to continue on that path (-0.08%). The state of Pennsylvania isn't reminiscent of Shaler Township or Allegheny County, with an annual growth rate of 0.14%, but no projected growth in the future. The Household growth rate is consistent with the population growth rate, with Allegheny County Households decreasing at an annual rate of -0.07%, and Pennsylvania households increasing at a rate of 0.37% (Figure 11).

2024 Demographic ESRI© Comparison		Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	U.S.A.
Population	Annual Growth Rate (2020-2024)	-0.47%	-0.06%	0.14%	0.70%
	Projected Annual Growth Rate (2024-2039)	-0.30%	-0.08%	0.00%	0.38%
Households	Annual Growth Rate (2020-2024)	-0.41%	-0.07%	0.37%	1.02%
	Average Household Size	2.30	2.20	2.40	2.53

Figure 11: Population Comparison

AGE SEGMENTATION

Shaler has a larger proportion of the older age segments compared to the County and State, with individuals aged 55-74 making up 28.2% of Shaler's population compared to 24.3% in the County and 24.7% in the State, while individuals aged 75+ make up 10.9% in the Township and just 9.1% and 9.0% in the County and State, respectively. Inversely, the County and State have a larger population proportion of individuals aged 0-19 and 20-34 than Shaler (Figure 12).

2024 Demographic ESRI© Comparison		Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	U.S.A.
Age Segment Distribution	Ages 0-19	18.7%	20.5%	22.4%	23.7%
	Ages 20-34	17.5%	21.7%	19.5%	20.3%
	Ages 35-54	24.9%	24.4%	24.3%	25.4%
	Ages 55-74	28.2%	24.3%	24.7%	22.7%
	Ages 75+	10.9%	9.1%	9.0%	7.7%

Figure 12: Age Comparison





RACE DISTRIBUTION

Allegheny County and the state of Pennsylvania have a wider distribution of race than the Township. Compared to Shaler’s 93.0% ‘White Alone’ population, the County and State have only 74.7% and 73.7%, respectively. Despite the Township’s next highest portions being ‘Two or More Races’ and ‘Asian’, the next two largest portions of the population in the County and State are ‘Black Alone’ and ‘Two or More Races’. However, they make up a larger proportion than in the Township, with the County portions of ‘Black Alone’ being 13.2% and the ‘Two or More Races’ portion being 5.6%, and the State’s numbers being 11.1% ‘Black Alone’ and 6.4% ‘Two or More Races’ (Figure 13).

2024 Demographic ESRI© Comparison		Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	U.S.A.
Race Distribution	White Alone	93.0%	74.7%	73.7%	60.3%
	Black Alone	1.1%	13.2%	11.1%	12.5%
	American Indian	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	1.1%
	Asian	1.2%	5.1%	4.3%	6.4%
	Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
	Some other Race	0.5%	1.2%	4.2%	8.8%
	Two or More Races	4.1%	5.6%	6.4%	10.7%

Figure 13: Race Comparison

HISPANIC/ LATINO POPULATION

Individuals of Hispanic/ Latino Origin make up a larger percentage of Allegheny County (3.0%), and even larger in the state of Pennsylvania (8.8%) than in Shaler Township (1.8%) (Figure 14).

2024 Demographic ESRI© Comparison		Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	U.S.A.
Hispanic/ Latino Population	Hispanic / Latino Origin (any race)	1.8%	3.0%	8.8%	19.6%
	All Others	98.2%	97.0%	91.2%	80.4%

Figure 14: Hispanic Population Comparison



INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

Shaler Township has a Per Capita Income consistent with Allegheny County (\$48,745) and Pennsylvania (\$43,931). However, the Median Household Income in the Township is noticeably higher than in the County and State. The Township has a Median Household Income of \$87,409 compared to the County’s \$76,283 and State’s \$75,926 (Figure 15).

2024 Demographic Comparison		Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	U.S.A.
Income Characteristics	Per Capita Income	\$47,751	\$48,745	\$43,931	\$43,829
	Median Household Income	\$87,409	\$76,283	\$75,926	\$79,068

Figure 15: Income Characteristics

INCOME COMPARISON – NEIGHBORING BOROUGH AND TOWNSHIPS

The 2024 income comparison of neighboring boroughs and townships (Figure 16) highlights significant disparities across various Pennsylvania locations. O'Hara has the highest per capita income (\$69,423) and household income (\$117,766), outpacing all others in both data sets. Rounding out the top five in per capita income are Hampton (\$62,070), Indiana (\$56,750), Ross Township (\$52,290), and Shaler Township (\$47,751). Interestingly these are all positioned adjacent to each other geographically. Shaler Township positions itself in the middle-income range, with its median household income and per capita income. It is notable that the top five locations (including Shaler) are still above national and state averages. So while Shaler Township is in the middle, it is still above average for median household and per capita income. This data can help to develop the recreation center planning, and marketing strategies. For Shaler Township, offering a diverse range of programs can attract participants from within a fifteen-minute drive who share similar interests, helping to boost engagement and enhance the recreation center’s sustainability.

ESRI© Income Comparison		
Location	2024 Median Household Income	2024 Per Capita Income
O'Hara township, PA	\$117,766	\$69,423
Hampton township, PA	\$119,557	\$62,070
Indiana township, PA	\$125,229	\$56,750
Ross township, PA	\$88,239	\$52,290
Shaler township, PA	\$87,409	\$47,751
Reserve township, PA	\$75,954	\$40,554
Millvale borough, PA	\$55,686	\$36,596
Sharpsburg borough, PA	\$47,923	\$36,393
Etna borough, PA	\$51,752	\$32,352

Figure 16: Income Comparison





DEMOGRAPHIC IMPLICATIONS

While it is important not to generalize recreation needs and priorities based solely on demographics, the analysis suggests some potential implications for the Township:

- Township population trends may indicate a need to identify and understand the interests of all ages, especially **middle-aged and senior populations**. Adding more recreational activities for the active adult population, such as exercise/yoga classes, recreational sports like pickleball, or new trails, may prove to be beneficial in keeping many populations active. In addition to adults, the percentage of children will require the Township to have a better understanding of what offerings may serve the youth in the community best. Projects like new parks with youth amenities such as playgrounds, sport courts, sports fields and trails could provide the benefits needed by the children but also the parents that likely accompany them.
- The Township's household income characteristics suggest **potential disposable income at the family level**. The Township should be mindful of this when pricing out programs and events and considering amenities while staying aware of the projected upward income trend that they can expect over the next decade. The Township should consider additional indoor programming space the community could support through user fees for family programming.
- The Township experienced a **decrease in population from 2020 to 2024**, from 28,132 people to 27,604. The Pittsburgh area has experienced similar decreases in population. This population trend should be considered and accounted for when planning new amenities and program offerings for the community, as well as the maintenance, upkeep, and accessibility of current offerings.



Recreation Trends Analysis

The Recreation Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends as well recreational interest by age segments. Trends data used for this analysis was obtained from Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s (SFIA), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). All trend data is based on current and/or historical participation rates, statistically valid survey results, or NRPA Park Metrics.

1.2.1 NATIONAL TRENDS IN RECREATION

METHODOLOGY

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s (SFIA) *Sports, Fitness & Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report 2024* was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

- National Recreation Participatory Trends
- Core vs. Casual Participation Trends

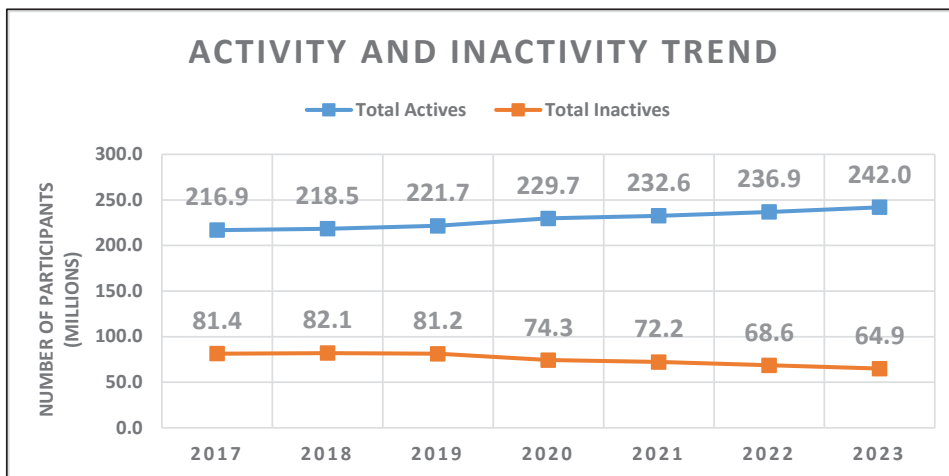


The study is based on findings from surveys conducted in 2023 by the Sports Marketing Surveys USA (SMS), resulting in a total of 18,000 online interviews. Surveys were administered to all genders, ages, income levels, regions, and ethnicities to allow for statistical accuracy of the national population. A sample size of 18,000 completed interviews is considered by SFIA to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.32 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. Using a weighting technique, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 306,931,382 people (ages six and older).

The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the U.S. This study looked at 124 different sports/activities and subdivided them into various categories including: sports, fitness, outdoor activities, aquatics, etc.

1.2.2 OVERALL PARTICIPATION

Approximately 242 million people ages six and over reported being active in 2023, which is a 2.2% increase from 2022 and the greatest number of active Americans in the last 6 years. This is an indicator that Americans are continuing to make physical activity more of a priority in their lives. Outdoor activities continue to thrive, recreation facilities reopened. fitness at home maintains popularity, and team sports are slowly reaching pre-pandemic participation levels. The chart below depicts participation levels for active and inactive (those who engage in no physical activity) Americans over the past 6 years.

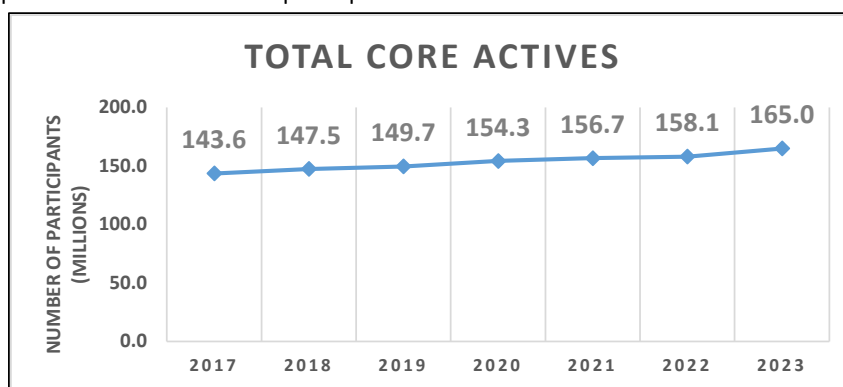




CORE VS. CASUAL PARTICIPATION

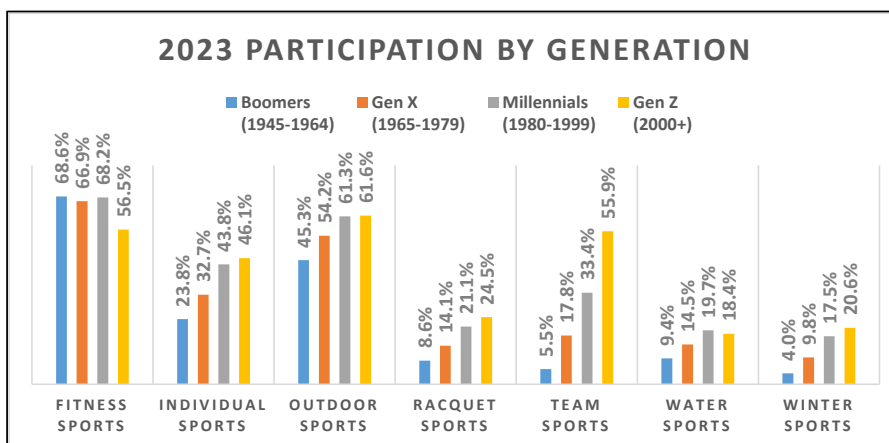
In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA further categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency of participation. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual versus core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness activities more than fifty times per year, while for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13 times per year.

In each activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than casual participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants. Increasing for the sixth straight year, 165 million people were considered CORE participants in 2023.



PARTICIPATION BY GENERATION

The following chart shows 2023 participation rates by generation. Fitness sports continue to be the go-to means of exercise for Boomers, Gen X, and Millennials. Over half of the Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z generation participated in one type of outdoor activity. Team sports were heavily dominated by generation Gen Z and nearly a third of Gen X also participated in individual sports such as golf, trail running, triathlons, and bowling.





HIGHLIGHTS

Pickleball continues to be the fastest growing sport in America by reaching 13.6 million participants in 2023 which is a 223.5% growth since 2020. Its popularity has also reached the Township and pickleball courts have been created in Kiwanis Park where tennis already existed. The growth of pickleball participants (13.6 million) has nearly reached the size of outdoor soccer participants (14.1 million). Following the popularity of pickleball, every racquet sport except table tennis has also increased in total participation in 2023.

Group, full-body workout activities such as tai chi, barre and Pilates saw the biggest increase in participation this past year. Americans continued to practice yoga, work out with kettlebells, and take up indoor climbing, while others headed to the hiking trails. The waterways traffic had increases in participation in all activities in the past year.

More than two-thirds of American's (67.8%) participated in fitness sports followed by over half (57.3%) who engaged in outdoor sports. Total participation for fitness, team, outdoor, racquet, water and winter sports are higher than their pre-pandemic participation rates. Individual sports are the only category still not at their pre-pandemic participation levels (45% in 2019 currently at 42.1% in 2023).



1.2.8 LOCAL SPORT AND LEISURE MARKET POTENTIAL

LOCAL SPORT AND LEISURE MARKET POTENTIAL

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data for Township residents, as provided by ESRI. Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service within the defined service areas. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident will participate in certain activities when compared to the U.S. national average. The national average is 100; therefore, numbers below 100 would represent lower-than-average participation rates, and numbers above 100 would represent higher-than-average participation rates. The service area is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports, fitness, outdoor activity, and commercial recreation.

It should be noted that MPI metrics are only one data point used to help determine community trends; thus, programmatic decisions should not be based solely on MPI metrics.

Overall, when analyzing the Township's MPIs, the data demonstrates mostly above-average market potential index (MPI) numbers in assessed areas, with high potential in some specific activities. For example, Golf, Pickleball, and Softball all scored the highest in the General Sport category, while also demonstrating higher participation compared to the national average. Something to note about the Township's MPI scores show that there is approximately 40% of activities below the national average, as 19 out of the 47 activities had an MPI score below 100. This becomes significant when the Township considers starting up new programs or building new facilities, giving them a strong tool to estimate resident attendance and participation.

The following charts compare MPI scores for 47 sport and leisure activities that are prevalent for residents within the Township. The activities are categorized by activity type and listed in ascending order, from lowest to highest MPI score. High index numbers (100+) are significant because they demonstrate that there is a greater likelihood that residents within the service area will actively participate in those offerings provided by the Township.



GENERAL SPORTS MARKET POTENTIAL

Shaler Township demonstrates notably high participation in golf, with an MPI of 124, indicating significantly greater local interest than the county (91), state (85), and national average (100). Pickleball also shows elevated popularity with an MPI of 115, aligning with national trends and highlighting an opportunity for continued investment in this rapidly growing sport. Softball follows with an MPI of 105, slightly above average and outperforming county and state levels, suggesting steady local demand (Figure 17). Baseball and football participation in Shaler are just under the national average (both at 98), yet closely aligned with regional figures, indicating consistent interest that may justify maintaining existing programs. Tennis (MPI 93) and volleyball (MPI 91) fall somewhat below national levels.

Activity	Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	National Average (100)
Golf	124	91	85	100
Pickleball	115	96	93	100
Softball	105	96	97	100
Baseball	98	97	92	100
Football	98	96	98	100
Tennis	93	101	102	100
Volleyball	91	98	102	100
Basketball	86	106	101	100
Soccer	84	106	105	100

ESRI©

Figure 17: General Sports MPI for Shaler Township





FITNESS MARKET POTENTIAL

Shaler Township reveals a strong interest in several wellness and exercise trends when compared to Allegheny County, the state of Pennsylvania, and the national average. Most notably, Shaler residents exhibit significantly above-average interest in swimming (MPI 114) and walking for exercise (MPI 112)—both scoring well above all comparison areas. These high indices suggest a strong community preference for accessible, low-impact cardiovascular activities, signaling an opportunity for expanded walking trails, aquatic facilities, or fitness programming geared toward these activities. Weight lifting (106) and yoga (103) also perform above the national average, indicating a solid interest in strength training and holistic fitness practices within the community. The most notable outlier is Zumba, with a low MPI of 78 in Shaler Township—substantially below both the national average and regional benchmarks (85 in both Allegheny County and Pennsylvania). This indicates limited appeal for choreographed group fitness dance formats among Shaler residents (**Figure 18**).

Activity	Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	National Average (100)
Swimming	114	102	95	100
Walking for Exercise	112	101	93	100
Weight Lifting	106	98	96	100
Yoga	103	104	97	100
Aerobics	96	102	97	100
Jogging/ Running	93	103	102	100
Pilates	91	105	103	100
Zumba	78	85	85	100

ESRI©

Figure 18: Fitness MPI for Shaler Township



OUTDOOR ACTIVITY MARKET POTENTIAL

Shaler Township indicates strong interest in a range of nature-based and adventure activities, with many categories significantly outperforming both regional and national averages. This highlights a community that is highly engaged with the outdoors and values recreational opportunities connected to nature, fitness, and relaxation. **(Figure 19)**. The most notable areas of high demand are canoeing/kayaking (MPI 137), archery (132), and freshwater fishing (132). These scores are well above those in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and the national average of 100, suggesting a strong cultural or geographic alignment with water and field-based recreation. Backpacking (118) and horseback riding (116) also rank highly, further emphasizing the community’s affinity for outdoor exploration and equestrian activities. Hiking (112) and road bicycling (111) are also above average in Shaler Township and match or exceed state-level participation, indicating demand for trail systems, bike paths, and associated infrastructure. Mountain biking (107) also scores above the national average, though by a smaller margin, suggesting a more moderate but still meaningful interest in this activity. The data demonstrates that Shaler Township residents are highly engaged in a wide variety of outdoor activities, especially those centered around water, nature, and trails.

Activity	Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	National Average (100)
Canoeing/ Kayaking	137	110	112	100
Archery	132	106	108	100
Fishing (fresh water)	132	107	114	100
Backpacking	118	109	100	100
Horseback Riding	116	98	102	100
Hiking	112	104	112	100
Bicycling (road)	111	105	101	100
Bicycling (mountain)	107	99	95	100
Fishing (salt water)	100	89	95	100
Rock Climbing	76	99	92	100

ESRI©

Figure 19: Outdoor Activity MPI for Shaler Township



COMMERCIAL RECREATION MARKET POTENTIAL

The data suggests that Shaler Township residents have a strong interest in experiential and active recreation, indicating high potential for several key programs within a recreation center. Activities such as overnight camping (MPI 118), spending on sports and recreation equipment (MPI 115 and 112), and attending live theater (MPI 112) or sports events (MPI 111) reflect a community that values both physical activity and cultural engagement. These interests could translate into high demand for indoor adventure or nature skills workshops, outdoor gear rental programs, and fitness classes that support recreational sports. **(Figure 20)**. Additionally, strong participation in photo scrapbooking (MPI 108) suggests opportunities for creative arts programs.

Activity	Shaler Township	Allegheny County	Pennsylvania	National Average (100)
Went overnight camping	118	102	104	100
Spent \$100-249 on sports/rec equip	115	104	104	100
Went to live theater	112	108	101	100
Spent \$250+ on sports/rec equip	112	101	103	100
Attended sports event	111	104	102	100
Did photo album/scrapbooking	108	101	100	100
Dined out	107	102	101	100
Visited an indoor water park	107	107	102	100
Went to art gallery	105	106	99	100
Visited a zoo	105	106	101	100
Participated in a book club	103	107	97	100
Spent \$1-99 on sports/rec equip	101	100	98	100
Went to museum	101	106	99	100
Flew a drone	95	92	92	100
Did painting/drawing	95	101	98	100
Did photography	93	96	96	100
Visited an aquarium	91	99	95	100
Attended adult education course	90	99	95	100
Played video/electronic game (console)	90	106	98	100
Visited a theme park	88	93	91	100
Played video/electronic game (portable)	86	100	96	100

ESRI©

Figure 20: Commercial Recreation MPI for Shaler Township



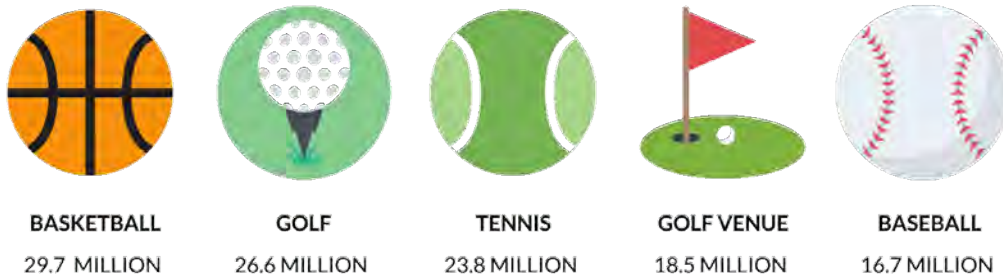
Appendix A – NATIONAL TRENDS

NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

The top sports most heavily participated in the United States were basketball (29.7 million), golf (26.6 million), and tennis (23.8 million) which have participation figures well more than the other activities within the general sports category. Playing golf at an entertainment venue (18.5 million) and baseball (16.7 million) round out the top five.

The popularity of basketball, golf, and tennis can be attributed to the ability to compete with small number of participants, this coupled with an ability to be played outdoors and/or properly distanced helps explain their popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Basketball’s overall success can also be attributed to the limited amount of equipment needed to participate and the limited space requirements necessary, which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at most American dwellings as a drive-way pickup game. Golf continues to benefit from its wide age segment appeal and is considered a life-long sport. In addition, target type game venues or golf entertainment venues have increased drastically (99%) as a 5-year trend, using golf entertainment (e.g., Top Golf) as a new alternative to breathe life back into the game of golf.



FIVE-YEAR TREND

Since 2018, pickleball (311.5%), golf - entertainment venues (99.0%), and tennis (33.6%) have shown the largest increase in participation. Similarly, outdoor soccer (23.4%) and basketball (22.7%) have also experienced significant growth. Based on the five-year trend from 2018-2023, the sports that are most rapidly declining in participation include roller hockey (-28.7%), rugby (-28.7%), and ultimate frisbee (-23.0%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

The most recent year shares some similarities with the five-year trends; with pickleball (51.8%) and golf - entertainment venues (18.8%) experiencing some of the greatest increases in participation this past year. Other top one-year increases include court volleyball (13.3%), ice hockey (9.6%), and cheerleading (8.3%).

