

## CHAPTER 7 SYSTEM PLAN

**STRATEGIC GOAL: Create a park and recreation system that provides first quality parks and recreation facilities that are needed and used widely by customers.**

### OVERVIEW

When the 1991 park and recreation plan was prepared, the Township owned a total of 263 acres of parkland and open space. The acreage was distributed among a total of 21 sites, 6 of which were developed and opened as parks. The remaining 15 sites were open spaces without any improvements or recreation facilities for public use.

Currently, there are 805 acres comprised of 44 individual park and open space areas. Thus, the overall size of the Township's park system has tripled in the past twelve years, which is a tremendous accomplishment. Additionally, 10 more parks were developed, bringing the total now to 16. Some of the most notable achievements include the following:

- The construction of Samuel Carpenter Park as a key community park.
- The acquisition of Cedar Hill Road Park and its construction as a community park with a passive recreation emphasis.
- The acquisition of a license agreement from PECO Energy for public use of the electric transmission corridor and the subsequent construction of the 2.5-mile Power Line Trail.
- The acquisition of Chestnut Creek Park and construction of the football field complex.
- The acquisition of Lukens Park at Dresher Road and its construction as the newest community park, including Everybody's Playground.
- The installation of playground apparatus at Jarrett Road and Blair Mill parks, thereby establishing them as neighborhood parks.
- Other projects worthy of special mention are the ongoing construction of the Horsham Township Library and the Community Center, both of which will provide indoor recreation spaces when completed in 2004 and 2005, respectively.

The tremendous growth experienced in the park system, in terms of acreage, the number of parks, and the expansion of recreation facilities, can be attributed to the Township's commitment to serving customers' recreational needs. These achievements were made possible through a combination of Township funding, grants, collaborative ventures with local entities, and developer contributions of money and land. A significant amount of land that is now part of the park system was set aside and conveyed to the Township as part of the plan approval process for subdivisions and land developments.

Despite the progress that has been made, still more needs to be done to better meet customers' expectations. This chapter recommends actions that the Township should take to achieve the above-referenced strategic goal. The actions are focused on ensuring that an adequate supply of parkland and a diversity of recreation facilities will be appropriately located and as accessible as practical to all customers.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Work with others and seek partnerships to acquire and develop the park system.

### **Recommendations**

1. The provision of parks and recreation facilities should be a joint venture, whereby the Township and the community at large, including all providers of recreation, assume shared responsibilities for acquisition and development. Two prime examples of successful partnerships that have resulted in essential park system enhancements in the township are the construction of Everybody's Playground in conjunction with the Horsham Rotary Club and the construction of the football field complex at Chestnut Creek Park with help from the Horsham Hawks Football and Cheerleading Association.

Because of limitations of finances, staff, and other resources, it is prudent to rely on entities that have a vested interest in utilizing the municipal park system to help expand it. It is recommended that the Township encourage continued cooperation with community-based organizations to leverage public dollars and to make park projects more cost-effective. Cooperation and joint funding should be pursued.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Coordinate facility planning with customers, community-based providers, and other public agencies.

### **Recommendations**

2. The Township should involve customers throughout the planning process for park system expansions and improvements. Because parks and recreation facilities are provided for customers' use and enjoyment, it is important to be sure that decision-makers take into account their recreation needs and priorities. Recreation surveys should be conducted on a regular basis as an invaluable tool to monitor local preferences.
3. A means of logging in, documenting, and responding to general public comments relative to the overall development of the park system should be established. Information gathered might help to identify certain deficiencies that warrant action or management issues that should be addressed internally to relieve customers' concerns.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Work with the Hatboro-Horsham School District to maintain or expand the availability of school facilities for public use.

### Recommendations

4. For park planning purposes, public schools should continue to serve as recreation resources close to customers' homes. Some communities and school districts have entered into written cooperative agreements whereby school facilities are formally "opened" to residents. A pattern of resident school use is particularly well suited to Horsham Township, and this practice is already well established.

The Township should consider securing a commitment guaranteeing customer access to Hatboro-Horsham School District properties. The formal written agreement should specify how the Township and School District agree to make their indoor and outdoor facilities and grounds available for mutual benefit and use. However, it should be noted that restrictions must remain on the times that facilities at schools can provide a benefit to the general public. For example, school grounds should be available for spontaneous use only when school is not in session or when there are no school-scheduled activities taking place.

5. Participate in the planning for new school development and expansions to insure maximum community recreation utility in the design of playgrounds, sports fields, community rooms, gymnasiums, and the like

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Provide a reasonably equitable distribution of community and neighborhood parks.

### Recommendations (refer to Figure 49 located in the rear pocket of this plan)

6. COMMUNITY PARK – Although the township is well served by community parks, one site has been targeted for potential acquisition as a community-wide park resource if the property is placed for sale on the open market or is in jeopardy of being converted to a non-open space land use:
  - P9 – The Horsham Valley Golf Club is an 18-hole public golf course spread out over approximately 66 acres. The site is a visual and recreational amenity in the community that also abuts Kohler Park, one of the Township's community parks. Acquisition of the golf course and its operation as a municipal facility is contemplated only as a means to ensure preservation of this open space landmark and only if it could be financially self-sustaining. It is further recommended that a study examining the feasibility of such an undertaking be prepared if and when the Township eventually takes action on this proposal.

Another significant feature of this property is that the PECO Energy corridor through which the Power Line Trail passes is currently partly occupied by the golf course, thereby impeding the westward extension of the trail past Babylon Road. If the Township were to acquire the property, the trail could probably be accommodated along the perimeter of the course.

7. **COMMUNITY PARK EXPANSION** – Two properties are targeted for preservation to enlarge and enhance an existing community park