Sports that have seen moderate 1-year increases, but 5-year decreases are cheerleading (8.3%), track and field (5.8%), lacrosse (5.5%) and slow-pitch softball (5.3%). This could be a result of coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic and team program participation on the rise. Like their 5-year trend, roller





hockey (-9.6%), sand/beach volleyball (-5.1%), and rugby (-4.6%) have seen decreases in participation over the last year.

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

General sport activities, basketball, court volleyball, and slow pitch softball have a larger core participant base (participate 13+ times per year) than casual participant base (participate 1-12 times per year). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most activities showed a decrease in their percentage of core participants, but these percentages for core users are slowly reaching their pre-pandemic levels. *Please see Appendix A for the full Core vs. Casual Participation breakdown.*

National Participatory Trends - General Sports					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2018	2022	2023	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Basketball	24,225	28,149	29,725	22.7%	5.6%
Golf (9 or 18-Hole Course)	24,240	25,566	26,565	9.6%	3.9%
Tennis	17,841	23,595	23,835	33.6%	1.0%
Golf (Entertainment Venue)	9,279	15,540	18,464	99.0%	18.8%
Baseball	15,877	15,478	16,655	4.9%	7.6%
Soccer (Outdoor)	11,405	13,018	14,074	23.4%	8.1%
Pickleball	3,301	8,949	13,582	311.5%	51.8%
Football (Flag)	6,572	7,104	7,266	10.6%	2.3%
Volleyball (Court)	6,317	6,092	6,905	9.3%	13.3%
Badminton	6,337	6,490	6,513	2.8%	0.4%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,386	6,036	6,356	-13.9%	5.3%
Soccer (Indoor)	5,233	5,495	5,909	12.9%	7.5%
Football (Tackle)	5,157	5,436	5,618	8.9%	3.3%
Football (Touch)	5,517	4,843	4,949	-10.3%	2.2%
Gymnastics	4,770	4,569	4,758	-0.3%	4.1%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,770	4,128	3,917	-17.9%	-5.1%
Track and Field	4,143	3,690	3,905	-5.7%	5.8%
Cheerleading	3,841	3,507	3,797	-1.1%	8.3%
Racquetball	3,480	3,521	3,550	2.0%	0.8%
Ice Hockey	2,447	2,278	2,496	2.0%	9.6%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,303	2,146	2,323	0.9%	8.2%
Wrestling	1,908	2,036	2,121	11.2%	4.2%
Ultimate Frisbee	2,710	2,142	2,086	-23.0%	-2.6%
Lacrosse	2,098	1,875	1,979	-5.7%	5.5%
Squash	1,285	1,228	1,315	2.3%	7.1%
Roller Hockey	1,734	1,368	1,237	-28.7%	-9.6%
Rugby	1,560	1,166	1,112	-28.7%	-4.6%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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1.2.4 NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Overall, national participatory trends in fitness have experienced growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among Americans to improve their health and enhance quality of life by engaging in an active lifestyle. The most popular general fitness activities in 2023 were those that could be done in multiple environments such as at home, gym or in a virtual class setting. The activities with the most participation was walking for fitness (114.0 million), treadmill (54.8 million), free weights (53.9 million), running/jogging (48.3 million), and yoga (34.2 million).



FIVE-YEAR TREND

Over the last five years (2018-2023), the activities growing at the highest rate were trail running (48.7%), Pilates training (30.6%), barre (21.6%) and yoga (19.1%). Over the same period, the activities that have undergone the biggest decline in participation include group stationary cycling (-34%), cross-training style workout (-29.5%) and traditional/road triathlons (-19.8%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

In the last year, fitness activities with the largest gains in participation were group-related, slow, intentional movements activities, tai chi (16.3%), Pilates training (15.0%), and barre (12.9%). This 1-year trend is another indicator that participants feel safe returning to group-related activities. Trail running (12.3%) also saw a moderate increase indicating trail connectivity continues to be important for communities to provide. In the same span, fitness activities that had the largest decline in participation were boxing/MMA for fitness (-14.4%), traditional/road triathlons (-2.4%) and weight/resistant machines (-1.9%).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

Participants of walking for fitness are mostly core users (participating 50+ times) and have seen a 1.3% growth in the last five years. *Please see Appendix A for the full core vs. casual participation breakdown.*



National Participatory Trends - General Fitness					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2018	2022	2023	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Walking for Fitness	111,001	114,759	114,039	2.7%	-0.6%
Treadmill	53,737	53,589	54,829	2.0%	2.3%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	51,291	53,140	53,858	5.0%	1.4%
Running/Jogging	49,459	47,816	48,305	-2.3%	1.0%
Yoga	28,745	33,636	34,249	19.1%	1.8%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	36,668	32,102	32,628	-11.0%	1.6%
Weight/Resistant Machines	36,372	30,010	29,426	-19.1%	-1.9%
Free Weights (Barbells)	27,834	28,678	29,333	5.4%	2.3%
Elliptical Motion/Cross-Trainer	33,238	27,051	27,062	-18.6%	0.0%
Dance, Step, & Choreographed Exercise	22,391	25,163	26,241	17.2%	4.3%
Bodyweight Exercise	24,183	22,034	22,578	-6.6%	2.5%
High Impact/Intensity Training	21,611	21,821	21,801	0.9%	-0.1%
Trail Running	10,010	13,253	14,885	48.7%	12.3%
Rowing Machine	12,096	11,893	12,775	5.6%	7.4%
Stair Climbing Machine	15,025	11,677	12,605	-16.1%	7.9%
Pilates Training	9,084	10,311	11,862	30.6%	15.0%
Cross-Training Style Workout	13,338	9,248	9,404	-29.5%	1.7%
Boxing/MMA for Fitness	7,650	9,787	8,378	9.5%	-14.4%
Martial Arts	5,821	6,355	6,610	13.6%	4.0%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	9,434	6,268	6,227	-34.0%	-0.7%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,838	5,531	5,524	-19.2%	-0.1%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	6,695	5,192	5,434	-18.8%	4.7%
Barre	3,532	3,803	4,294	21.6%	12.9%
Tai Chi	3,761	3,394	3,948	5.0%	16.3%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	2,168	1,780	1,738	-19.8%	-2.4%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,589	1,350	1,363	-14.2%	1.0%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

1.2.5 NATIONAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR/ADVENTURE RECREATION

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Results from the SFIA report demonstrate rapid growth in participation regarding outdoor/adventure recreation activities. Much like general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually, and are not as limited by time constraints. In 2023, the most popular activities, in terms of total participants include day hiking (61.4 million), freshwater fishing (42.6 million), road bicycling (42.2 million), camping (38.6 million), and wildlife viewing (21.1 million).



FIVE-YEAR TREND

From 2018-2023, camping (40.7%), birdwatching (33.0%), skateboarding (37.3%), BMX bicycling (29.7%), and day hiking (28.4%) has undergone large increases in participation. The five-year trend also shows that only two activities declined in participation, adventure racing (-18.4) and backpacking overnight (-5.2%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

The one-year trend shows most activities growing in participation from the previous year. The most rapid growth being indoor climbing (10.0%), BMX bicycling (6.7%), fly fishing (5.8%), and adventure racing (5.5%). Over the last year, the only activities that underwent decreases in participation were road bicycling (-3.0), overnight backpacking (-2.2%), RV camping (-2.0%), and skateboarding (-1.1%).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR / ADVENTURE RECREATION

Although most outdoor activities have experienced participation growth in the last five years, it should be noted that all outdoor activities participation, besides adventure racing, consist primarily of casual users. Please see **Appendix A** for the full core vs. casual participation breakdown.



National Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2018	2022	2023	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Hiking (Day)	47,860	59,578	61,444	28.4%	3.1%
Fishing (Freshwater)	38,998	41,821	42,605	9.2%	1.9%
Bicycling (Road)	39,041	43,554	42,243	8.2%	-3.0%
Camping	27,416	37,431	38,572	40.7%	3.0%
Wildlife Viewing (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	20,556	20,615	21,118	2.7%	2.4%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,980	16,840	16,497	3.2%	-2.0%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	12,344	15,818	16,423	33.0%	3.8%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,830	14,344	15,039	17.2%	4.8%
Backpacking Overnight	10,540	10,217	9,994	-5.2%	-2.2%
Bicycling (Mountain)	8,690	8,916	9,289	6.9%	4.2%
Skateboarding	6,500	9,019	8,923	37.3%	-1.1%
Fishing (Fly)	6,939	7,631	8,077	16.4%	5.8%
Archery	7,654	7,428	7,662	0.1%	3.2%
Climbing (Indoor)	5,112	5,778	6,356	24.3%	10.0%
Roller Skating, In-Line	5,040	5,173	5,201	3.2%	0.5%
Bicycling (BMX)	3,439	4,181	4,462	29.7%	6.7%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,541	2,452	2,569	1.1%	4.8%
Climbing (Sport/Boulder)	2,184	2,452	2,544	16.5%	3.8%
Adventure Racing	2,215	1,714	1,808	-18.4%	5.5%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	



1.2.6 NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATICS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Swimming is deemed a lifetime activity, which is why it continues to have such strong participation. In 2023, fitness swimming remained the overall leader in participation (28.2 million) amongst aquatic activities.



FIVE-YEAR TREND

Assessing the five-year trend, all three aquatic activities saw moderate increases in participation.

ONE-YEAR TREND

In 2023, all aquatic activities saw moderate increases in participation which can be asserted to facilities and programs returning to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. Swimming on a team (14.6%) saw the highest percentage increase in participation.

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN AQUATICS

All activities in aquatic trends have undergone an increase in casual participation (1-49 times per year) over the last five years. *Please see Appendix A for full the core vs. casual participation breakdown.*

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2018	2022	2023	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Swimming (Fitness)	27,575	26,272	28,173	2.2%	7.2%
Aquatic Exercise	10,518	10,676	11,307	7.5%	5.9%
Swimming on a Team	3,045	2,904	3,327	9.3%	14.6%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	





1.2.7 NATIONAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

The most popular water sports / activities based on total participants in 2023 were recreational kayaking (14.7 million), canoeing (10.0 million), and snorkeling (7.5 million). It should be noted that water activity participation tends to vary based on regional, seasonal, and environmental factors. A region with more water access and a warmer climate is more likely to have a higher participation rate in water activities than a region that has a long winter season or limited water access. Therefore, when assessing trends in water sports and activities, it is important to understand that fluctuations may be the result of environmental barriers which can influence water activity participation.



FIVE-YEAR TREND

Over the last five years, surfing (38.9%), recreational kayaking (33.7%), stand-up paddling (19.6%) and rafting (19.0%) were the fastest growing water activities. From 2018-2023, activities declining in participation were water boardsailing/windsurfing (-7.8%), water skiing (-6.8%), snorkeling (-4.2%) and sea/touring kayaking (-0.2%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

In 2023, zero activities saw a decrease in participation. Activities which experienced the largest increases in participation include scuba diving (15.2%), sailing (12.9%), and rafting (12.7%).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

As mentioned previously, regional, seasonal, and environmental limiting factors may influence the participation rate of water sport and activities. These factors may also explain why all water-based activities have drastically more casual participants than core participants, since frequencies of activities may be constrained by uncontrollable factors. *Please see **Appendix A** for the full core vs. casual participation breakdown.*



National Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2018	2022	2023	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Kayaking (Recreational)	11,017	13,561	14,726	33.7%	8.6%
Canoeing	9,129	9,521	9,999	9.5%	5.0%
Snorkeling	7,815	7,376	7,489	-4.2%	1.5%
Jet Skiing	5,324	5,445	5,759	8.2%	5.8%
Stand-Up Paddling	3,453	3,777	4,129	19.6%	9.3%
Sailing	3,754	3,632	4,100	9.2%	12.9%
Rafting	3,404	3,595	4,050	19.0%	12.7%
Surfing	2,874	3,692	3,993	38.9%	8.2%
Water Skiing	3,363	3,040	3,133	-6.8%	3.1%
Scuba Diving	2,849	2,658	3,063	7.5%	15.2%
Kayaking (White Water)	2,562	2,726	2,995	16.9%	9.9%
Wakeboarding	2,796	2,754	2,844	1.7%	3.3%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	2,805	2,642	2,800	-0.2%	6.0%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,556	1,391	1,434	-7.8%	3.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	





Appendix B – Core vs. Casual Participation Trends

General Sports

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Sports								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Basketball	24,225	100%	28,149	100%	29,725	100%	22.7%	5.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	9,335	39%	13,000	46%	14,405	48%	54.3%	10.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	14,890	61%	15,149	54%	15,320	52%	2.9%	1.1%
Golf (9 or 18-Hole Course)	24,240	100%	25,566	100%	26,565	100%	9.6%	3.9%
Tennis	17,841	100%	23,595	100%	23,835	100%	33.6%	1.0%
Golf (Entertainment Venue)	9,279	100%	15,540	100%	18,464	100%	99.0%	18.8%
Baseball	15,877	100%	15,478	100%	16,655	100%	4.9%	7.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	6,563	41%	7,908	51%	8,934	54%	36.1%	13.0%
<i>Core (13+ times)</i>	9,314	59%	7,570	49%	7,722	46%	-17.1%	2.0%
Soccer (Outdoor)	11,405	100%	13,018	100%	14,074	100%	23.4%	8.1%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	6,430	56%	7,666	59%	8,706	59%	35.4%	13.6%
<i>Core (26+ times)</i>	4,975	44%	5,352	41%	5,368	41%	7.9%	0.3%
Pickleball	3,301	100%	8,949	100%	13,582	100%	311.5%	51.8%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,011	61%	6,647	74%	8,736	74%	334.4%	31.4%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,290	39%	2,302	26%	4,846	26%	275.7%	110.5%
Football (Flag)	6,572	100%	7,104	100%	7,266	100%	10.6%	2.3%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,573	54%	4,573	64%	4,624	64%	29.4%	1.1%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,999	46%	2,531	36%	2,642	36%	-11.9%	4.4%
<i>Core Age 6 to 17 (13+ times)</i>	1,578	24%	1,552	22%	1,661	22%	5.3%	7.0%
Volleyball (Court)	6,317	100%	6,092	100%	6,905	100%	9.3%	13.3%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,867	45%	2,798	46%	3,481	50%	21.4%	24.4%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,450	55%	3,293	54%	3,425	50%	-0.7%	4.0%
Badminton	6,337	100%	6,490	100%	6,513	100%	2.8%	0.4%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	4,555	72%	4,636	71%	4,743	73%	4.1%	2.3%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,782	28%	1,855	29%	1,771	27%	-0.6%	-4.5%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,386	100%	6,036	100%	6,356	100%	-13.9%	5.3%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,281	44%	2,666	44%	2,939	46%	-10.4%	10.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	4,105	56%	3,370	56%	3,417	54%	-16.8%	1.4%
Soccer (Indoor)	5,233	100%	5,495	100%	5,909	100%	12.9%	7.5%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,452	47%	3,144	57%	3,411	57%	39.1%	8.5%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,782	53%	2,351	43%	2,498	43%	-10.2%	6.3%
Football (Tackle)	5,157	100%	5,436	100%	5,618	100%	8.9%	3.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	2,258	44%	3,120	57%	3,278	58%	45.2%	5.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,898	56%	2,316	43%	2,340	42%	-19.3%	1.0%
<i>Core Age 6 to 17 (26+ times)</i>	2,353	46%	2,088	38%	2,130	38%	-9.5%	2.0%
Football (Touch)	5,517	100%	4,843	100%	4,949	100%	-10.3%	2.2%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,313	60%	3,201	66%	3,301	67%	-0.4%	3.1%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,204	40%	1,642	34%	1,648	33%	-25.2%	0.4%
Gymnastics	4,770	100%	4,569	100%	4,758	100%	-0.3%	4.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	3,047	64%	3,095	68%	3,315	70%	8.8%	7.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,723	36%	1,473	32%	1,443	30%	-16.3%	-2.0%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,770	100%	4,128	100%	3,917	100%	-17.9%	-5.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,261	68%	2,977	72%	2,769	71%	-15.1%	-7.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,509	32%	1,152	28%	1,148	29%	-23.9%	-0.3%
Track and Field	4,143	100%	3,690	100%	3,905	100%	-5.7%	5.8%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	2,071	50%	1,896	51%	2,093	54%	1.1%	10.4%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,072	50%	1,794	49%	1,811	46%	-12.6%	0.9%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over								
Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)		Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)		Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)			



GENERAL SPORTS (Continued)

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Sports								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Cheerleading	3,841	100%	3,507	100%	3,797	100%	-1.1%	8.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	2,039	53%	2,092	60%	2,360	62%	15.7%	12.8%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,802	47%	1,415	40%	1,438	38%	-20.2%	1.6%
Racquetball	3,480	100%	3,521	100%	3,550	100%	2.0%	0.8%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,407	69%	2,583	73%	2,694	76%	11.9%	4.3%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,073	31%	938	27%	855	24%	-20.3%	-8.8%
Ice Hockey	2,447	100%	2,278	100%	2,496	100%	2.0%	9.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,105	45%	1,209	53%	1,458	58%	31.9%	20.6%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,342	55%	1,068	47%	1,038	42%	-22.7%	-2.8%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,303	100%	2,146	100%	2,323	100%	0.9%	8.2%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,084	47%	1,002	47%	1,123	48%	3.6%	12.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,219	53%	1,144	53%	1,201	52%	-1.5%	5.0%
Wrestling	1,908	100%	2,036	100%	2,121	100%	11.2%	4.2%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,160	61%	1,452	71%	1,589	75%	37.0%	9.4%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	748	39%	585	29%	532	25%	-28.9%	-9.1%
Ultimate Frisbee	2,710	100%	2,142	100%	2,086	100%	-23.0%	-2.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,852	68%	1,438	67%	1,523	67%	-17.8%	5.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	858	32%	703	33%	563	33%	-34.4%	-19.9%
Lacrosse	2,098	100%	1,875	100%	1,979	100%	-5.7%	5.5%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,036	49%	999	53%	1,129	53%	9.0%	13.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,061	51%	876	47%	850	47%	-19.9%	-3.0%
Squash	1,285	100%	1,228	100%	1,315	100%	2.3%	7.1%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	796	62%	816	66%	927	70%	16.5%	13.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	489	38%	413	34%	387	29%	-20.9%	-6.3%
Roller Hockey	1,734	100%	1,368	100%	1,237	100%	-28.7%	-9.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,296	75%	1,065	78%	938	76%	-27.6%	-11.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	437	25%	303	22%	298	24%	-31.8%	-1.7%
Rugby	1,560	100%	1,166	100%	1,112	100%	-28.7%	-4.6%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	998	64%	758	65%	729	66%	-27.0%	-3.8%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	562	36%	408	35%	384	35%	-31.7%	-5.9%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)	Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)	Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)	





General Fitness

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Walking for Fitness	111,001	100%	114,759	100%	114,039	100%	2.7%	-0.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	36,139	33%	38,115	33%	38,169	33%	5.6%	0.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	74,862	67%	76,644	67%	75,871	67%	1.3%	-1.0%
Treadmill	53,737	100%	53,589	100%	54,829	100%	2.0%	2.3%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	25,826	48%	26,401	49%	27,991	51%	8.4%	6.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	27,911	52%	27,189	51%	26,837	49%	-3.8%	-1.3%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	51,291	100%	53,140	100%	53,858	100%	5.0%	1.4%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	18,702	36%	22,428	42%	23,238	43%	24.3%	3.6%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	32,589	64%	30,712	58%	30,619	57%	-6.0%	-0.3%
Running/Jogging	49,459	100%	47,816	100%	48,305	100%	-2.3%	1.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	24,399	49%	23,776	50%	24,175	50%	-0.9%	1.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	25,061	51%	24,040	50%	24,129	50%	-3.7%	0.4%
Yoga	28,745	100%	33,636	100%	34,249	100%	19.1%	1.8%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	17,553	61%	20,409	61%	20,654	60%	17.7%	1.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	11,193	39%	13,228	39%	13,595	40%	21.5%	2.8%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	36,668	100%	32,102	100%	32,628	100%	-11.0%	1.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	19,282	53%	15,424	48%	15,901	49%	-17.5%	3.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	17,387	47%	16,678	52%	16,728	51%	-3.8%	0.3%
Weight/Resistant Machines	36,372	100%	30,010	100%	29,426	100%	-19.1%	-1.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	14,893	41%	12,387	41%	11,361	39%	-23.7%	-8.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	21,479	59%	17,623	59%	18,065	61%	-15.9%	2.5%
Free Weights (Barbells)	27,834	100%	28,678	100%	29,333	100%	5.4%	2.3%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	11,355	41%	13,576	47%	14,174	48%	24.8%	4.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	16,479	59%	15,103	53%	15,159	52%	-8.0%	0.4%
Elliptical Motion/Cross-Trainer	33,238	100%	27,051	100%	27,062	100%	-18.6%	0.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	16,889	51%	14,968	55%	13,898	51%	-17.7%	-7.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	16,349	49%	12,083	45%	13,164	49%	-19.5%	8.9%
Dance, Step, & Choreographed Exercise	22,391	100%	25,163	100%	26,241	100%	17.2%	4.3%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	14,503	65%	17,096	68%	18,179	69%	25.3%	6.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	7,888	35%	8,067	32%	8,063	31%	2.2%	0.0%
Bodyweight Exercise	24,183	100%	22,034	100%	22,578	100%	-6.6%	2.5%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	9,674	40%	9,514	43%	10,486	46%	8.4%	10.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	14,509	60%	12,520	57%	12,092	54%	-16.7%	-3.4%
High Impact/Intensity Training	21,611	100%	21,821	100%	21,801	100%	0.9%	-0.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	11,828	55%	12,593	58%	12,559	58%	6.2%	-0.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	9,783	45%	9,228	42%	9,242	42%	-5.5%	0.2%
Trail Running	10,010	100%	13,253	100%	14,885	100%	48.7%	12.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	8,000	80%	10,792	81%	12,260	82%	53.3%	13.6%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,009	20%	2,461	19%	2,625	18%	30.7%	6.7%
Rowing Machine	12,096	100%	11,893	100%	12,775	100%	5.6%	7.4%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	7,744	64%	7,875	66%	8,473	66%	9.4%	7.6%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	4,352	36%	4,017	34%	4,302	34%	-1.1%	7.1%
Stair Climbing Machine	15,025	100%	11,677	100%	12,605	100%	-16.1%	7.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	9,643	64%	7,569	65%	8,075	64%	-16.3%	6.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	5,382	36%	4,108	35%	4,530	36%	-15.8%	10.3%
Pilates Training	9,084	100%	10,311	100%	11,862	100%	30.6%	15.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	5,845	64%	7,377	72%	8,805	74%	50.6%	19.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,238	36%	2,935	28%	3,057	26%	-5.6%	4.2%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)	Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)	Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)	



General Fitness (Continued)

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Cross-Training Style Workout	13,338	100%	9,248	100%	9,404	100%	-29.5%	1.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	6,594	49%	4,281	46%	4,391	47%	-33.4%	2.6%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	6,744	51%	4,968	54%	5,013	53%	-25.7%	0.9%
Boxing/MMA for Fitness	7,650	100%	9,787	100%	8,378	100%	9.5%	-14.4%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	4,176	55%	6,191	63%	5,003	60%	19.8%	-19.2%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,473	45%	3,596	37%	3,375	40%	-2.8%	-6.1%
Martial Arts	5,821	100%	6,355	100%	6,610	100%	13.6%	4.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,991	34%	3,114	49%	3,481	53%	74.8%	11.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,830	66%	3,241	51%	3,130	47%	-18.3%	-3.4%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	9,434	100%	6,268	100%	6,227	100%	-34.0%	-0.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	6,097	65%	3,925	63%	3,783	61%	-38.0%	-3.6%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,337	35%	2,344	37%	2,444	39%	-26.8%	4.3%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,838	100%	5,531	100%	5,524	100%	-19.2%	-0.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	4,712	69%	3,958	72%	3,929	71%	-16.6%	-0.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	2,126	31%	1,573	28%	1,596	29%	-24.9%	1.5%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	6,695	100%	5,192	100%	5,434	100%	-18.8%	4.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	4,780	71%	3,691	71%	4,003	74%	-16.3%	8.5%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,915	29%	1,500	29%	1,432	26%	-25.2%	-4.5%
Barre	3,532	100%	3,803	100%	4,294	100%	21.6%	12.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	2,750	78%	3,022	79%	3,473	81%	26.3%	14.9%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	782	22%	781	21%	821	19%	5.0%	5.1%
Tai Chi	3,761	100%	3,394	100%	3,948	100%	5.0%	16.3%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	2,360	63%	2,139	63%	2,748	70%	16.4%	28.5%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,400	37%	1,255	37%	1,200	30%	-14.3%	-4.4%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	2,168	100%	1,780	100%	1,738	100%	-19.8%	-2.4%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,589	100%	1,350	100%	1,363	100%	-14.2%	1.0%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)	Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)	Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)	





Outdoor/Adventure Recreation

National Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
#	%	#	%	#	%			
Hiking (Day)	47,860	100%	59,578	100%	61,444	100%	28.4%	3.1%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	37,238	78%	44,154	74%	45,336	74%	21.7%	2.7%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	10,622	22%	15,424	26%	16,108	26%	51.6%	4.4%
Fishing (Freshwater)	38,998	100%	41,821	100%	42,605	100%	9.2%	1.9%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	21,099	54%	23,430	56%	23,964	56%	13.6%	2.3%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	17,899	46%	18,391	44%	18,641	44%	4.1%	1.4%
Bicycling (Road)	39,041	100%	43,554	100%	42,243	100%	8.2%	-3.0%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	20,777	53%	23,278	53%	22,520	53%	8.4%	-3.3%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	18,264	47%	20,276	47%	19,723	47%	8.0%	-2.7%
Camping	27,416	100%	37,431	100%	38,572	100%	40.7%	3.0%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	20,611	75%	28,459	76%	29,060	75%	41.0%	2.1%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	6,805	25%	8,972	24%	9,513	25%	39.8%	6.0%
Wildlife Viewing (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	20,556	100%	20,615	100%	21,118	100%	2.7%	2.4%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,980	100%	16,840	100%	16,497	100%	3.2%	-2.0%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	9,103	57%	10,286	61%	9,801	59%	7.7%	-4.7%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	6,877	43%	6,553	39%	6,695	41%	-2.6%	2.2%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	12,344	100%	15,818	100%	16,423	100%	33.0%	3.8%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,830	100%	14,344	100%	15,039	100%	17.2%	4.8%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	7,636	60%	9,151	64%	9,904	66%	29.7%	8.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	5,194	40%	5,192	36%	5,135	34%	-1.1%	-1.1%
Backpacking Overnight	10,540	100%	10,217	100%	9,994	100%	-5.2%	-2.2%
Bicycling (Mountain)	8,690	100%	8,916	100%	9,289	100%	6.9%	4.2%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	4,294	49%	4,896	55%	5,434	58%	26.5%	11.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	4,396	51%	4,020	45%	3,854	41%	-12.3%	-4.1%
Skateboarding	6,500	100%	9,019	100%	8,923	100%	37.3%	-1.1%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	3,989	61%	6,469	72%	6,504	73%	63.0%	0.5%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,511	39%	2,559	28%	2,418	27%	-3.7%	-5.5%
Fishing (Fly)	6,939	100%	7,631	100%	8,077	100%	16.4%	5.8%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	4,460	64%	4,993	65%	5,417	67%	21.5%	8.5%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	2,479	36%	2,638	35%	2,659	33%	7.3%	0.8%
Archery	7,654	100%	7,428	100%	7,662	100%	0.1%	3.2%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	6,514	85%	6,202	83%	6,483	85%	-0.5%	4.5%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,140	15%	1,227	17%	1,179	15%	3.4%	-3.9%
Climbing (Indoor)	5,112	100%	5,778	100%	6,356	100%	24.3%	10.0%
Roller Skating, In-Line	5,040	100%	5,173	100%	5,201	100%	3.2%	0.5%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,680	73%	3,763	73%	3,840	74%	4.3%	2.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,359	27%	1,410	27%	1,361	26%	0.1%	-3.5%
Bicycling (BMX)	3,439	100%	4,181	100%	4,462	100%	29.7%	6.7%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,052	60%	2,792	67%	3,130	70%	52.5%	12.1%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,387	40%	1,389	33%	1,332	30%	-4.0%	-4.1%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,541	100%	2,452	100%	2,568	100%	1.1%	4.7%
Climbing (Sport/Boulder)	2,184	100%	2,452	100%	2,544	100%	16.5%	3.8%
Adventure Racing	2,215	100%	1,714	100%	1,808	100%	-18.4%	5.5%
<i>Casual (1 time)</i>	581	26%	236	14%	405	22%	-30.3%	71.6%
<i>Core(2+ times)</i>	1,634	74%	1,478	86%	1,403	78%	-14.1%	-5.1%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)	Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)	Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)	



Aquatics

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Swimming (Fitness)	27,575	100%	26,272	100%	28,173	100%	2.2%	7.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	18,728	68%	18,827	72%	20,620	73%	10.1%	9.5%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	8,847	32%	7,445	28%	7,553	27%	-14.6%	1.5%
Aquatic Exercise	10,518	100%	10,676	100%	11,307	100%	7.5%	5.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	7,391	70%	8,626	81%	9,298	82%	25.8%	7.8%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,127	30%	2,050	19%	2,009	18%	-35.8%	-2.0%
Swimming on a Team	3,045	100%	2,904	100%	3,327	100%	9.3%	14.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	1,678	55%	1,916	66%	2,280	69%	35.9%	19.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,367	45%	988	34%	1,047	31%	-23.4%	6.0%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over								
Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)		Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)		Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)			



Water Sports/Activities

National Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2018		2022		2023		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Kayaking (Recreational)	11,017	100%	13,561	100%	14,726	100%	33.7%	8.6%
Canoeing	9,129	100%	9,521	100%	9,999	100%	9.5%	5.0%
Snorkeling	7,815	100%	7,376	100%	7,489	100%	-4.2%	1.5%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	6,321	81%	6,005	81%	6,086	81%	-3.7%	1.3%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,493	19%	1,371	19%	1,403	19%	-6.0%	2.3%
Jet Skiing	5,324	100%	5,445	100%	5,759	100%	8.2%	5.8%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	3,900	73%	4,151	76%	4,490	78%	15.1%	8.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,425	27%	1,294	24%	1,269	22%	-10.9%	-1.9%
Stand-Up Paddling	3,453	100%	3,777	100%	4,129	100%	19.6%	9.3%
Sailing	3,754	100%	3,632	100%	4,100	100%	9.2%	12.9%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,596	69%	2,633	72%	3,117	76%	20.1%	18.4%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,159	31%	999	28%	984	24%	-15.1%	-1.5%
Rafting	3,404	100%	3,595	100%	4,050	100%	19.0%	12.7%
Surfing	2,874	100%	3,692	100%	3,993	100%	38.9%	8.2%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,971	69%	2,444	66%	2,655	66%	34.7%	8.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	904	31%	1,248	34%	1,338	34%	48.0%	7.2%
Water Skiing	3,363	100%	3,040	100%	3,133	100%	-6.8%	3.1%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,499	74%	2,185	72%	2,302	73%	-7.9%	5.4%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	863	26%	855	28%	832	27%	-3.6%	-2.7%
Scuba Diving	2,849	100%	2,658	100%	3,063	100%	7.5%	15.2%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,133	75%	2,012	76%	2,374	78%	11.3%	18.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	716	25%	646	24%	689	22%	-3.8%	6.7%
Kayaking (White Water)	2,562	100%	2,726	100%	2,995	100%	16.9%	9.9%
Wakeboarding	2,796	100%	2,754	100%	2,844	100%	1.7%	3.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,900	68%	2,075	75%	2,119	75%	11.5%	2.1%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	896	32%	679	25%	725	25%	-19.1%	6.8%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	2,805	100%	2,642	100%	2,800	100%	-0.2%	6.0%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,556	100%	1,391	100%	1,434	100%	-7.8%	3.1%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,245	80%	1,103	79%	1,162	81%	-6.7%	5.3%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	310	20%	288	21%	272	19%	-12.3%	-5.6%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
Core vs Casual Distribution:	Evenly Divided between Core and Casual Participants (45-55%)	Moderate Amount of Participants (56-74%)	Majority Amount of Participants (75% or greater)	

Similar Provider Report



Similar Provider Assessment

The Consulting Team conducted a Market Analysis comparing surrounding Community Centers and Community Rental Spaces. This analysis allows Shaler Township to benchmark against other organizations to better determine gaps, overlaps, and possible market opportunities in the provision of various amenities, attractions, and services.

Methodology

The assessment focused on Direct Similar Providers provided by surrounding townships and communities. In this study, a Direct Similar Provider includes Community Centers and Community Rental Spaces that offer programs, events, or a rental facility.

This assessment focused on:

- Amenities and Attractions
- Major Programs and Services
- Rental Spaces and Fees
- Memberships

Similar Provider Analysis

Similar providers were assessed based on amenities, program offerings, and pricing information. All data was obtained directly from each similar provider's official website or from an onsite facility representative via phone/email. Please note that some providers did not have information readily available on their websites and did not yield any response from representatives. This has led to instances where information is missing, incomplete, or may be outdated. All information obtained was in the Fall of 2024.

Kiwanis Park

Kiwanis Park is home to the only community pool in Shaler Township – Crawford Pool. This pool is open from late spring to late summer. Season passes are available at different rates based on the customers' residential status and age. Some programs are run through Crawford Pool, including swim lessons for toddlers, adult swim aerobics, various planned community events, and a local swim team called the Shaler Seadogs.

The park also hosts one playground, two tennis courts, street hockey, one pickleball court, three ballfields, two picnic shelters, and two basketball courts. The shelters and Crawford Pool can be rented out for a fee and for a limited time to keep them open for regular business.

Proposed Community Center

In a 2022 Community Center Report conducted by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group, three conceptual sketches were drawn up for the proposed Community Center – Small, Medium, and Large.

Small

The conceptual design for the **Small** Kiwanis Park Community Center includes a two-story structure built into a hillside with designated spaces on both levels. The lower floor features a lobby, one basketball court, pickleball courts, a banquet room with a capacity of 200 guests, flexible classroom spaces, and storage. The upper floor includes smaller meeting rooms, a kitchenette, a larger banquet room, and an exterior deck.



The site plan also highlights amenities such as improved road access, ADA parking and restrooms, trails with a bridge over a ravine, picnic pavilions, and a roundabout with a central fountain. Existing facilities like the dual amphitheater and some parking areas are retained and improved.

Medium

This conceptual design for the **Medium** Kiwanis Park Community and Athletic Center includes a two-story facility integrated into the hillside. The lower-level hosts athletic spaces, including a 150-meter walking track, a basketball court, two pickleball courts, and storage. The upper level serves community purposes, featuring a lobby, flexible meeting space and smaller rooms for possible rent, a kitchenette, rest/locker rooms, an exterior deck, and additional storage.

The surrounding park layout includes an upper parking lot, pockets of gardens like pollinator gardens, shared parking, an outdoor community space, a larger playground, ADA parking, picnic pavilions, and trails with a bridge over a ravine. There are also plans for new or relocated tennis and pickleball courts and a new pool house.

Large

In this conceptual design for the **Large** Kiwanis Park Community and Athletic Center, the facility is three stories. The lower floor is dedicated to parking. The middle floor serves as an athletics area featuring a 200-meter walking track, two full basketball courts, three pickleball courts, locker rooms, flexible rooms, and storage. The upper floor is for community activities and contains a lobby, a large banquet room, smaller rooms, flexible rental spaces, a kitchenette, an exterior deck, and additional storage.

The site includes an upper outdoor parking lot, outdoor community space, reoriented parking and playground, picnic pavilions, an accessible restroom, trails with a bridge over a ravine, and a new pool house. Additional amenities include a gazebo and ADA-compliant picnic shelter.

Funding

Something to consider is the differing construction costs for each of the conceptual facilities. Common estimated costs for all three concepts include:

- Realignment of access road across from Vollmer Drive, and additional parking areas - \$1 million
- Reconstruction of current/existing bathhouse - \$1.2 million
- Engineering/Storm Water Management/ Design Fees for Above - \$750,000-\$1 million

The total construction cost for the Small, Medium, and Large facilities is estimated to be around \$13 million, \$23 million, and \$42 million, respectively. To pay the issuance back, the Township would need to make an annual debt service payment. The Kiwanis Park Focus Group outlined the possible changes to taxes in the table below. It is important to know that the debt service was calculated without consideration for external funding sources. The Township has expressed a desire to look at naming rights, grants, and other sources of funding to determine if they can be incorporated into a broader funding strategy.

Total Bond Issuance	Estimated Annual Debt Service	Equates to Tax Milage Increase	New Millage Rate with increase	New Average Tax Bill	Increase	Percent Increase over current tax rate
13 M	\$ 671,617.31	.40 Mills	3.89	\$ 548.69	\$ 56.42	11.46%
23 M	\$ 1,188,246.01	.70 Mills	4.19	\$ 591.01	\$ 98.74	20.06%
42 M	\$ 2,169,840.54	1.275 Mills	4.765	\$ 672.11	\$ 179.84	36.53%





Direct Providers

In the same Community Center Report by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group in 2022, five nearby facilities were identified as similar providers to the Township's plans for the proposed community center. These facilities are all a part of their respective townships'/communities' local government or parks department. The Community Center Report outlined a few amenities that would be best for the proposed community center and the similar providers were evaluated based on these:

- Flexible Rental Space
- Catering Kitchen
- Outside Deck with Roof
- Outside Deck without Roof
- Basketball Courts
- Classrooms
- Walking Track – Level or Elevated
- Pickleball Court

In addition to these amenities, the similar providers were evaluated on their rental spaces and fees, similar programs, and membership fees.



Facilities

The five facilities evaluated are all in the Pittsburgh area, the closest being the Ross Township Community Center (14 minutes) and the Hampton Township Community Center (15 minutes). Hours for each facility differ depending on the programming and activities offered at each. Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center and Wilkins Township Community Center are mainly rental facilities, so their hours mainly depend on when their respective Departments aren't using them but can staff them.

Community Center	Distance from Kiwanis Park (min)	Hours
Hampton Township Community Center	15	Fall, Winter/Spring, Summer: Sun: Closed, 12p-4p, Closed Mon-Fri: 6a-9p,6a-9p, 6a-8p Sat: 8a-6p,8a-6p, 8a-4p
Pine Township Community Center	30	Mon-Thu: 6a-9p Fri: 6a-8p Sat-Sun: 8a-4p
Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center	28	Fri-Sun: 9a-11p
Ross Township Community Center	14	Mon-Thu: 8a-8p Fri: 8a-3:30p Sat-Sun: 1p-5p
Wilkins Township Community Center	31	Mon-Fri: 8:30a-4:30p



Amenities and Attractions

Among the amenities and attractions highlighted as priorities by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group, Rental Space and Catering Kitchen were offered by every facility, while Basketball Courts, Walking Track, and Pickleball Courts were offered by most of them. One thing to note is that Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center does not have indoor courts or walking tracks, but they are offered outdoors. There is expected limitations to the types of programming that can be provided in smaller indoor recreation spaces. The intent is to right-size the facility to meet the needs of the community while considering the financial capabilities of the Township. so Shaler Township should consider making sure they have these amenities indoors to provide the community with more popular programs. Other common amenities to consider are a Great Room/Community Room (commonly rented out) and a fitness center.

Community Center	Rental Space	Catering Kitchen	Outside Deck with Roof	Outside Deck without Roof	Basketball Courts	Classroom	Walking Track	Pickleball Court	Other amenities
Hampton Township Community Center	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes		Great room/community room, fitness center, library, 195-acre park
Pine Township Community Center	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		Community rooms, fitness center, splash pad, kids' corner, 105-acre park
Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (Outdoor)	No	Yes (Outdoor)	Yes (Outdoor)	Multipurpose rooms, 87-acre park
Ross Township Community Center	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes		Police Station
Wilkins Township Community Center	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No		Community Room



Rental Spaces and Fees

The similar providers all offer space for rent at varying sizes and capacities. On average, these facilities have a capacity of around 80 people per 1,000 square feet. Something to note is that information for the square footage of rental space at Ross Township Community Center could not be pinpointed down, so an estimate was made based on the maximum capacity given at 15 sq ft/person. Many of the maximum capacity spaces are for combined rooms or multiple rooms at a time. Please note that some of the facilities offer other smaller rooms for rent on occasion. Rental fees can vary depending on residential status and length of stay. The most expensive total rental cost is at Hampton Township Community Center’s Great Rooms A and B as a Non-resident for eight hours: \$1,050. The least expensive fee is Pine Community Center’s Community Room East or West at \$70/hr during weekday, non-prime hours. Although the Ross Township Community Center’s hourly rental fees are generally lower, there is a 2-hour minimum rental period.

Community Center	Sqft	Rental Space Capacity	Rental Fees	Notes
Hampton Township Community Center	3950	200	Great Room A OR B (Res, Nonres): \$85, \$100/hr, \$230, \$290/3hr, \$465, \$560/6hr, \$585, \$760/8hr Great Room A & B (Res, Nonres): \$175, \$198/hr, \$465, \$585/3hr, \$700, \$865/6hr, \$815, \$1,050/8hr	Rental Capacity is when Great Rooms A & B are combined
Pine Township Community Center	1891	160	Residents/Members/Non-Profits: Community Room E OR W: \$70-85/hr Community Room E & W: \$145-\$170/hr Pine Businesses: Community Room E OR W: \$75-85/hr Community Room E & W: \$145-\$175/hr Nonresidents: Community Room E OR W: \$80-\$95/hr Community Room E & W: \$165-\$190/hr	Rental Capacity is when Community Rooms East & West are combined
Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center	1920	175	Hourly: \$125 Res/Non-Profit, \$145 Nonresident/Business 8 Hours: \$625 Resident/Non-Profit, \$750 Nonresident/Business	Rental Capacity is for the Activity Hall without seating
Ross Township Community Center	~1500	100	Classroom A, B, & C (Res, Nonres): \$65, \$75/hr Classroom A & B (Res, Nonres): \$50, \$60/hr	Rental Capacity is for Classrooms A, B & C combined with tables & chairs
Wilkins Township Community Center	3010	317	7 Hour Rental: \$200	Rental Capacity is for Rooms A & B with chairs but without tables



Common Programs

The similar providers were evaluated based on some common programs that they offer. A Youth Basketball League is offered at three of the five facilities, with the most expensive league at Pine Township Community Center during the winter at \$157. The least expensive offering is at Hampton Township Community Center for Residents at \$116. Yoga is offered at four of the five facilities. Some of the facilities offer pricing for multiple classes, some offer one class at a time, and Wilkins Township offers a yoga class that is for donations with a suggested donation of \$10. Ross Township offers three different types of Yoga at their Community Center. These programs should give Shaler Township a gauge of what programs they could offer and how they should be priced.

Community Center	Youth Basketball League	Yoga
Hampton Township Community Center	Youth Basketball: \$116 Res, \$134 Nonres	Yoga 9 weeks: \$40 Res, \$45 Nonres
Pine Township Community Center	Youth Basketball: Spring, Summer, Fall: \$147 Winter: \$157	Yoga 1 class: \$8 Members, \$10 Non-Members
Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center		
Ross Township Community Center	7th-12th Grade Basketball: \$130	Chair Yoga 10 weeks: \$72 Res, \$90 Nonres Gentle Yoga 10 weeks: \$88 Res, \$110 Nonres Flow Yoga 10 weeks: \$80 Res, \$100 Nonres
Wilkins Township Community Center		Yoga: Donation Class



Memberships and Daily Admission

Shaler Township could consider providing a membership or daily admission fee for its proposed community center. Only Hampton Township Community Center and Pine Township Community Center offer a daily fee or membership. These facilities offer the most amenities, including a fitness center. If Shaler Township is considering including a fitness center in the community center, they should think about including a daily admission fee and a membership.

Community Center	Daily Fees	Membership Fees
Hampton Township Community Center	Gymnasium Only: \$3 All Facilities: \$6	Community Center (No Fitness) Adult: \$32/yr Res, \$63/yr Non Teen: \$19/yr Res, \$38/yr Non Fitness Adult: \$67/yr Res, \$134/yr Non College: \$37/yr Res, \$74/yr Non Family: \$217/yr Res, \$427/yr Non Married Couple: \$117/yr Res, \$222/yr Non Youth: \$56/yr, \$111/yr Non
Pine Township Community Center	Gymnasium and Track only: \$6 Gym, Track, and Fitness Center: \$12 Fitness Class: \$8 Resident, \$10 Non	Track Only Resident: \$30/yr Track Only Nonresident: \$60/yr Family: \$660/yr Resident, \$900/yr Non Adult: \$360/yr Resident, \$540/yr Non Senior: \$300/yr Resident, \$420/yr Non Teen: \$300/yr Resident, \$420/yr Non



Conclusion

Understanding the surrounding market for specific amenities, programs, and rental spaces allows the Township staff to take measured approaches to introducing a new Community Center. Few nearby similar providers offer all of the amenities outlined as priorities by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group. This gives the Township the ability to set itself apart from the other facilities while also offering the community of Shaler a community center that they can call their own.

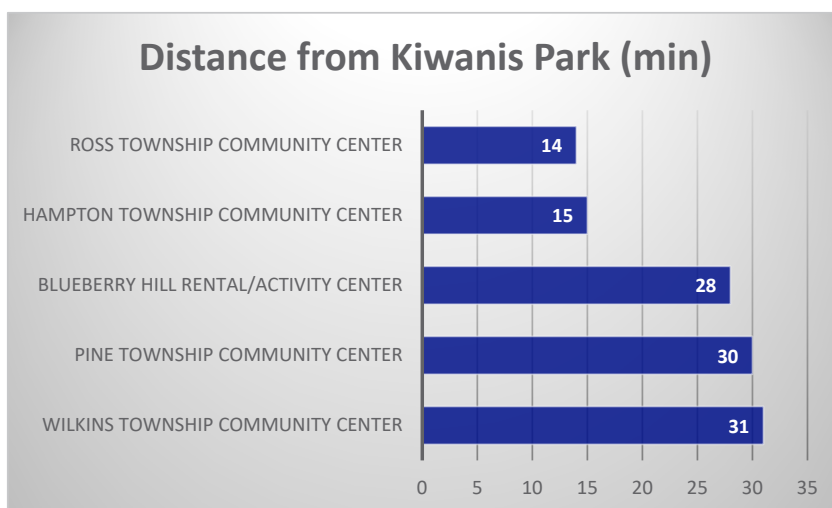
Ultimately, staff will need to use the information contained in this report in concert with local usage trends, public opinion, and their own professional knowledge when proposing new additions to Kiwanis Park and the proposed community center once the plan is complete. This approach empowers the Township to be responsive to changes in the market when they happen.

The figures from the Kiwanis Park Focus Group at the beginning of this Similar Provider Assessment were from 2022. Considering the decreases with inflation since that year, the Township may want to recalculate the figures to determine its impact on the estimated costs to develop a recreation center. The need for indoor recreation spaces is present, the community is supportive of an investment, but wanting to make sure the Township does not overcommit funding that could create unintended consequences elsewhere in operations.

The following observations were made from the Market Analysis:

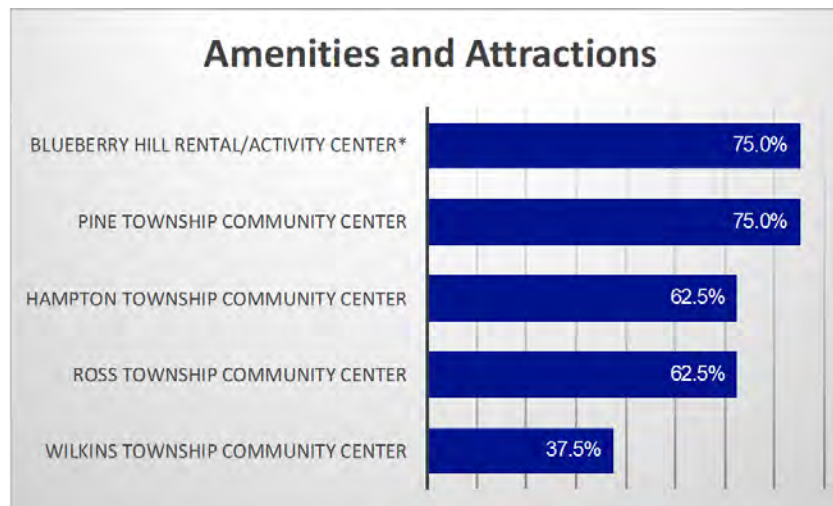
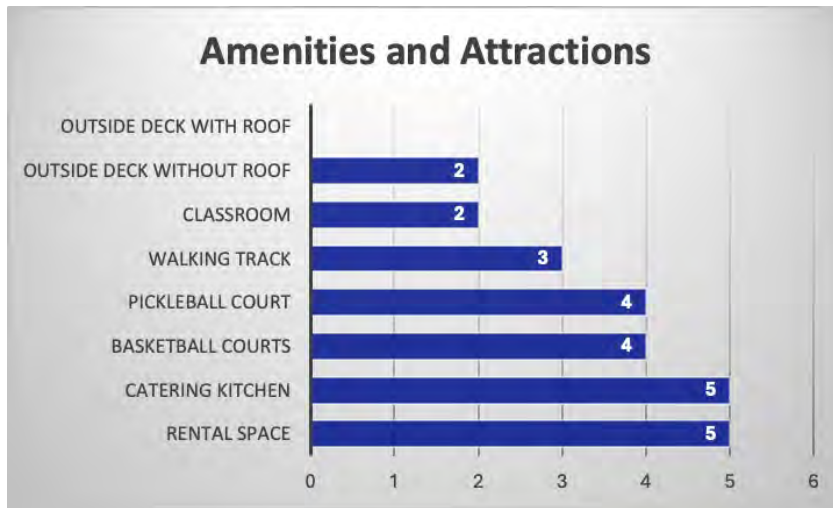
Similar Providers

Five similar providers in the Pittsburgh area were identified by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group in 2022. The two closest facilities to Kiwanis Park are the Ross Township Community Center and the Hampton Township Community Center. Three facilities are outside of a 15-minute drive from Kiwanis Park, which can sway people to come to Kiwanis Park to save on drive-time.



Amenities and Attractions

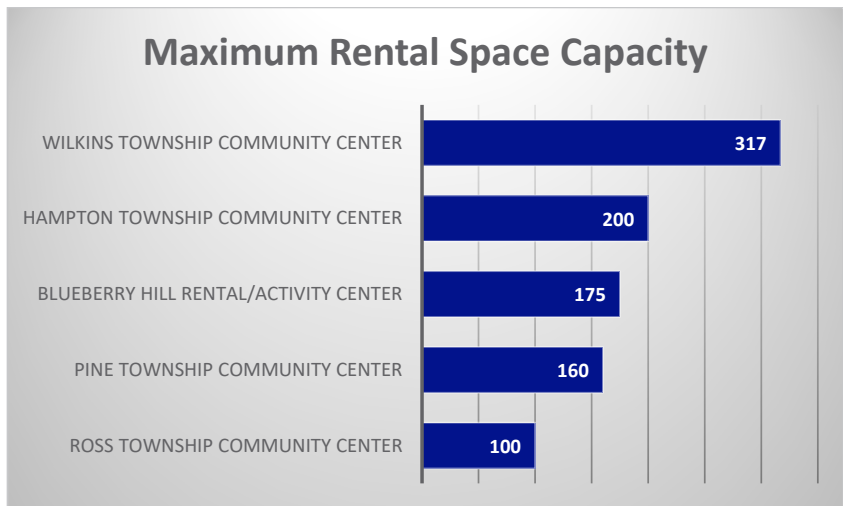
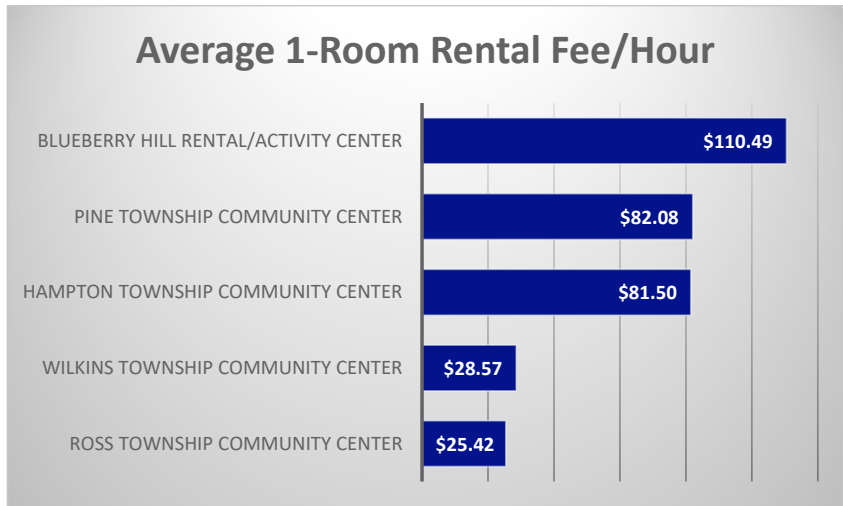
Of the amenities provided by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group that are said to be priorities, Rental Space and Catering Kitchen were the only ones to be included in all of the similar providers evaluated. The next most common amenities were Basketball Courts and Pickleball Court. Of the facilities evaluated, Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center and Pine Township Community Center provided most of the amenities evaluated. One thing to note is that Blueberry Hill has a Walking Track, Pickleball Court, and Basketball Court, but they are outdoors in the surrounding park and not included indoors. Taking that into account, the facility is more on par with Wilkins Township Community Center





Rental Spaces and Fees

Rental space fees for many of the facilities depended on the room(s), residential status, and length of stay. Some of the facilities offer packages of multiple rooms and/or discounted multiple hours. The average 1-Room Rental Fee/Hour was calculated by taking every price offered and dividing it by rooms and hours. The highest average fee is at Blueberry Hill, while the lowest offered fee is at Ross Township Community Center. The Maximum Rental Space Capacity shown is the absolute maximum capacity of one rental, whether that be one room or packaged rooms. The highest capacity available is at Wilkins Township Community Center, and the lowest is at Ross Township Community Center.



Program Assessment



CHAPTER ONE –PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Shaler Township (“Township”), the consulting team conducted a Program Assessment of the parks and recreation services offered by the Township. The assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents and visitors.



The Township has offered parks and recreation services in a limited capacity. The Assistant Township Manager has overseen parks and recreation services in the form of aquatics, park maintenance, and events. To augment the parks and recreation services, the Township contributes to the implementation of programs through and at the Shaler North Hills Library (“Library”). The consulting team based these program findings on a review of information provided by the Township including program descriptions, financial data, website content, and discussions with staff. This report addresses the program offerings from a systems perspective for the entire portfolio of programs including partnerships and contracted services. The entire portfolio will need to include what programs (Library & other) that can be provided in a program-based community center, likely within Kiwanis Park.

FRAMEWORK

The Township’s goals are to align programming with the community’s needs so residents, businesses and visitors can have an improved quality of life that is delivered in a fiscally responsible manner while preserving the Township’s rich history, cultural heritage, and charming lifestyle.

To help achieve these objectives, the Township provides several parks and amenities within the park system. Several parks and amenities have reached their end of lifecycle and should be reinvested in to provide appropriate amenities and programming that residents are seeking. The Township will likely need to work with partners and others to activate these spaces that appear to be somewhat underutilized currently. This analysis has identified the Crawford Pool and Kiwanis Park to be the location for the majority of programs and events provided by the Township. Most parks and recreation programs are provided outdoors with exception of those provided through the Library.



CORE PROGRAM AREAS

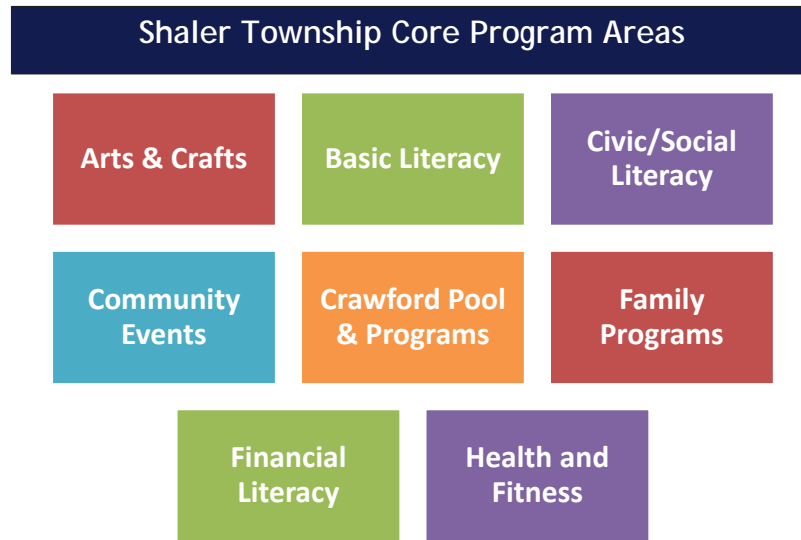
To help deliver parks and recreations services, it is important to identify the Core Program Areas based on current and future needs to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. The philosophy of the Core Program Area is to assist staff, policy makers, and the public to focus on what is most important to the community. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet any of the following criteria:



- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency's overall budget.
- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- The program area has wide demographic appeal.
- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the program area's offerings.
- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- The agency controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREAS

Through discussions with the Township staff, (8) Core Program Areas were identified that are currently being offered. The core programs are as follows:





CORE PROGRAM AREA DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of Core Program Areas and internal goals are consistent with industry standards. There is an opportunity to enhance the descriptions and refresh the messaging as the Township unveils the Master Plan and launches the implementation of the plan and new brand of programs and services.

Core Program Area	Brief Description
Arts and Crafts	Providing a fun and interactive way for creative expression and for children to practice their fine motor skills and their problem-solving capabilities.
Basic Literacy	Developing foundational competency including reading, writing, math, job application assistance, and overall life-skill development. Also includes digital and STEM literacies.
Civic/Social Literacy	Engaging in discourse while remaining respectful of other individuals of varying opinions; understanding the importance of community engagement which allows individuals to interact with one another, in a participatory manner; invoking societal change.
Community Events	A variety of parks and recreation events are delivered to residents through the warmer months of each year. Events are family oriented with ancillary activities of interest to youth and adults. Recently, the Township has introduced adult beverages with some outdoor events.
Crawford Pool Programs	Lessons for Learn to Swim candidates that can range anywhere from group sized classes to the private level. A program for individuals to participate in low-impact group exercise in the water and swim club facility use.
Family Programs	Developing family friendly environment by transforming libraries into community centers for literacy, early childhood development, parent education and engagement, family support and community information.
Financial Literacy	Having the knowledge and understanding necessary to make informed fiscal/economic decisions for personal life planning and business interests including responsible budgeting, spending and saving skills.
Health and Fitness	Having the ability to make informed decisions in relation to an individual's physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual health; Also applies to caregivers understanding the health information of a loved one.

PROGRAM STRATEGY ANALYSIS

AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS

The Figure below depicts each Core Program Area and the most prominent age segments they serve. Recognizing that many Core Program Areas serve multiple age segments, Primary (noted with a 'P') and Secondary (noted with an 'S') markets are identified. Primary refers to the main target of programs within a core program area, the age segment that benefits the most. Secondary refers to an age segment(s) that is not the primary target of services but are enticed to participate from either interest or specific marketing. The Township provides services to all age segments with only a few unserved Core Program Areas, which is appropriate considering they are Family Programs, Financial Literacy, and Health and Wellness which do not typically interest ages seventeen and under.

Shaler Township Age Segments Served								
Core Program Area	Preschool (5 and Under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Adult (18-34)	Adult (35-50)	Adult (51-69)	Adult (70+)	All Ages Programs
Arts and Crafts	P	P	P	S	S	S	S	
Basic Literacy	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Civic/Social Literacy	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Crawford Pool Programs	P	P	S	S	P	P	P	
Family Programs	P	P		P	P			
Financial Literacy				P	P	P	P	
Health and Fitness				P	P	P	P	

The Figure above exhibits an over-arching view of the age segments served by different core program areas. Current Library programming is closely aligned with the community's demographics and effectively supports the Township's mission. However, there is a recognized need for Shaler Township to diversify beyond Library programming. The Township activates athletic fields with partners in the community. Activating indoor spaces has not been possible to this point as there are only a couple of programmable rooms between the Township headquarters and the Library. With the potential for new indoor recreation spaces, the Township will be able to add new programming and create a central hub for year-round recreation.

PROGRAM LIFECYCLE

The Program Lifecycle Analysis combines both Library and parks and recreation programming. The analysis included Township staff reviewing each Core Program Area offered to determine if participation trends show the program in a stage of growth or decline. This analysis helps inform strategic decisions about the overall program portfolio managed by the Township including those provided through partnerships.

This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data but rather, it is based on Township staff's knowledge of core program areas and participation. The following table shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Township's programs in both parks and recreation and the Library. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff during data gathering.

Lifecycle Stage	Description	Actual Program Distribution		Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	33%		
Take-Off	Rapid participation growth	36%	81%	50-60% total
Growth	Moderate, but consistent population growth	12%		
Mature	Slow participation growth	6%	6%	40% total
Saturation	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	7%	9%	0-10% total
Decline	Decline participation	2%		
No-Go	Cancelled Programs	4%	4%	



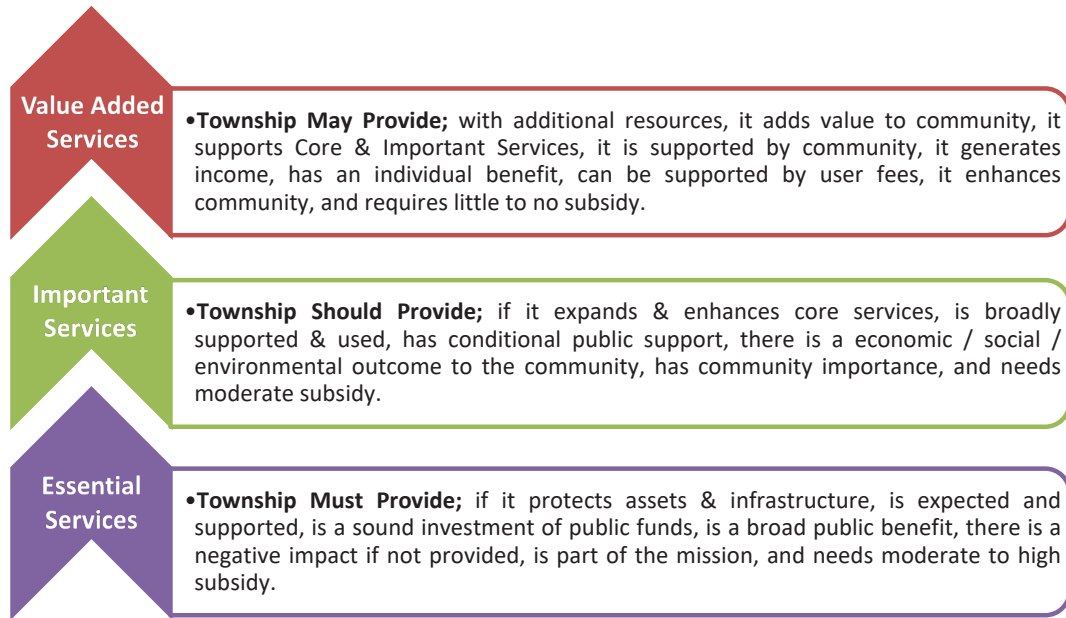


The Lifecycle Analysis depicts a program distribution that has plenty of introductory programs. Approximately 33% of all programs fall within the beginning stage of Introduction and Take-off but lacking in Mature stage programming in parks and recreation services, as the Township has been more of a facility provider to people and organizations that deliver programs as a main service. In the Township, there is the desire to build the program services that will reactivate spaces and re-energize the parks that appear tired and aging. This should increase the positive impact of recreational facilities the Township operates. Staff can anticipate the programs within the Introduction and Take-Off Stages to transition to Mature and eventually, Saturated and Declining. Staff will need to be prepared with new introductory programming as this transition takes place. The new introductory programs will be identified within the statistically valid survey. The data will be instrumental in determining the highest and best programming/ activities to implement within the new community center

Typically, parks and recreation services are continued well beyond their useful life, as staff build relationships with the residents who benefit from these programs making it difficult to discontinue. This is not the case currently for the Township with 4% of programming being cancelled. However, when the Mature Stage programs transition in to the declining stages, staff will need to monitor resources applied to declining programs and likely reallocate resources into new innovative programming.

PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION

Conducting a classification of services informs how each Core Program Area serves the overall Township mission and program goals. Additionally, it also assists with how programs should be funded regarding tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. How a program is classified can help to determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies. The appropriate management of certain programs will likely involve partnering with organizations or contractors who have the expertise to deliver services more directly and conveniently to residents. This Analysis utilized a classification method based on three indicators: Essential, Important, and Value-Added. Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, financial sustainability, personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, and access by participants. The following infographic further describes each of the three program classifications.



Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides a public benefit versus a private benefit. A public benefit can be described as everyone receiving the same level of benefit with equal access, whereas a private benefit can be described as the user receiving exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.

A Program Classification was conducted for core program areas currently being offered. The results are presented in the Figure below. Approximately 51% of programs were determined Essential from staff assessments, with 30% considered to be Important, and the remaining 19% being Value-Added. This breakdown is used to identify the current distribution and make recommendations that help the agency achieve a balance consistent with financial goals. For detailed program classification, see **Appendix A**.

Shaler Township Program Classification			
Factors	Essential	Important	Value-Added
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	High public expectation	High public expectation	High individual and interest group expectation
Benefits (health, safety, protection of assets, etc.)	Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)	Public and individual benefit	Primarily individual benefit
Access	Open access by all	Open access Limited access to specific users	Limited access to specific users
Financial Sustainability	Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs, Requires public funding	Fees cover some direct costs, Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target	Fees cover most direct and indirect costs, Some public funding as appropriate
Competition in the Market	Limited or no alternative providers	Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need	Alternative providers readily available
Program Distribution	51%	30%	19%



It is not uncommon to see essential services have a healthy percentage of the distribution, as the Township aligns services with community needs and help to address social issues for residents, such as reading literacy. Financial sustainability is important to the Township when it comes to the Crawford Pool and its programming. Library programming is provided through donations, grants and endowments.

PRICING

Pricing strategies are one mechanism the Township can use to influence revenue generation. The Township has a consistent pricing strategy with the Crawford Pool and programs. The Library programming is free due to the level of sponsorship and/or endowments. Pricing strategies are commonly used to achieve an established set of outcomes.

Residency helps to identify the primary target market, taxpayers that help fund development of the assets within the system, and those whose tax dollars contribute to ongoing asset maintenance. The Crawford Pool use of pricing strategies is referred to as dynamic pricing. This is something that can be used when analyzing the community center’s revenue potential. Dynamic pricing is also used to manage demand when demand is high, offering a decreased price at a less busy time to spread out demand. This may be necessary with the programs in the proposed community center by establishing peak times and peak days of the week. An example of implementing peak times would be a golf course with weekday rates (Monday-Thursday) being lower than weekend rates (Friday-Sunday).

Core Program Area	Age Segment	Family / Household Status	Residency	Weekday / Weekend	Prime / Non-Prime Time	Group Discounts	By Location	By Competition (Market Rate)	By Cost Recovery Goals	By Customer's Ability to Pay
Arts and Crafts										
Basic Literacy										
Civic/Social Literacy										
Crawford Pool & Programs	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Family Programs										
Financial Literacy										
Health and Fitness										

The cost of providing programs, events and services has increased over the past few years. The Township routinely discusses the pricing and financial performance to monitor changes in operational costs that may negatively impact the ability to provide sustainable services at a consistent price.

CURRENT COST RECOVERY

As shown in the table below, cost recovery targets can vary based on the core program area, and some core program areas do not have cost recovery goals. The actual cost recovery achieved can fluctuate year-to-year depending upon participation, operational issues, renovations, weather events, partnerships, and sponsorships. Where there are contracted instructors, significant supply costs, and specific expertise, the cost recovery tends to be higher (i.e., arts and crafts). Where cost recovery is included in the goals, the Township is operating better than most.

Cost Recovery Goals by Core Program Area			
Core Program Area	Current Cost Recovery Goal Percentage	Actual Cost Recovery Achieved	Notes
Arts and Crafts	100%	98%	Tai Chi is \$3.00 per person/class. All funds go to instructor.
Civic/Social Literacy	100%	90%	Friends of SNHL subsidizes, sometimes not all show up
Crawford Pool Programs	75%	85%	Does not include Capital Expenses for Pool and includes the average programs
Fundraisers	100%	80%	Depends on attendance

1.1.1 PROGRAM STANDARDS

Program standards consist in helping staff know the outcomes to achieve. Standards can be centralized and applied across the Township and/or specific to unique services. This section looks at the best practices in place for the Township, including overall marketing, social media, data tracking, volunteers, human resource practices, customer feedback, and similar providers.

1.1.2 CURRENT MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Township’s current marketing strategy utilizes several communication methods to connect with residents including those found in the table (right):

Effective communication strategies require striking an appropriate balance between the content with the volume of messaging, while utilizing the “right” methods of delivery. The Township has a significant distribution of delivery methods for promoting programs. These are not implemented consistently between parks and recreation and the library. A full list of what the library is implementing and what is being implemented for parks and recreation programming can be found in the **Appendix A**.

Best Practice in Marketing
Apps
Direct mail
Email blasts and/or listserv
Facebook
Flyers and/or brochures
In-facility signage
Instagram
Newsletters (online)
Newsletters (print)
Program guides (online)
Program guides (print)
QR Codes
Roadsign marquees
Smart/mobile phone enabled site
Twitter
Webinars
Website
YouTube channel

SOCIAL MEDIA

Formerly the Township utilized Facebook with the last post on January of 2023 informing followers to go to the Township’s centralized Facebook page. Currently the Township covers messaging for the functions. Here is a quick analysis of the platform. All numbers are as of November 14, 2024.

Facebook

- ~ 4,600 followers





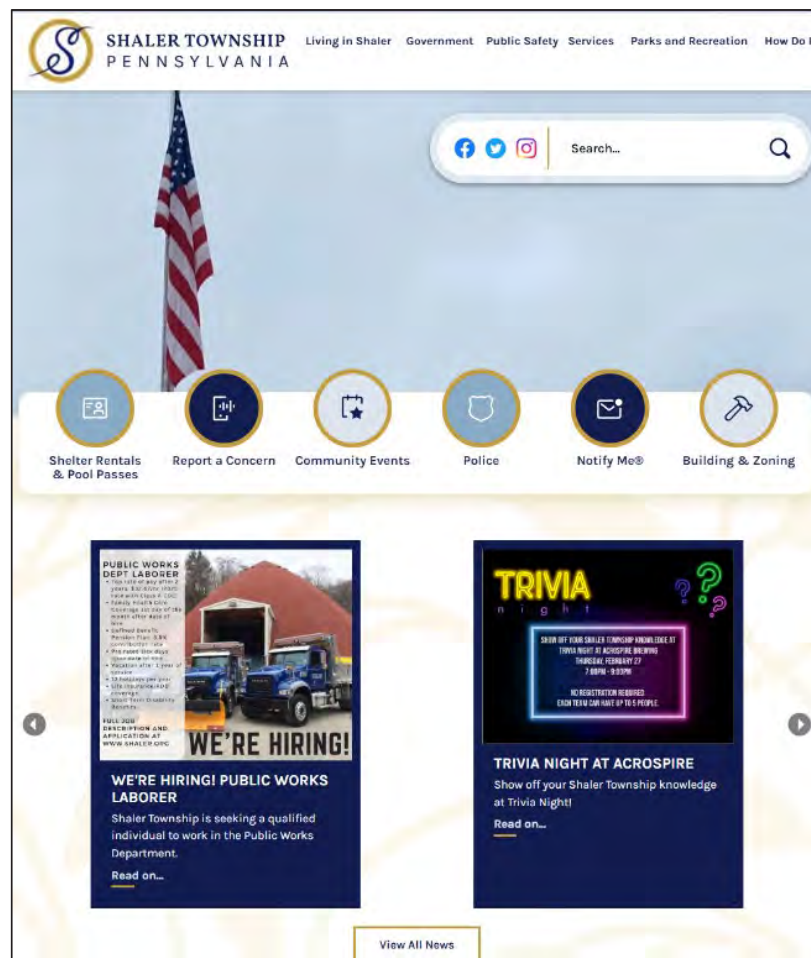
- Posts multiple times a week.
- Content developed to promote services, staff, important traffic interruptions, staff recognition, new project progress and completion. With the Township increasing programming in addition to being a facility provider, promotions may be secondary to other happenings within the Township.

Marketing is important to achieving cost recovery goals through increased participation. Therefore, it is important that the Township promotions and engagement avoid being institutional in nature and be authentic to the need for people to participate in recreational opportunities.

TOWNSHIP & LIBRARY WEBSITE

The Township homepage (<https://www.shaler.org/>) has an eye-catching banner on the landing page. The scrolling banner is consistent with Township branding. Immediately, visitors to the site have multiple quick interest icons below the banner, including, shelter rentals, reporting concerns, community events,

police, Sign up for notifications, and building and zoning. Also at the top are latest news and happenings. The layout has the parks and recreation services as a category at the top. The image below (homepage) is the landing page for the Township.



The Library homepage (<https://www.shalerlibrary.org/>) also has a centralized banner on the landing page. The scrolling banner is consistent with Library branding. Immediately, visitors to the site have multiple quick interest below the blue title banner, including, about the library, adults, kids and families, teens, ways to help, eResources, our community, and Library newsletter. The image below (homepage) is the landing page for the Library.



DATA TRACKING

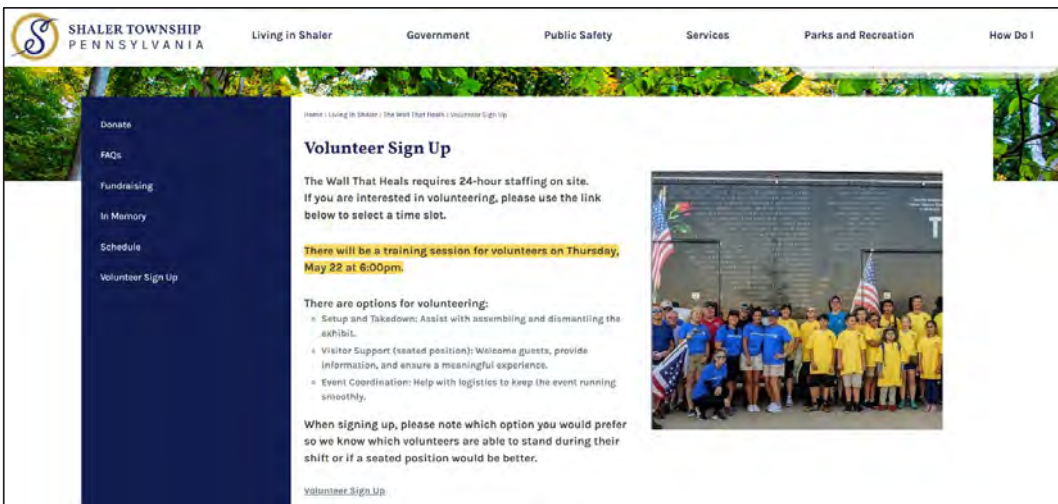
The Township understands that how the residents perceive services is important. The Township tracks KPIs to better inform decision making for quality-of-life assets and programming. Currently, the Township tracks the following:

Best Practices in Data
Total participants
Customer satisfaction level
Track the number of individual volunteers
Track the number of volunteer hours donated



VOLUNTEERS

The Township utilizes volunteers within the community and specifically parks for various opportunities, individually or in groups. Volunteer opportunities are changing as seasons change. The website provides information on opportunities in the Township and upcoming training sessions. The Township website has a volunteer form to initiate matching the volunteer with a great experience. Volunteering is beneficial to the Township and volunteers equally, when planned and implemented in this manner. Volunteers benefit from participating with social, physical, and emotional benefits, which could be specifically identified on the website.



QUALITY MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

The Township has best practices in place to manage operations. Staff work with the specific areas of operation conducting the hiring process. Hiring and retaining employees has become increasingly difficult in recent years. One factor believed to be impacting the Township’s hiring and employee retention is recent trends increasing employee compensation to compete in an “employee market.” Currently, the Township has several HR practices in place in addition to hiring and onboarding, as seen in the table (Right).

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

Currently, the Township utilizes methods to obtain customer feedback as part of the master plan process and periodically as needed to determine the community’s perspective. The following are helping to gain insight into customer perceptions:

- Focus groups
- Statistically valid surveys
- In-facility, in-park, or on-site surveys
- Public/Community Meetings

Best Practices in Quality Management
Basic life safety training (ex. CPR, First Aid)
Continuing education
Diversity training
Enhanced life safety training
Focus groups
In-facility, in-park, or on-site surveys
Instructor quality check
Lesson plans
Maintain a list or database of major competitors/similar providers
Marketing training
Performance reviews; full-time
Performance reviews; part-time
Performance reviews; seasonal
Post-program surveys
Program evaluation system
Regularly and consistently update policies & procedures
Specialty skill training

SURVEY RESULTS – PROGRAMMING PRIORITY INVESTMENTS

Once the statistically valid survey report is completed, it will provide additional insight for the Township and be integrated into these findings for a deeper understanding of the preferred direction and offerings from the residents.



APPENDIX A: SHALER TOWNSHIP PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASSIFICATION OF PROGRAM					
Core Program Area	Program	Essential	Important	Value Added	If notes are needed to describe
Health and Wellness	Tai Chi		X		
	Wednesday Morning Wakeup		X		
	Meditation		X		
	Let's Spill the Tea			X	
	Puzzle competitions			X	
	Your Child's Mental Health		X		
	Meditative Hand Stitching			X	
	Happy Hygge New Year			X	
	Hospice Care	X			
	Diabetes	X			
	Funeral Planning	X			
	Walks at Fawcett Fields			X	
	Square Dancing			X	
	Dementia 101	X			
	Grief at the Holidays	X			
	Tuesday Card Club			X	
	Game Night			X	
	Dementia Friends	X			
	Caregiver Sessions	X			
	Stem Cell	X			
	All Call for Help: EMS	X			
	LAMP	X			
	The Importance of Play			X	
	Fun Food For Kids	X			
	Dance Party	X			
	Mental Health with Teens	X			
Stress Busters			X		
Basic Literacy	Monday Night Book Group	X			
	Mystery Book Group	X			
	Adult Battle of the Books			X	fundraiser
	Book Bonanza			X	fundraiser
	Spirituality for the 2nd part of life	X			
	Sense and Sound Poetry	X			
	Writing Group	X			
	Act Out Readers Theatre	X			
	Food For Thought			X	
	Computer classes	X			
	New Year New Devices			X	
	Tech 101	X			
	Books to Screen			X	
	Travel to the South Pole			X	
	Travel to the Galapagos			X	
	Travel to Greece			X	
	Meet the Author Visits	X			
	Movies on Your Mind			X	
	Nature Snippets	X			
	Art of Storytelling	X			
	Pollinators	X			
	Engineer Camp (tweens)	X			
	Green Teens	X			
	Tasty Teen Treats			X	
	Teen Movie Nights			X	
	Teen Mystery Nights			X	
	Shakespeare Night			X	
	Teen Writing Group			X	
	Poetry Slam			X	
	Comedy/Improv			X	
Anime			X		
Around the World	X				

CLASSIFICATION OF PROGRAM					
Core Program Area	Program	Essential	Important	Value Added	If notes are needed to describe
Basic Literacy Cont.	Super Fun Games	X			
	Goodwill Games	X			
	PA Connecting Community Programs	X			
	Stories at Starlight	X			
	Songs and Stories at the Parks	X			
	Saturday Family Storytime	X			
	Saturday Family Storytime Online	X			
	Tailwaggin Tutor	X			
	Lunch Bunch	X			
	Pizza and a Story	X			
	Page Turners	X			
	Math	X			
	Book Babies	X			
	Ants to Zucchini	X			
	Musical Moments	X			
	Chapter Champions	X			
	American Girl	X			
	Preschool E1press	X			
	Family Place Imagination Station	X			
	Script Squad Readers Theatre	X			
	Tween Book Clubbin	X			
	K+1	X			
	Your Blg Backyard	X			
	Kickoff to Kindergarten	X			
	LEGO Free Build			X	
	Who, Was, Where	X			
Chess STEAM Camp	X				
Family Battles of the Books	X				
Arts & Crafts	Needles & Hooks By the Books		X		
	Ukranian Art Demo			X	
	Ukranian Art Classes			X	
	Botanical Drawing			X	
	Pittsburgh Recorder Society Concerts			X	
	Collage Creating			X	
	Glass City Swing Band		X		
	Pittsburgh Radio Memories		X		
	Flock of Flutists		X		
	Colored Pencil Drawing			X	
	Holiday Stories and Crafts	X			
	Gingerbread Houses		X		
	Glue Sticks and Googly Eyes	X			
	Happy Little Canvas	X			
	Tween Craftin	X			
	Art E1ploration Online	X			
	Fairy Gardens with Garden Club	X			
	Teen Body Art		X		
	Teen Paint On		X		
	Teen Craft and Vendor Fair			X	
Teen Upcycled Art		X			
Piano Camp		X			
Teen Bad Art		X			
Financial Literacy	Estate Planning	X			
	Estate Planning for Special Needs	X			
	Medicare 101	X			
	Probate	X			
	Wills	X			
	Trusts	X			
	Better Investing	X			
	Couponing	X			
	How to sell your stuff	X			
	Protect Yourself From Fraud/Scam	X			



CLASSIFICATION OF PROGRAM					
Core Program Area	Program	Essential	Important	Value Added	If notes are needed to describe
Civil/Social Literacy	Pitt Nationality Rooms		X		
	Let's Talk Local History	X			
	Victorian Christmas		X		
	From Stone to Steel		X		
	Beyond Clutter		X		
	Wine Tasting			X	Fundraiser
	Cooking Demos			X	
	Wreath Decorating			X	Fundraiser
	Spring Wreath Decorating			X	Fundraiser
	Succulents			X	Fundraiser
	Orchid 101		X		
	Masters of the Air	X			
	Eras Tour Trivia			X	
	History of North Park	X			
	Fostering Awareness	X			
	What's Happening with Religion	X			
	History of Pro Football	X			
	Family Programs	Apple Tasting			X
Historical Buildings of North Park		X			
Antique Appraisal Fair				X	
Camp Night with SNHL				X	
Ice Cream Night			X		
Candyland			X		
Mini Golf all Ages			X		Fundraiser but 1 partnership
Teen Mini Golf				X	
Car Cruise			X		Fundraiser but 1 partnership
Garden Tour			X		Fundraiser but 1 partnership
Garden Contest				X	
Soups On				X	Fundraiser
Crawford Pool Programs	Touch a Truck		X		Fundraiser but 1 partnership
	Swim Lessons		X		
	Water Aerobics			X	
	Shaler Seadogs (Shaler Swim Team)		X		

APPENDIX B: SHALER TOWNSHIP MARKETING METHODS USED

Shaler Township Marketing Methods Used						
#	Best Practices	Shaler Library		Crawford Pool		Comments
		YES	NO	YES	NO	
22	Program guides (print)	X			X	
23	Program guides (online)	X		X		
24	Website	X		X		
25	Smart/mobile phone enabled site		X	X		Coming in 2025, as well as ADA functionality county
26	Apps	X		X		
27	Flyers and/or brochures	X		X		
28	Direct mail	X			X	In shaler
29	Email blasts and/or listserv	X			X	
30	Public Service Announcements (PSAs)		X		X	
31	Roadsign marquees	X			X	Township community sign
32	Paid advertisements		X		X	
33	Radio (paid or free)		X		X	we try
34	TV (paid or free)		X		X	
35	On-hold pre-programmed phone messages		X		X	
36	SMS/MMS/Text Message marketing		X		X	
37	Newsletters (print)	X		X		
38	Newsletters (online)	X		X		
39	In-facility signage	X			X	
40	Facebook	X		X		
41	Instagram	X			X	
42	Twitter	X			X	
43	Flickr		X		X	
44	YouTube channel	X			X	
45	Blogs / vlogs		X		X	new site will have a blog feature
46	Webinars	X			X	
47	QR Codes	X			X	
48	Other				X	

Operations Review Report

Operations Review

Introduction

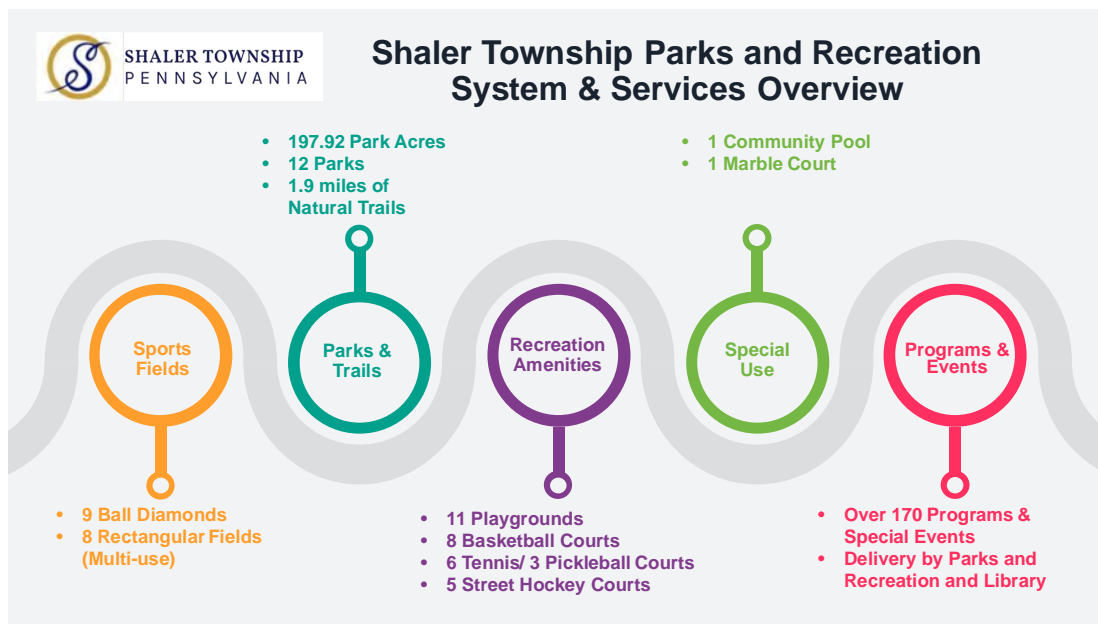
The consulting team facilitated staff focus groups and conducted a comprehensive review of existing plans, policies, and standards, identifying operational strengths and challenges. Focus groups with STPR staff and Township Administration provided valuable insights into service delivery. The goal of this analysis is to assess current operational capacity and determine the resources needed to ensure long-term sustainability in operations and alignment with community needs.

Operationally, the parks and recreation system is not set up like most municipal parks and recreation departments. It does not have a person to oversee all aspects of delivery of services. The current approach to delivering services is for responsibilities to fall under existing positions and for maintenance services to be delivered by three dedicated staff. While this has served the Township adequately in the past, this may not as the system is expanded to include the proposed programmed community center. Most municipalities with the amount of acreage, aquatics and programming have a parks and recreation manager/director to oversee and manage a multitude of tasks. An example of the magnitude of tasks that can be within a fully functional parks and recreation department is displayed in the following:



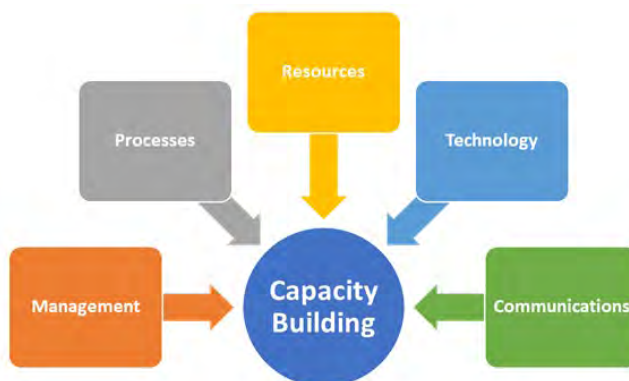
Currently, the Township provides funding to the Library to operate and conduct programs, Library leadership has ownership and recognition that they are the driver behind these programs. While the Library is known more for programming, the types of programs do not cover the diversity of programs that most parks and recreation system provide. Most programming from the library are centered around literacy and non-active programs such as arts and crafts. The Township will be able to contribute more to the community's quality of life with residents' support for the new community center.

Township System and Services Overview



Operational Focus Groups Summary

The Consulting Team conducted a workshop with staff in October of 2024 to establish context for the operational review through the employees’ perspective, site tours, document review. Township leadership and Library leadership participated in a focus group and were interviewed on the operational strengths, challenges, and priorities. This goal is to The five key areas of capacity building seen below were used to structure the MMP approach.



Approach

The review included focus groups by core functions and was centered on sustainability, efficiency, and organizational alignment. This analysis is a high-level review on internal operations as they relate to building capacity in operations. Four initial questions were asked in each of the focus groups to help understand current operations, strengths to build on, challenges the Township and Library face, and top priorities. The following questions were asked:

1. How do the Township and Library currently operate?
2. What are the strengths of operations that we need to build upon as part of this Plan?
3. What are the challenges in operations?



4. What are the top 2-3 priorities that would constitute success for operations?

Staff received the questions in advance geared towards the five themes areas that can help to increase capacity when an intentional focus is implemented. The defined operational themes are:

<u>Policy/Procedure Management</u>	<u>Organizational Management</u>	<u>Resource Management</u>	<u>Technology Management</u>	<u>Communications Management</u>
A series of actions or steps taken in order to achieve outcomes identified through approved plans, policies, and standards for parks and recreation services	The organization, coordination, and supervision of all business activities in a park and recreation agency to achieve defined outcomes	A stock or supply of money, inventory, staff, information, and other assets in a parks and recreation agency that can be utilized in order to function effectively	The application of software, devices, tools and equipment for practical parks and recreation purposes, especially to increase efficiency	The internal and external exchange of information regarding parks and recreation operations, promoting services, and capital projects

Shaler Township Aquatic Services - Crawford Swimming Pool

The facility itself, built in 1966, poses challenges with aging infrastructure. The pool’s concrete subbase is compromised, relying on a liner to prevent leaks, and the splashpad and kiddie pool surfaces are rough and uncomfortable. The aquatic operations rely on part-time staff for both the pool and concession areas, with oversight currently falling on the Assistant Township Manager, who is managing multiple responsibilities during a transitional phase. This has led to operational gaps, as there is no dedicated operator for larger preparations and implementations. Efforts are underway to reassign duties, with roles transitioning to existing staff. There is also a recognized need to create pathways for staff advancement, including a full-time Recreation Manager, to strengthen operations.

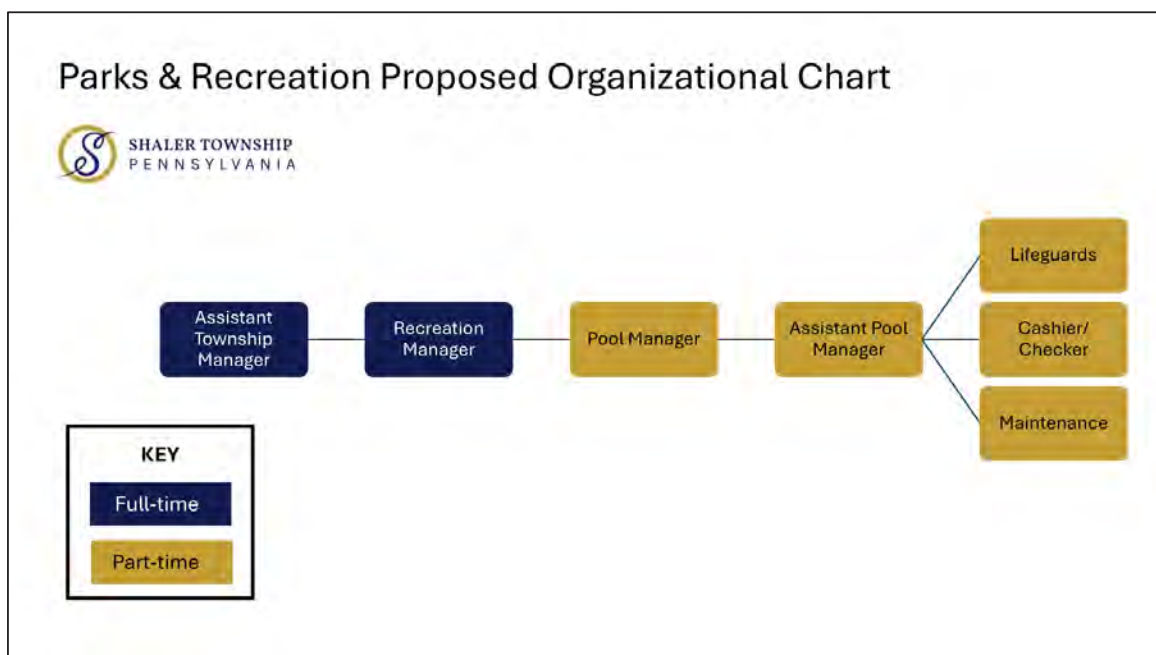


Aquatic Strengths & Challenges

Despite these challenges, the aquatics program has several strengths. The pool is a beloved community tradition, generating revenue through its clean facilities, heated pool, and food concessions. Its location within a park with additional amenities enhances its appeal. Proactive approaches have also been implemented to address visitor misuse effectively. However, significant challenges remain, particularly with staffing and facility maintenance. The role of the current Assistant Township Manager includes significant parks and recreation responsibilities, which may limit the Township's ability to hire a qualified individual for the position after her retirement if these duties remain with the role. This highlights the need for a parks and recreation professional to oversee activities and facilities. Staffing shortages hinder the ability to address repairs promptly, and the bathhouse requires upgrades to address outdated fixtures and off-season raccoon infestations. Lifeguards' performance and vigilance need improvement, with complacency and low expectations affecting cleanliness and safety. Additionally, part-time staff often exhibit less care for the facility compared to full-time employees, and some organizations use the facility without contributing financially.

Success Factors

To ensure capacity and ensure service delivery, the approach of the township has been spreading parks and recreation duties to existing Township employee(s). To take parks and recreation services to the next level, hiring a full-time Township employee to manage the parks and recreation services and align operations under a unified vision would achieve the desired outcomes (see proposed organizational chart). Increasing staff and resources is essential to address the pool's challenges and day-to-day operations effectively. Modernizing and replacing outdated amenities within the pool is also critical, with a long-term goal of overhauling the entire facility to improve efficiency and enhance the visitor experience.





Shaler Township Library Services – Shaler North Hills Library

The library is managed by a Director, who leads all operational aspects of the facility and is highly resourceful. In total, the Library employs 6 full-time and 34 part-time staff to support operations. Two part-time maintenance staff support her, while major projects are coordinated through Facility Maintenance and contracted engineers. The library is overseen by a separate board appointed by the Commission. The Board is engaged in philanthropy but avoids involvement in operations, unless brought in by Director. Significant partnerships enhance operations of the library, including collaborations with Open Door, the Shaler Garden Club (landscaping and fundraisers), Friends of the Library, the school district, and individual residents. Friends of the Library often fund programming, and the library is frugal with donated funds. Technologically, the library benefits from the Electronic Information Network (EIN) provided through the Carnegie Library, providing a robust 10G internet connection and regular equipment updates through regional funding via the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD). Maintenance resources are shared with other township facilities, including EMS, police, and the aquatic center.

Library Strengths

The library's strengths include its highly professional and educated staff, who are supported by an agile board that allows them to focus on their expertise. Operating hours are regularly reviewed, and partnerships, such as with government and library networks and volunteers, provide valuable resources and scheduling support. The award-winning Children's Services Department within the Library and strong literacy mission drive community excitement, particularly among children. The facility itself is a standout historical building, with maintenance staff excelling in aesthetics and holiday decorations. Donations and estate trusts show strong community support, and events like "Love Your Library Month" raise significant funds. Outreach efforts effectively engage the community, and draw in more people than the program space can handle. The library is a central hub, fostering community connection. Social media efforts, while not comprehensive, are bolstered by scheduling software.

Library Challenges

The library faces challenges with low staff pay, shared parking issues with the school district, and public perception that underestimates the library's role as a hub of activity. Unpredictable community projects and external leadership changes may impact the library's needs or priorities. While the library functions well as a separate entity, it depends on Township support for operations.

Success Factors

Success would involve increasing planned giving and incorporating the library into the Township's Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Expanding the library building, particularly to improve storage and parking, is also a priority to address current limitations and better serve the community.

Shaler Township Parks & Recreation Maintenance Services

The maintenance team oversees all township facilities, including EMS, police, library, aquatic center, and township offices, but primarily focuses on parks. The team consists of three full-time staff and one seasonal worker who manages exterior grounds, traffic islands, ponds, and newly acquired floodway properties. They follow a structured weekly and daily schedule, prioritizing trash removal and maintenance of high-use parks before moving to mowing and other projects. Certain tasks, such as asphalt patching, are done in-house, while larger projects and specialized tasks like playground installations, tree removal, and capital projects (e.g., tennis courts) are contracted out. Park maintenance operates most efficiently through strong teamwork. As part of the Department of Public



Works, the division benefits from expanded resources that support equipment upkeep, snow removal, and assistance with community events.

Maintenance Strengths

The Township benefits from a dedicated and skilled union workforce, with staff taking pride in their work. Equipment is well-maintained, and the team is proactive and multi-faceted, implementing improvements even without a formal master plan. Supportive management and strong collaboration further enhance operations. Teamwork in the Department of Public Works is ensuring resources are shared effectively. This culture of teamwork extends to tasks like event setups, trash cleanup, winterizing the pool, and even cooking for community events.

Maintenance Challenges

Staffing and time constraints are significant challenges, especially with the growing workload due to new amenities and properties. Balancing these responsibilities with existing resources can be a struggle with unplanned tasks that require immediate attention, and the lack of a work order management system makes organization difficult. The Township would like to pursue more grant funding to support its needs. General staffing shortages in public works remains an obstacle. Additionally, the team must manage varying demands and expectations from multiple individuals and organizations.

Success Factors

Success would involve hiring additional seasonal staff to better manage workloads, upgrading and modernizing facilities, and redesigning parks to ensure cohesive layouts and functionality. Developing a clear plan for future improvements, along with empowering staff to secure funding and implement changes at the administration level, would also greatly enhance operations.

Shaler Township Program and Event Services

Strengths of Recreation Programs and Events

The recreation programs and events offered by Shaler Township demonstrate several strengths that contribute to their success. First, the dedication and expertise of the individuals involved in planning and implementing these programs (Township staff, Library staff, civic organizations, and volunteers) are invaluable. Their commitment to meeting the needs of the community is evident in the variety and quality of the offerings. The incorporation of alcoholic drinks into certain events, such as the adult swim and the Light Up Night dance party, has proven to be popular and successful. The wide range of events and activities, including those offered at the library, park, and pool facilities, caters to diverse interests and age groups.

The programs are designed to be accessible and affordable. The minimal cost associated with many programs/events encourages participation and makes them enjoyable for families. The Township's focus is on maximizing the use of its facilities through various programs and pricing options. The intent is to keep programs and events affordable.

Program Development Process

Shaler Township currently relies on an in-house approach to program development. This means that the Township Administration, pool staff and Township administrative assistants are responsible for planning, organizing, and implementing all events. Although current staff are doing a great job, adding a more focused parks & recreation administrative role could improve service delivery and protect



institutional knowledge through transition times. The process involves identifying potential program ideas, considering factors like community interests and available resources, and developing detailed plans for execution. While the formula for successful events has proven effective, the Township recognizes the importance of continuous improvement and adaptation.

Facilities and Parks

The Township utilizes a variety of indoor and outdoor facilities to implement its programming. The library, Shaler Middle School cafeteria, and Kiwanis Park are common venues for events. The Light Up Night, a popular annual celebration, is held at the school. These locations provide suitable spaces for defined different types of activities and accommodate varying attendance levels.

Marketing Process

Shaler Township employs a multi-faceted marketing approach to promote its recreation programs and events. This includes utilizing traditional methods such as websites, social media, and physical signage, as well as exploring digital options like electronic billboards. The Township also leverages partnerships with local schools and community organizations to reach a wider audience through platforms like Peach Jar. Peach Jar is a platform that is connecting households with local and regional resources that provide support families in all aspects of child development (social, emotional, academic, and physical).



Challenges Facing Recreation Programming

Despite its many strengths, Shaler Township's recreation programs face several challenges. One significant issue is the aging population of volunteers. As these individuals phase out, there is a need to recruit new volunteers to maintain the level of involvement and support. Another challenge is the criticism that programming primarily focuses on youth, with limited offerings for younger adults without children.

Additionally, the Township grapples with the decision of whether to charge for swim clubs and the need to adjust the family pool pass fee structure to reflect the changing demographics and usage patterns. Staffing constraints, limited parking, and physical space limitations also pose challenges for event planning and execution. Addressing these challenges will require careful consideration and innovative solutions to ensure the continued success and sustainability of the recreation programs.

Plans, Policies, and Standards

The industry of parks and recreation has best practices in plans, policies, and standards that are used in various combinations depending upon the complexity of services. The Township does not currently have any plans documented in part or in full. Once the Master Plan is completed, that will improve. Some best practices exist within policies centered around communications in the form of social media and purchasing. Human resources services exist in the standards with the employee manual for Crawford Pool. The Township has in place what it needs to provide services currently. As the Township's parks and recreation services evolve, additional best practices will be incorporated into operations to ensure effectiveness in delivering services. This does not mean that the Township should have all of the best practices for plans, policies and standards in place. With the potential expansion of the system to include a community center, the Township may have a need to include others and they will be identified in the recommendations of the Master Plan.

Community Center
Comparison Report



CHAPTER ONE –COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS – PROPOSED COMMUNITY CENTER

1.1 OVERVIEW

1.1.1 INTRODUCTION

In an effort to determine the priorities for indoor recreation spaces and the programs that will activate them in a new Community Center (“Center”) for Shaler Township (“Township”), it is important to evaluate what the community sees as a priority. This proposed building program is a combination of public input from focus groups, stakeholders, online survey and from what staff understands is needed to support the recreational trends of residents now and into the future. It is also based on what the community is consistently communicating but the Township cannot provide in current indoor spaces. The priority programs and spaces to focus on are what has wide segment appeal to residents to gain support for the development and operations of a new community center including financial support.



The following spaces have been identified as a priority from public engagement. This proposed building program is designed to provide a starting point for conceptual designs that will include flexible community spaces, active recreation areas, and supporting amenities..

1.2 FRAMEWORK

The Township’s goals are to align programming with the community’s needs so residents, businesses and visitors can have an improved quality of life that is delivered in a fiscally responsible manner while preserving the Township’s rich history, cultural heritage, and charming lifestyle.

1.2.1 COMMUNITY INPUT

The community identified through various means identified below, preferred programming for the potential community center and preferred spaces. When designing a new indoor recreation building, programming informs design. The table demonstrates commonalities across the three forms of engagement. Across all three forms of engagements, highlighted cells represent the common spaces and programs that the Township can provide.

Shaler Township Community Center Analysis - Amenities & Programs						
Kiwanis Park Focus Group & 2022 Survey		Community Survey			Open House	
INDOOR AMENITIES	Programs	Required	Desired	Not Needed	Exercise	
Flexible Rental Space	Community Events	Multi-Use Courts	Cardio & Weight Training Area	Golf Simulator	Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	
Catering Kitchen	Activity Classes	Childcare/Kids Play Area	Group Fitness Studio	Sledding Hill	Event/ Banquet Space	
Outside Deck with Roof	Workout Classes	Baseball Diamond	Locker Room		Warming Kitchen	
Basketball Courts	Meeting Space Rentals	Parking Lot	After School Programs		Meeting/ Classroom Space	
Classroom	Educational Classes	Playground	Event Banquet Space		Theater, Music, and Dance Space	
Walking Track	Senior Programming		Covered Outdoor Meeting Space		Multi-Use Court(s)	
Pickleball Courts	Craft Fairs		Warming Kitchen		Kids Play Area	
Outside Deck with no Roof	Open Gym		Meeting/ Classroom Space		After School Programs	
	Walking Groups		Theater Music and Dance Space		Group Fitness Studio	
	Youth Sports Classes		Dedicated Senior Activity Space			
	Adult Sport Classes		Softball Diamond			
	Bingo		Access Drive			
	Basketball Leagues					
	Pickleball Leagues					
	Volleyball Leagues					





Shaler Township Proposed Building Program

INDOOR RECREATION PROGRAMMING

When the programs are placed into the matrix, we can see which age segments each program area serves. The guiding principles and cost to implement are gauged by how well the programs achieve the outcomes and the level of cost to implement. This helps to determine which programs will serve the most resident's recreational needs.

Shaler Township Indoor Recreation Programming Matrix																		
PROGRAMMING	AGE SEGMENTS SERVED											GUIDING PRINCIPLES				COSTS	NOTES	
	YOUTH				ADULT				SENIOR			Multi-generational	Revenue Generation	Hub for Community	Multi-Functional	Cost to Implement	Notes	
	2-5 years	6-8 years	9-12 years	13-15 years	16-18 years	19-30 years	31-45 years	46-60 years	61-70 years	71-75 years	77+ years							
Community Events	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Low	High	High	High	Great success leading up to Master Plan in generating more revenue and events are well-attended. Community Center would provide greater support and can be a space during events to get community feedback or input.
Activity Classes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Can be done in the multi-purpose room, meeting spaces, gym, and banquet space.
Workout Classes					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Medium	High	Low	Low	Medium	Can be done in the multi-purpose room and gym
Meeting Space Rentals						•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Medium	Medium	High	High	Low	A/V set up needed for private rentals, meetings, etc. for community members and businesses.
Educational Classes	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Done in multi-purpose room and outdoor covered meeting spaces too. Can include life skills, nature, etc.
Senior Programming									•	•	•	•	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Medium	Seniors can use multi-purpose rooms and gymnasium during day hours and then youth, family, adults in afternoon/evening/weekend. Avoid dedicated spaces as they decrease revenue.
Craft Fairs				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	done within the whole building and potentially outdoor covered patio.
Open Gym				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Good to have with a great following and an admission charge. Program out each space as much as possible to drive use and maximize revenues
Walking Groups					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Good if there is a walking track, otherwise self-directed activity. May be able to have walking memberships with a track.
Youth Sports Classes	•	•	•	•									Medium	High	Medium	Low	Medium	good to have with gym space. Also planning activities for youth help increase the potential they will be lifelong users of the facility.
Adult Sport Classes						•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Low	High	Low	Low	Medium	Typically 100% cost recovery and revenue generator with the right staff and facility. Typically gym space use.
Bingo								•	•	•	•	•	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Multi-purpose room and gymnasium depending upon the demand. Also will require set up and tear down. Not best use of fulltime staff.
Basketball Leagues						•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Medium	High	Low	Low	Medium	All leagues would be a great idea, just be sure to brand them around holidays, and special times in the Township (i.e., old settlers day pickleball tournament, valentines day pickleball, Flag Day Volleyball Tournament (flag decoration)).
Pickleball Leagues		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Medium	High	Low	Low	Medium	
Volleyball Leagues						•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Medium	High	Low	Low	Medium	





INDOOR RECREATION BUILDING PROGRAM

The Indoor Recreation Building Program identifies the preferred spaces. These are measured against the age segments served, guiding principles, cost to develop and cost to operate. These are special use and limited function spaces that are worth considering as they add the potential of memberships and/or offer additional revenue sources that can help the Township limit subsidy levels in the Center.

Shaler Township Indoor Recreation Building Program Matrix																			
SPACES/ AMENITIES	AGE SEGMENTS SERVED												GUIDING PRINCIPLES				COSTS		NOTES
	YOUTH				ADULT				SENIOR				Multi-generational Spaces	Revenue Generation	Hub for Community	Multi-Functional	Cost to Develop	Cost to Operate	
	2-5 years	6-8 years	9-12 years	13-15 years	16-18 years	19-30 years	31-45 years	46-60 years	61-70 years	71-75 years	77+ years								
Multi-Use Courts (Basketball, Volleyball, Pickleball/ Rentals)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Can be used for non-athletic programs and rentals too.
Multi-Purpose (Meeting/ Classroom/ Reception Hall/ Rentals)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Can be used for many different activities, seniors during the day, youth and families at night. Can be one large room that can split in two
Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low	Available as part of the reception hall rentals and additional program space.
Warming/Catering Kitchen					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Low	Low	Low	High	Medium	Beneficial for events in the park and rentals
Childcare/Kids Play Area	•	•	•										Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Could be beneficial, but also can take up a lot space when seeking revenue generating spaces that are multi functional. Also depending upon state regulations and the structure, childcare facilities may require tighter controls over uses and restrict use during childcare hours.
SPECIAL USE/ LIMITED FUNCTION																			
Cardio & Weight Training Area					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Requires dedicated space with equipment lease or purchase. Would want to have membership revenue to cover cost of lease or purchased equipment.
Theater Music and Dance Space	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	High	Medium	High	High	Medium	Could be in a multi-purpose room/ banquet hall.
Group Fitness Studio					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	High	Medium	High	High	Medium	Could be in a multi-purpose room/ banquet hall. Can also use gym for popular programs with large demand.
Walking Track	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Limits use, but could be a reduced membership or free
Pickleball Courts					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Can be in conjunction with basketball and volleyball courts to maximize use and space.



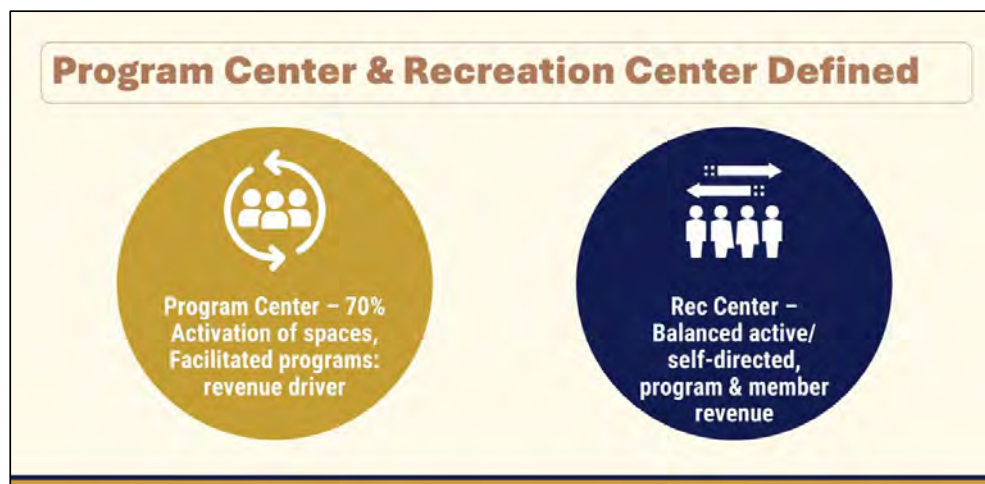


IDENTIFIED BUILDING PROGRAM

From the matrices, we can see that four distinct spaces have risen to the top priorities in the Center that include multi-purpose room(s), kitchen, outdoor covered space, and gymnasium. These four spaces also generate revenue to help offset operational costs. These spaces and the main programs can be seen here in the table below.

Shaler Township Proposed Community Center Program			
Flexible Rental Space	Warming Kitchen	Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	Basketball Courts
Meeting Space Rentals	Warming Kitchen	Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	Open Gym
Event Banquet Space	Catering Kitchen	Outside Deck with Roof	Youth Sports Classes
Covered Outdoor Meeting Space			Adult Sport Classes
Meeting/ Classroom Space			Multi-Use Courts
Meeting/ Classroom Space			Basketball Leagues
Covered Outdoor Meeting Space			Pickleball Leagues
Event/ Banquet Space			Volleyball Leagues
Classroom			Baseball Diamond
Group Fitness Studio			Locker Room
Group Fitness Studio			Multi-Use Court(s)
			Pickleball Courts

These spaces are indicative of a program center. The figure below shows the difference between a recreation center and a program center. A program center needs to be activated 70% of operational hours where facilitated programs are the main revenue driver. A recreation center is membership based with a balance of self-directed activities and facilitated programs. There is an opportunity to include membership opportunities such as group fitness, enrichment lunches, and drop-in programs such as open gym (basketball, volleyball, and pickleball) where members are admitted for free. The multipurpose room(s) can be used to provide these activities along with a variety of other programming needs. This would also increase the revenue potential of the facility. Multi-purpose room would generate more revenue if it could be subdivided into two smaller rooms. Drop-in programs would be a benefit of memberships.





IDEAL BUILDING PROGRAM

The ideal building program would consist of the following:

- Multi Activity Court (“MAC Room”) can serve a sport court and accommodate additional programming to maximize the space with a variety of activities.
- Multipurpose room(s) for a variety of activities (large room can be divided into two smaller ones).
 - Can double as a banquet hall for rentals.
- A kitchen for warming food or catering, supports the multi-purpose room(2).
- Covered outdoor patio as an extension of the banquet hall for rentals.

1.3 BUILDING PROGRAM DEFINED

The Shaler Township Initial building program outlines the foundational spaces, sizes, and functional relationships needed to deliver a versatile and community-focused facility. This program was developed to balance a wide range of recreational, social, and event needs, while providing the flexibility to accommodate varying group sizes and activities. Spaces are designed with both minimum and expanded size options, allowing for scalable development based on available funding, site constraints, and long-term growth needs.

Key program components include multi-purpose rooms that can be subdivided or combined to support meetings, community rentals, and large gatherings. These spaces can also double as rentable gathering areas for banquets, receptions, and family occasions. They are supported by a catering kitchen and strategically located storage to ensure smooth operations. The facility also includes a spacious MAC Room lined for basketball, pickleball, and volleyball. A covered outdoor meeting area extends programming opportunities into three-season use, enhancing community engagement through indoor-outdoor connectivity.

The program further provides essential supporting spaces such as a welcoming lobby and reception area, offices, public restrooms, and distributed storage equal to 10-15% of total program space. Adjacency planning ensures operational efficiency, for example, the MAC Room is directly connected to restrooms and storage, positioned near kitchen, and located near the main entry for easy public access. In total, the building program accommodates between 20,000 and 26,000 square feet of primary program space, including circulation and equipment rooms. This structured approach ensures the community center will be more affordable, functional, adaptable, and capable of supporting Shaler Township’s evolving recreation and event needs.

Shaler Township Initial Community Center Building Program					
Space	Recommended	Adjacencies	Notes	Minimum	Expanded
Multi-Purpose/Flexible Rental Room	4,000–6,000 SF	Gymnasium, Lobby & Reception or 2nd floor	Dividable for rentals and meetings, or one large room	5,200	6,000
Warming Kitchen	800–1,000 SF	Adjacent to Multi-purpose Space, Loading/Service Entry	Multipurpose for programs/ rentals/ events	800	1,000
Multi-Activity Court (MAC) Room	6,500-8,000 SF	Restrooms, Storage	Pickleball, volleyball with a 2 lane elevated walking track	8,600	10,000
Entrance/ SM Lobby	1300-2000	Entry, Access to all spaces	Includes front desk, waiting, signage	1300	3,000
Circulation	1900-3000	Includes stairs/ elevator	Accessible	1900	3,000
Restrooms (Public)	900-1300	MAC Room/ Multi-purpose Spaces	Accessible	900	1,300
SUBTOTAL SQUARE FEET				18,700	24,300
Storage (General Purpose)	10% of all program areas	Distributed near: Flex Room, Gym, Kitchen, Fitness Studio	Storage for chairs, equipment, sports gear	1,300	1,700
TOTAL INDOOR SQUARE FEET				20,000	26,000
Covered Outdoor Meeting Space	1,500–2,000 SF	Adjacent to Flexible/Event Space & Outdoor Deck	Power access, optional enclosures for seasonality	1,500	2,000





Shaler Township Proposed Building Program



1.4 SIMILAR PROVIDER ANALYSIS

Understanding the surrounding market for specific amenities, programs, and rental spaces allows the Township staff to take measured approaches to introducing a new Community Center. Few nearby similar providers offer all of the amenities outlined as priorities by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group. This gives the Township the ability to set itself apart from the other facilities while also offering the community of Shaler a community center that they can call their own.

Ultimately, staff will need to use the information contained in this report in concert with local usage trends, public opinion, and their own professional knowledge when proposing new additions to Kiwanis Park and the proposed community center once the plan is complete. This approach empowers the Township to be responsive to changes in the market when they happen.

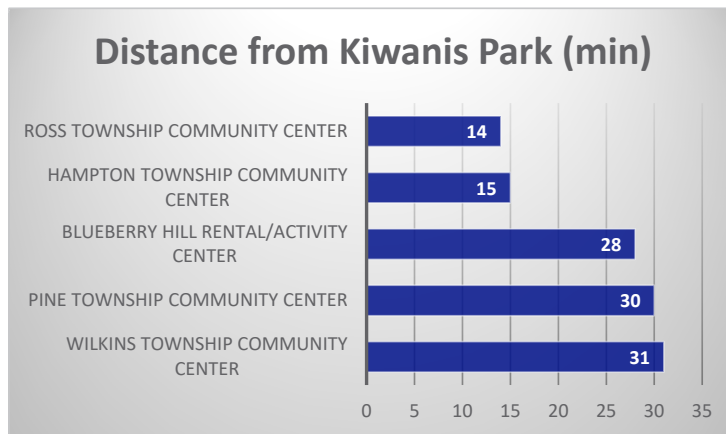
The figures from the Kiwanis Park Focus Group at the beginning of this Similar Provider Assessment were from 2022. Considering the decreases with inflation since that year, the Township may want to recalculate the figures to determine its impact on the estimated costs to develop a recreation center. The need for indoor recreation spaces is present, the community is supportive of an investment, but wanting to make sure the Township does not overcommit funding that could create unintended consequences elsewhere in operations.



The following observations were made from the Market Analysis:

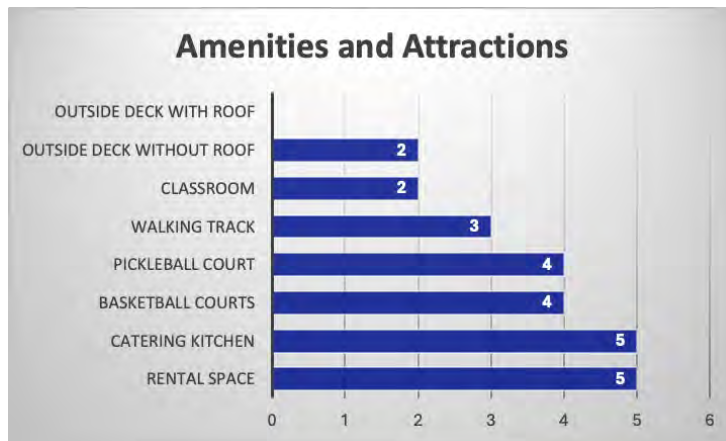
1.4.1 SIMILAR PROVIDERS

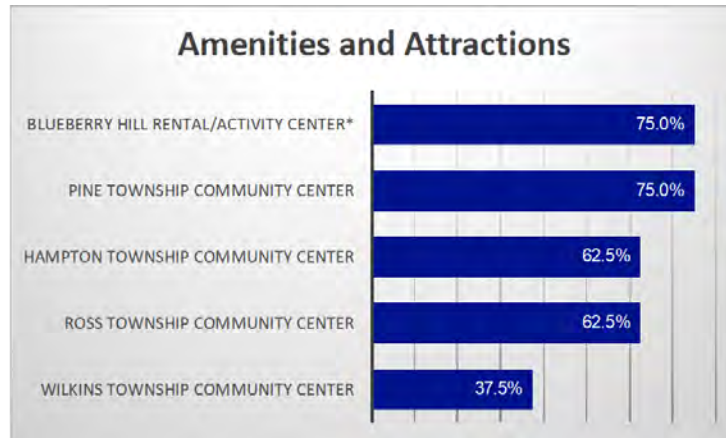
Five similar providers in the Pittsburgh area were identified by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group in 2022. The two closest facilities to Kiwanis Park are the Ross Township Community Center and the Hampton Township Community Center. Three facilities are outside of a 15-minute drive from Kiwanis Park, which can sway people to come to Kiwanis Park to save on drive-time.



1.4.2 AMENITIES AND ATTRACTIONS

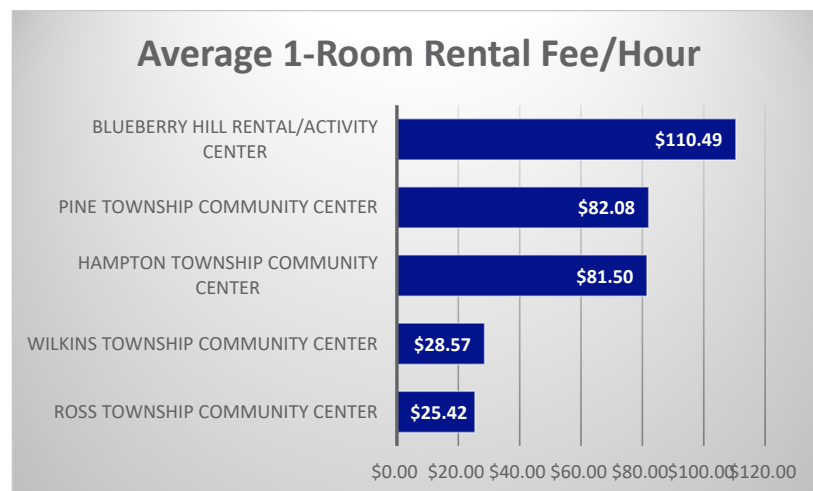
Of the amenities provided by the Kiwanis Park Focus Group that are said to be priorities, Rental Space and Catering Kitchen were the only ones to be included in all of the similar providers evaluated. The next most common amenities were Basketball Courts and Pickleball Court. Of the facilities evaluated, Blueberry Hill Rental/Activity Center and Pine Township Community Center provided most of the amenities evaluated. One thing to note is that Blueberry Hill has a Walking Track, Pickleball Court, and Basketball Court, but they are outdoors in the surrounding park and not included indoors. Taking that into account, the facility is more on par with Wilkins Township Community Center

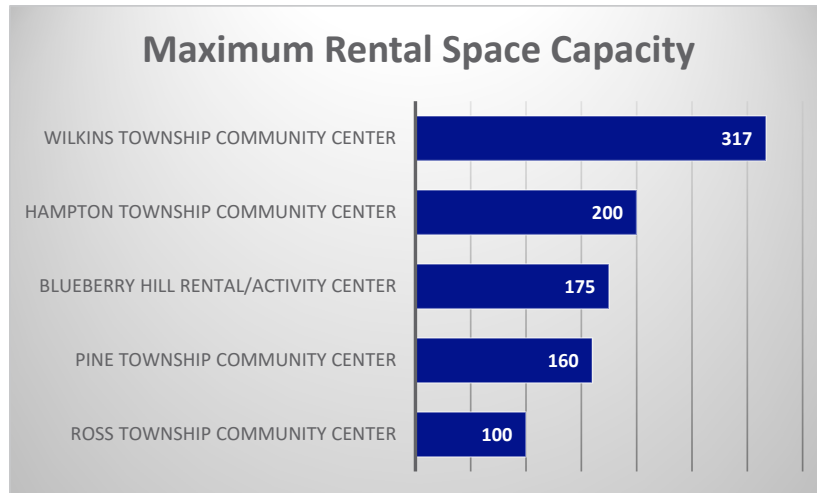




1.4.3 RENTAL SPACES AND FEES

Rental space fees for many of the facilities depended on the room(s), residential status, and length of stay. Some of the facilities offer packages of multiple rooms and/or discounted multiple hours. The average 1-Room Rental Fee/Hour was calculated by taking every price offered and dividing it by rooms and hours. The highest average fee is at Blueberry Hill, while the lowest offered fee is at Ross Township Community Center. The Maximum Rental Space Capacity shown is the absolute maximum capacity of one rental, whether that be one room or packaged rooms. The highest capacity available is at Wilkins Township Community Center, and the lowest is at Ross Township Community Center.





1.5 OPERATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS/STANDARDS:

- The proposed new Community Center (“Center”) will serve the Township residents and surrounding areas.
- The Center footprint is approximately 20,000 square feet (not including circulation) with limited opportunity for future expansion.
- The Center will be a combination of a program-driven and a membership-based facility (walking track, fitness classes, and open gym).
- The Township will implement an owner/operator model for the Center. This model allows for the Township to contract services for areas requiring expertise, such as HVAC systems, contract instructors, and other needs through partnership agreements.
- Spaces are not to be provided for free to any group to avoid creating entitlement and increasing the subsidy level of the center. At a minimum, groups shall provide volunteer hours that equal the hourly rate of the facility through a written partnership agreement.
- Township will review and increase fees and charges regularly to keep up with increasing costs of operations, limiting subsidy.
- Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment will be factored into upfront capital development costs of new spaces created.
- Storage spaces for the Complex will be between 10-15% and adjacent to the spaces that the equipment will be set up. This will help minimize the number of staff to mobilize for set up and tear down.
- Library programs may use the community center, but revenue generation is limited from these programs. The Township will need to create additional recreational opportunities for residents that are not currently being offered in order to achieve the outcomes.
- Maintenance standards for each space including immediate exterior of the Center and parking will be included in expense calculations in the operational pro forma. Maintenance standards can be found in the Appendix.
- Additional parking is needed to accommodate the community center and may not be sufficient to operate the facility at 70% capacity during Township events and when the Crawford Pool is open. Limiting programming of the facility to hours when the pool is closed will assist with limited parking.



1.5.1 HOURS OF OPERATIONS

- The facility will be open six days a week. Closed major holidays and for one week to conduct deep cleaning and repairs.
- Holidays during which the Center will be closed or operate on limited hours are:
 - New Year’s Eve
 - New Year’s Day
 - Easter Sunday
 - Thanksgiving Day
 - Christmas Eve
 - Christmas Day
- Center operating hours are 63 hours per week and are assumed to be:

Community Center Hours of Operation			
Day	Opening Time	Closing Time	Total Daily Hours
Monday–Thursday	9:00 AM	8:00 PM	11 hours
Friday	9:00AM	7:00PM	10 hours
Saturday	8:00 AM	5:00 PM	9 hours
Sunday	10:00 AM	5:00 PM	7 hours
Total Weekly Hours			63 hours

1.5.2 STAFFING

Staffing is based on “lean management” practices where all positions/human resources expended for any goal other than the creation of value for the customer base are considered nonessential. Additional assumptions for staffing include:

- Cost containment measures will be implemented daily when activity in the building defines staffing levels and the Township reserve the right to decrease staffing levels during operations when facility use is low.
- Some position responsibilities for the Center may be absorbed by current employees, as determined by the Township.
- While revenues are calculated at the facility’s full potential, start-ups can present several challenges if staff are not brought in early to help the Township scale up operations. The pro forma anticipates full staffing and the Township will want to bring key positions on 4-9 months prior depending upon the level of assistance from existing staff.

Shaler Township Proposed Community Center Staffing Model				
Category	Position	Minimum Staffing	Expanded Staffing	Notes
Leadership & Administration	Recreation Manager	1 FTE	1 FTE	Daily operations, programming, and scheduling
Leadership & Administration	Administrative Support		.5 FTE	Existing Township staff
Guest Services & Frontline	Custodian	.5 FTE	1 FTE	Accounted for in pro forma, may be existing township staff
Recreation & Programming	Part-time Instructors / Contract	PT/Contract	.5 FTE	Specialized programs, accounted for in pro forma
Maintenance & Facility Support	Public Works Support	As Needed	1 FTE	Major repairs and grounds support
TOTAL FTEs		1.5 FTE	4 FTE	

Notes:
Expanding Staffing helps to deal with the facility when mature and potentially other parks and recreation responsibilities



1.6 FINANCIAL ASSUMPTIONS

- Revenue Drivers consist of
 - Annual Community Center memberships
 - Group fitness, enrichment programs, and open gym
 - Rentals - All spaces except lobby, offices, restrooms, and storage
 - Program fees
 - Fitness/wellness, enrichment classes, life skills, arts/ culture, youth & adult sports, drop-in programs
- Insurance reimbursements will be billed by the Township (Silver Sneakers, Renew Active) and are averaged at six visits per month during seven months of regular visits.
- Pricing and participation for programs is based on local market for programs as defined by the community's demographics (ESRI) and a Similar Provider Analysis.
- All member pricing will include differential rates for memberships for residents and non-residents, as well as variable pass rates for individuals, seniors, and families.
- The financial goal for the Center operation is to be as close to cost neutral as possible, based on staff comments.
- Center memberships are assumed to capture approximately 2% of the total market within one mile, 1% of the total market within 1-2miles, and 0.5% of the market within 2-3 miles.
- Members are estimated to be 85% residents in the Township and 15% as non-residents.
- Members of the Center will receive a five-day advance access to programs offered in the facility.
- Utility costs based on square footage and electric, gas, water, sewer, and Wi-Fi are estimated at \$1.17/sf.
- Equipment and supplies are included, by space, to provide program services and maintain the facility on an annual basis.
- Marketing costs to promote the programs and services of the facility are calculated at 3%.
- Credit card and bank fees are estimated at 3% of revenues.
- An ongoing asset management / lifecycle replacement cost of 5% is included in the proforma based on the operating budget.
- Pro forma figures are based on forecasted 2028 dollars.
- Group Fitness will be included as a benefit of membership
- Operating grants are opportunity driven and not a guaranteed revenue source. Therefore, not included in the operational pro forma
- All expenditures have increased by unit cost to account for the current rate of inflation.
- Amenity sizes are based on estimates from the conceptual design. Amenities and spaces may change during final design, construction documents, etc. Noble should use the pro forma as a living document and update the size of spaces, rate of inflation and other pertinent details to accurately reflect what will be developed.
- Fundraisers are not calculated within operations and annual goals should be set each year.
- General benefits for full-time staff have been calculated at 38% of full-time salaries.
- Payroll taxes and fees are factored at 7.65% of total part-time staff salary and full-time staff overtime, excluding any general benefits.
- It is important to avoid creating entitlement in operating the community center. This means that no space should be given away for free, unless it is used to create a partnership that benefits the community. Giving spaces away and building entitlement will keep the Township from accomplishing its desired outcomes.



1.6.1 COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMMING

The Community Center Programming Schedule provides a well-rounded mix of activities designed to serve residents of all ages throughout the year. By aligning programs with seasonal demand and tailoring offerings to each space in the building program, the schedule balances recreation, enrichment, and community gathering opportunities. From youth clinics, leagues, and educational programs to adult fitness, cultural classes, and family events, the Center is positioned as a hub for both structured programming, existing Township events, and flexible rentals. This approach ensures that every season offers meaningful ways for the community to connect, stay active, and celebrate together.

1.6.2 PRICING STRATEGY

The Shaler Township Community Center pricing strategy is designed to balance affordability for residents with sustainable revenue generation to support operations. Memberships provide discounted access to programs and rentals, while programs and events are priced to encourage broad participation across age groups and interests. Rental rates reflect space size and market value, with resident discounts ensuring equitable community access. This structured model creates a clear framework that supports cost recovery, promotes consistent usage, and enhances the overall value of the Center for the community.

Pricing Model			
Shaler Township Community Center			
DIVISION	ACCOUNT TITLE	PRICE	Unit
REVENUES			
Membership	Adult Non-Resident	\$75.00	Annual
Membership	Adult Resident Discount	\$60.00	Annual
Membership	Senior Non-Resident	\$60.00	Annual
Membership	Senior Resident Discount	\$45.00	Annual
Membership	Youth Non-Resident	\$45.00	Annual
Membership	Youth Resident Discount	\$30.00	Annual
DIVISION	REVENUES	Avg Price	Participants
Programs / Events	Senior Fitness / Chair Yoga	\$5.00	20
Programs / Events	Preschool Playgroups / Toddler Play	\$6.00	15
Programs / Events	Youth Enrichment (STEM, Robotics, Arts)	\$15.00	12
Programs / Events	Homeschool / After-School Clubs	\$10.00	10
Programs / Events	Adult Painting / Crafts / Education	\$20.00	12
Programs / Events	Teen Drop-In / Social Nights	\$3.00	25
Programs / Events	Family Movie / Game Nights	\$10.00	30
Programs / Events	Seasonal Holiday Markets	\$2.00	200
Programs / Events	Coffee Socials / Senior Brunch	\$5.00	15
Programs / Events	Youth Cooking Classes	\$20.00	10
Programs / Events	Adult Culinary / Themed Dinners	\$35.00	15
Programs / Events	Cultural Cooking Demos	\$25.00	20
Programs / Events	Holiday Cookie Workshops	\$15.00	12
Programs / Events	Yoga / Tai Chi / Fitness	\$10.00	20
Programs / Events	Storytime / Family Picnics	free	20
Programs / Events	Outdoor Concerts / Jam Sessions	free	100
Programs / Events	Basketball / Open Play	\$4.00	30
Programs / Events	Pickleball / Open Play	\$4.00	30
Programs / Events	Volleyball / Open Play	\$4.00	30
Programs / Events	Youth Clinics (Basketball, Volleyball, Futsal)	\$80.00	20
Programs / Events	Youth Leagues (Basketball, Volleyball)	\$50.00	100
Programs / Events	Teen Nights / Open Gym	\$5.00	40
Programs / Events	Adult Leagues (Basketball, Volleyball, Pickleball)	\$400.00	3
Programs / Events	Family Recreation Nights	\$10.00	20
Programs / Events	Community Pickleball Tournaments	\$10.00	50



Pricing Model			
Shaler Township Community Center			
DIVISION	ACCOUNT TITLE	PRICE	Unit
REVENUES			
Reservations / Rentals	MAC Room Non-resident	\$60.00	72
Reservations / Rentals	MAC Room - Resident Discount	\$55.00	254
Reservations / Rentals	MAC Room After Hours	\$70.00	36
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (sm) Non-resident	\$35.00	31
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (sm) - Resident Discount	\$30.00	109
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (sm) After Hours	\$45.00	15
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (lg) Non-resident	\$65.00	20
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (lg) - Resident Discount	\$55.00	72
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (lg) After Hours	\$75.00	10
Reservations / Rentals	Warming Kitchen Non-resident	\$30.00	16
Reservations / Rentals	Warming Kitchen Resident Discount	\$25.00	54
Reservations / Rentals	Warming Kitchen After Hours	\$40.00	8
Reservations / Rentals	Outdoor Patio (with indoor rental) Non-resident	\$30.00	12
Reservations / Rentals	Outdoor Patio (with indoor rental) Resident Discount	\$25.00	48
DIVISION	REVENUES	Avg Price	Notes
Other	Program Sponsorship	TBD	Varies
Other	Vendor Permits	TBD	Varies

1.7 OPERATIONAL PRO FORMA

The five-year pro forma for the Shaler Township Community Center projects a balanced financial model. The pro forma was built from a revenue model that used the pricing strategies and an expenditure model was developed using unit costs and square feet to determine operational expenditures. The pro forma emphasizes sustainability through a mix of admissions, programs, rentals, and other revenue streams. Expenditures are primarily driven by personnel, operations, and service costs, while revenues steadily increase across all categories. The baseline scenario shows the Center achieving near full cost recovery in its first year and surpassing 100% in subsequent years, positioning the facility to operate with long-term financial stability while continuing to serve community needs.

Pro Forma Revenues & Expenditures					
Shaler Township Community Center					
BASELINE: REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES					
Revenues	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year	5th Year
Pass/Daily Admissions	\$29,760.00	\$31,843.20	\$33,116.93	\$35,103.94	\$38,263.30
Programs / Events	\$149,600.00	\$160,072.00	\$166,474.88	\$176,463.37	\$192,345.08
Reservations / Rentals	\$66,512.00	\$71,167.84	\$74,014.55	\$78,455.43	\$85,516.42
Other	\$12,800.00	\$13,696.00	\$14,243.84	\$15,098.47	\$16,457.33
Total	\$258,672.00	\$276,779.04	\$287,850.20	\$305,121.21	\$332,582.12
Expenditures	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd year	4th year	5th year
Personnel Services	\$127,814.43	\$132,927.00	\$138,244.08	\$145,211.58	\$155,550.65
Operations	\$77,632.00	\$81,513.60	\$85,589.28	\$90,767.43	\$99,118.04
Other Services & Charges	\$55,893.76	\$59,247.39	\$62,802.23	\$67,236.07	\$74,121.04
Total	\$261,340.19	\$273,687.99	\$286,635.59	\$303,215.08	\$328,789.72
Net Income	(\$2,668.19)	\$3,091.05	\$1,214.61	\$1,906.13	\$3,792.40
Total Cost Recovery	99.0%	101.1%	100.4%	100.6%	101.2%





Shaler Township Proposed Building Program

APPENDIX A: REVENUE MODEL

Pro Forma Revenues Model					
Shaler Township Community Center					
DIVISION	ACCOUNT TITLE	PRICE	UNITS		REVENUES
REVENUES		Avg Price	Sessions	Participants / Groups	
Membership	Adult Non-Resident	\$75.00			
Membership	Adult Resident Discount	\$60.00		199	\$11,940.00
Membership	Senior Non-Resident	\$60.00			
Membership	Senior Resident Discount	\$45.00		312	\$14,040.00
Membership	Youth Non-Resident	\$45.00			
Membership	Youth Resident Discount	\$30.00		126	\$3,780.00
TOTAL PROGRAM REVENUES					\$29,760.00
DIVISION	ACCOUNT TITLE	PRICE	SESSIONS	UNITS	REVENUES
REVENUES					
Programs / Events	Senior Fitness / Chair Yoga	\$5.00	150	20	\$15,000.00
Programs / Events	Preschool Playgroups / Toddler Play	\$6.00	120	15	\$10,800.00
Programs / Events	Youth Enrichment (STEM, Robotics, Arts)	\$15.00	100	12	\$18,000.00
Programs / Events	Homeschool / After-School Clubs	\$10.00	80	10	\$8,000.00
Programs / Events	Adult Painting / Crafts / Education	\$20.00	75	12	\$18,000.00
Programs / Events	Teen Drop-In / Social Nights	\$3.00	40	25	\$3,000.00
Programs / Events	Family Movie / Game Nights	\$10.00	30	30	\$9,000.00
Programs / Events	Seasonal Holiday Markets	\$2.00	6	200	\$2,400.00
Programs / Events	Coffee Socials / Senior Brunch	\$5.00	100	15	\$7,500.00
Programs / Events	Youth Cooking Classes	\$20.00	60	10	\$12,000.00
Programs / Events	Adult Culinary / Themed Dinners	\$35.00	8	15	\$4,200.00
Programs / Events	Cultural Cooking Demos	\$25.00	25	20	\$12,500.00
Programs / Events	Holiday Cookie Workshops	\$15.00	10	12	\$1,800.00
Programs / Events	Yoga / Tai Chi / Fitness	\$10.00	90	20	\$18,000.00
Programs / Events	Storytime / Family Picnics	free	50	20	
Programs / Events	Outdoor Concerts / Jam Sessions	free	12	100	
Programs / Events	Basketball / Open Play	\$4.00	75	30	\$9,000.00
Programs / Events	Pickleball / Open Play	\$4.00	150	20	\$12,000.00
Programs / Events	Volleyball / Open Play	\$4.00	75	30	\$9,000.00
Programs / Events	Youth Clinics (Basketball, Volleyball, Futsal)	\$80.00	2	20	\$3,200.00
Programs / Events	Youth Leagues (Basketball, Volleyball)	\$50.00	1	100	\$5,000.00
Programs / Events	Teen Nights / Open Gym	\$5.00	5	40	\$1,000.00
Programs / Events	Adult Leagues (Basketball, Volleyball, Pickleball)	\$400.00	3	3	\$3,600.00
Programs / Events	Family Recreation Nights	\$10.00	10	20	\$2,000.00
Programs / Events	Community Pickleball Tournaments	\$20.00	2	50	\$2,000.00
TOTAL PROGRAM REVENUES					\$149,600.00
DIVISION	ACCOUNT TITLE	PRICE	SESSIONS	UNITS	REVENUES
REVENUES					
Reservations / Rentals	MAC Room Non-resident	\$60.00	82	2	\$9,840.00
Reservations / Rentals	MAC Room - Resident Discount	\$55.00	254	2	\$27,940.00
Reservations / Rentals	MAC Room After Hours	\$70.00	46	2	\$6,440.00
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (sm) Non-resident	\$35.00	41	2	\$2,870.00
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (sm) - Resident Discount	\$30.00	119	2	\$7,140.00
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (sm) After Hours	\$45.00	25	2	\$2,250.00
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (lg) Non-resident	\$75.00	40	2	\$6,000.00
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (lg) - Resident Discount	\$60.00	82	2	\$9,840.00
Reservations / Rentals	Multi-Purpose Room (lg) After Hours	\$85.00	20	2	\$3,400.00
Reservations / Rentals	Warming Kitchen Non-resident	\$30.00	16	2	\$960.00
Reservations / Rentals	Warming Kitchen Resident Discount	\$25.00	54	2	\$2,700.00
Reservations / Rentals	Warming Kitchen After Hours	\$40.00	8	2	\$640.00
Reservations / Rentals	Outdoor Patio (with indoor rental) Non-resident	\$30.00	12	2	\$720.00
Reservations / Rentals	Outdoor Patio (with indoor rental) Resident Discount	\$25.00	48	2	\$2,400.00
TOTAL RESERVATIONS REVENUES					\$66,512.00
DIVISION	ACCOUNT TITLE	PRICE	UNITS		REVENUES
REVENUES					
Other	Program Sponsorship	Varies			\$9,000.00
Other	Vendor Permits	\$200.00 each		19	\$3,800.00
TOTAL OTHER REVENUES					\$12,800.00



APPENDIX B: EXPENDITURE MODEL

Pro Forma Expenditures Model				
Shaler Township Community Center				
ACCOUNT TITLE			BUDGET	EXPLANATION
TOTAL REVENUES			\$258,672.00	
PERSONNEL SERVICES				
	Hrs.			
Recreation Manager -Community Center	2080	\$27.36	\$56,908.80	Full-time
Custodian	780	\$15.77	\$12,300.60	Part-time or existing staff cost, if allocated to facility
PT Contracted Staff	884	\$25.00	\$22,100.00	Average Contracted fitness instructors and program facilitators based on 17 hours/week
PT Staff	620	\$14.00	\$8,680.00	After hour rentals
Payroll Benefits			\$1,646.98	7.85% of Salaries and Wages for PT
Additional Full-Time Benefits			\$26,178.05	56% of salary - includes taxes
Total			Personnel Services	\$127,814.43
OPERATIONS				
	Units	Cost/Unit		
Lobby	1,000	\$0.22	220	Based on unit rate and square feet
Office	300	\$0.22	\$66.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Stairs / Elevator	300	\$0.45	\$135.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Multi-Purpose Room	5,200	\$1.92	\$9,984.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Restrooms	900	\$9.12	\$8,208.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Warming Kitchen	800	\$9.12	\$7,296.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Storage	500	\$0.52	\$260.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Circulation	1,300	\$1.92	\$2,496.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Multi-Athletic Court (MAC)	8,600	\$1.92	\$16,512.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Storage	800	\$0.15	\$120.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Stairs / Elevator	300	\$0.45	\$135.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Repair & Maintenance	20,000	\$0.29	\$5,800.00	includes maintenance contracts (expertise)
Staff Apparel			\$1,000.00	
Office Supplies			\$1,000.00	
Stationary & Printed Materials			\$1,000.00	
Utilities	20,000	\$1.17	\$23,400.00	Based on unit rate and square feet
Operations			\$77,632.00	
OTHER SERVICES & CHARGES				
Insurance	20000	\$1.58	\$31,600.00	
Bank Charges & Fees			\$7,760.16	estimated at 3% of all revenues
Lifecycle Replacement			\$12,933.60	5% of revenues
Waste Management			\$3,600.00	
Total			Other Services	\$55,893.76
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$261,340.19	
NET REVENUE/(LOSS)			(\$2,668.19)	
COST RECOVERY			99.0%	

Notes:

Amenity sizes are based on estimates from the conceptual design. Amenities and spaces may change during final design, construction documents, etc.





APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY CENTER MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

The maintenance standards for the Community Center include the interior of the facility. Exterior maintenance is already happening in Kiwanis Park and are not included in the maintenance standards. While there are some maintenance standards that decrease the level of maintenance in less trafficked areas, the Center will have a high expectation in appearance. For this reason, all maintenance is of the highest level applied.

COMMUNITY CENTER MAINTENANCE STANDARDS EXTERIOR MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Maintenance standards can change by season and month depending on the type of park area and level of use. Standards will be calculated by time and equipment needed to develop the required operational budgets. The following indoor maintenance management schedule is recommended for the Community Center staff to follow to keep the facility in top condition:

OFFICES

- Windows Exterior cleaned (2) a year.
- Inside as needed.
- Carpets vacuumed Daily.
- Trash emptied Daily.
- Desks wiped down.
- Lights cleaned monthly.
- Tables and Chairs cleaned daily or on a as needed basis.
- Storage closets cleaned once a year.
- Phones cleaned daily.
- HVAC cleaned quarterly.
- Doors Cleaned weekly.
- Offices painted every (7) years.

OFFICE SUITE & LOBBY

- Light switches cleaned daily.
- Trash emptied daily.
- Recycling emptied daily.
- Counter wiped down daily.
- Lights cleaned monthly.
- Phone wiped down daily.
- Floor swept daily and mopped weekly.
- All equipment wiped down daily.
- Annually cleaning of cabinets

KITCHEN

- Cleaned daily.
- Counter cleaned daily.
- Refrigerator cleaned out quarterly.

STORAGE AREAS

- Annually Clean
- Sweep Monthly

CIRCULATION/ ENTRY AREAS/ STAIRS/ ELEVATOR

- Cleaned daily.
- Tile cleaned daily.
- Pressure-wash concrete monthly



SHALER TOWNSHIP
P E N N S Y L V A N I A

- Hand rails cleaned daily.
- Glass cleaned daily.

JANITORS CLOSET

- Janitors Closet cleaned out quarterly.
- Loading dock corridor painted yearly (wall paper needs to be taken down)
- Carpets cleaned daily.
- Lights cleaned quarterly.

RESTROOMS

- Floors and toilets cleaned every shift.
- Mirrors cleaned every shift.
- Check levels of toilet paper and hand towels every shift and replenish as needed.

MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

- Floors cleaned daily.
- Doors and windows cleaned daily.
- Mirrors cleaned daily.
- Room painted every three years.
- Bars wiped down daily.
- Lights wiped down every week.

MULTI-ACTIVITY COURT (MAC) ROOM

- Floors refinished/deep cleaned annually.
- Backboards cleaned monthly and wall mounts.
- Mop the floors during the day and scrub the floors at night.
- Curtains wiped down quarterly.
- Storage room cleaned out annually.
- Scoreboards and sound system inspected quarterly.
- Emergency door inspected weekly.
- Every (2) years deep clean
- Internal windows cleaned weekly.
- Electrical room inspected weekly and cleaned quarterly.

Benchmarked Communities Analysis Report



Benchmarked Communities Analysis

Methodology

Shaler Township (“Township”) identified operating metrics to benchmark against peer communities related to parks and recreation financials and assets. The goal of this analysis is to evaluate how Shaler’s Parks & Recreation service is positioned amongst peer communities, therefore, the information sought was a combination of operating metrics that factor budgets, staffing levels, programming, and inventory.

Information used in this analysis was obtained directly from each participating benchmark community (when available) and information available through the National Recreation and Park Association’s (NRPA) Park Metrics Database.

Due to differences in how each system collects, maintains, and reports data, variances may exist. These variations can impact the per capita and percentage allocations, and the overall comparison must be viewed with this in mind. The benchmark data collection for all systems was complete as of January 2025, and it is possible that information in this report may have changed since the original collection date. **In some instances, the information was not tracked or not available from the participating communities, which is indicated by a blank space in the data tables where the information was missing.**

The communities listed below were selected for benchmarking because they are communities of varying sizes, adjacent to the Township in the county, and possess varying socioeconomic characteristics. The variety of the populations served by these communities will allow the Township to benchmark itself against communities with various services as well as communities that they may strive to measure up against in the future. These benchmarked communities include the following:

- Hampton Township Parks & Recreation Services
- Town of McCandless Parks & Recreation Services
- Ross Township Parks & Recreation Services

The table below lists each benchmark community in the study, arranged by population per square mile.

Agency	State	Jurisdiction Type	Population	Jurisdiction Size (Sq. Mi.)	Population per Sq. Mi.
Shaler Township	PA	Municipality	28,132.00	10.50	2,679.24
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	PA	Municipality	33,176.00	14.47	2,292.74
McCandless Parks & Recreation	PA	Home Rule Charter	28,457.00	16.50	1,724.67
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	PA	Home Rule Charter	18,479.00	16.00	1,154.94



Shaler Township Master Plan

Of all communities examined, Shaler’s served population falls towards the middle of the benchmarked communities (at 28,132). Shaler’s jurisdiction size served (10.50 square miles) was the smallest of the analysis, giving the community the highest population density (approximately 2,679.24 residents per square mile) as a result.

Benchmark Comparison

System Inventory

The following tables provide a general overview of each system’s inventory, including total park acreage, trail mileage, and recreation facilities. Assessing the level of service for park acres, Shaler competes with other communities evaluated for amount of total park acres with 187.44 total acres owned or managed which is close to Hampton Township’s 195 acres and McCandless’ 191.9. In terms of total acres per population, Shaler has 6.66 per 1,000 residents. This is far below the NRPA median for communities serving similar sized communities (11.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents). Additionally, Shaler only owns and manages 1.40 total miles of trails resulting in 0.06 trail miles per 1,000 residents, which is tied with Ross Township and McCandless in this analysis. While Shaler may be below the NRPA average in these metrics, so are the other benchmarked communities.

Agency	Total Acres Owned or Managed	Total Miles of Trail Owned or Managed	Acres per 1,000 residents	Trail Miles per 1,000 residents
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	195.00	1.27	10.55	0.07
McCandless Parks & Recreation	191.90	1.69	6.74	0.06
Shaler Township	187.44	1.40	6.66	0.05
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	162.58	2.00	4.90	0.06
NRPA Median for agencies serving 20,000 to 49,999: 11.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents				



This analysis also includes a breakdown of each community’s parkland jurisdiction size by square miles and undeveloped acreage (mostly considered natural areas or open space), as well as the amount of trail mileage that is paved and/or hard surface trail and the amount that is unpaved and/or soft surface trail. Unfortunately, information regarding jurisdiction size and natural areas/open spaces was either untracked or indeterminable at the time of data collection. When observing trail mileage, Shaler, along with Ross Township and McCandless, has only unpaved/soft surface trails (1.40) and no paved/hard surface trails (0). The NRPA median, however, is 10 total miles of trail per community, which Shaler does not currently meet with official trails. The community considers unofficial trails to exist, but until they are officially recognized, Shaler is not able to dedicate resources to them. It is also worth noting that Allegheny County North Park is frequented by Shaler Township Residents which has 40+ miles of trails

Agency	Population	Acres of natural areas/ open space	Total miles of trail owned or managed by the system	Total miles of paved/hard surface trail	Total miles of unpaved/soft surface trail
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	33,176		2.00	0.00	2.00
McCandless Parks & Recreation	28,457	151.50	1.69	0.00	1.69
Shaler Township	28,132		1.40	0.00	1.40
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	18,479	34.79	1.27	1.27	0.00
NRPA Median for agencies serving 20,00 to 49,999: 10 total miles of trail					

The benchmarking analysis also included the number of indoor recreation facilities and outdoor aquatic centers/pools owned or managed by each community. Shaler Township and McCandless do not have typical recreation facilities. Shaler Township has programs within the Shaler North Hills Library and McCandless within the McCandless/Northern Allegheny Heritage and Cultural Center. However, for future measurements the Township can look to Hampton Township for possible KPIs. The full list of facilities and square footage can be found in the table below. Also worth noting, these benchmark communities are surrounding the North Park Pool, a large pool provided by Allegheny County. Since Hampton Township, Town of McCandless, and Ross Township do not own a pool they do not have duplicating services. It may not necessarily be indicative of a lack of public service in this regard.



Agency	Population	Total Indoor Recreation Facility Square Footage	Number of Outdoor Aquatic Centers/ Pools	Total Outdoor Aquatic Center/Pool Square Footage	Indoor Recreation Sq Footage per 1,000 residents	Outdoor Recreation Sq Footage per 1,000 residents
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	18,479	45,000.00	1	70,000.00	2.44	3,788.08
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	33,176	17,500.00	0	0.00	0.95	0.00
McCandless Parks & Recreation	28,457	2,140.00	0	0.00	0.12	0.00
Shaler Township	28,132	0.00	1	69,358.00	0.00	2,465.45

Staffing

This section compares staffing levels for each system by comparing each community’s Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs, or a community’s equivalent of full-time workers), total FTEs dedicated to recreation programming, and total part-time and/or seasonal employees. This data was collected from each community for FY2024.

In general, communities participating in the benchmark study have limited staffing. Shaler employs 4 total FTEs, or 1.42 total FTEs per 10,000 residents, which sits slightly above the middle of this analysis, and is well below the NRPA median for similar sized communities (11.2 FTEs per 10,000 residents). This can be attributed to the fact that Shaler does not have any recreation facilities which generally require more staff to operate and program.

Agency	Population	Total Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)	Total FTEs per 10,000 Residents
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	18,479	8.00	4.33
Shaler Township	28,132	4.0	1.42
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	33,176	4.0	1.21
McCandless Parks & Recreation	28,457	1.0	0.35
NRPA Median for agencies serving 20,000 to 49,999: 34.2 Total FTEs, 11.2 FTEs per 10,000 residents			



Operating Expense

The table below details each community's total FY2023 operating expenses, operating expenses in terms of their system acreage, and total operating expenses in terms of staffing. Shaler sits near the top among peer communities for total operating expense (~\$1.9M), expense per acre (\$10,351), and expenses per FTE (\$485,059). Shaler is performing above the NRPA Median of \$9,013 expense per acre and the NRPA median of \$112,366 expense per FTE. Lastly, Shaler had a 20% cost recovery (the amount of operating expenses recovered by earned revenue), which is an about average performance compared to the other communities in the analysis, minus the outlier of McCandless. **It is important to note these results are based on and only as good as the data provided by the benchmark communities. Also note worthy is that these figures also include the annual contributions of each benchmark community to their respective libraries.**

Agency	Total FTEs	Total Operating Expenses (FY23)	Total Fees, Charges, and Earned Revenue (FY23)	Operating Expense per Acre	Operating Expense per FTE	Cost Recovery
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	8.00	\$ 1,638,205	\$ 807,111	\$ 8,401	\$ 204,776	49%
Shaler Township	4.0	\$ 1,940,237	\$ 389,228	\$ 10,351	\$ 485,059	20%
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	4.0	\$ 1,281,044	\$ 234,750	\$ 7,879	\$ 320,261	18%
McCandless Parks & Recreation	1.0	\$ 873,248	\$ 19,279	\$ 4,551	\$ 873,248	2%
NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20,000-49,999 Residents: \$9,013 per acre						

Programming

Lastly, the benchmarked communities were asked to discuss Expenditures/Budget and Revenues linked to Programming through their respective services. Shaler leads all of the benchmarked communities in both expenditures (\$1,280,552) and revenue (\$389,228) attributable to programming. However, Shaler sits at the bottom of the list for programming cost recovery (30.40%). It is important to note that as of 2025, the Town of McCandless charges user fees for rec programs. The transition began in 2023 when the Town we just beginning to build out an intentional recreational staff function.

Agency	Total Operating Expenditures/Budget for Programs	Revenue Generated by Programs	Programming Cost Recovery
Hampton Township Parks & Recreation	\$220,279	\$272,259	123.60%
Ross Township Parks & Recreation	\$137,560	\$155,000	112.68%
Shaler Township	\$57,404	\$42,747	74.47%
McCandless Parks & Recreation	\$50,353	\$16,074	31.92%



Summary

While all communities included in this analysis fall below NRPA performance averages, Shaler Township is generally keeping pace with its peer communities in terms of parks and recreation services. However, there are a few key areas where improvement is needed. **It is important to recognize that each community differs significantly in the size, scope, and capacity of its parks systems, which can complicate direct comparisons.** The real value of this analysis lies in highlighting Shaler Township's relative strengths while identifying specific opportunities for enhancement. These variations across communities offer important insights into how Shaler Township Parks & Recreation can continue to refine its resource allocation and program offerings to better meet local needs.

Specific recommendations should not be derived solely from these benchmark results, however, as there are many other factors that would contribute to the final recommendations of this Master Plan including but not limited to community engagement and needs assessment findings, population and demographic characteristics and trends, and overall Township financial capacity and priorities for investment. What is uniquely needed in Shaler to meet the needs of its residents now and in the future is more important than what is happening in other communities. This information should only be helpful as one of many lenses in which final priorities are developed, evaluated and recommendations are derived.

Shaler demonstrates strong investment in programming with average revenue generation. While they are near the top in overall expenses, for program revenue, Shaler sits at the bottom of the list in cost recovery.

However, there are notable areas for improvement. Shaler's parkland and trail availability fall below the NRPA medians, with only 6.66 acres of parkland and 0.06 miles of trail per 1,000 residents. Additionally, the absence of indoor recreation facilities and outdoor aquatic centers limits opportunities for recreation and community engagement. Staffing levels are also significantly below NRPA benchmarks, partly due to the lack of facility-based programs requiring additional personnel.

Investing in recreation facilities could significantly enhance Shaler's offerings. Since the other benchmarked communities each have a facility to offer indoor programming, the facilities lack the appropriate spaces to meet the recent trends in recreation. Shaler can use this analysis to evaluate potential square footage requirements and estimate the associated increases in programming revenue and expenses from constructing a new facility. These improvements would not only serve the current population but also attract more residents and visitors, fostering a stronger sense of community and boosting participation in programs.

Overall, this benchmarking analysis highlights Shaler Township as a smaller system with opportunities for growth. The perspective gained through the peer comparison is valuable in identifying areas for improvement and establishing strategic goals to pursue. Ultimately, Shaler should utilize these findings as a baseline comparison that provides key performance indicators (KPIs) to be tracked and measured over time.

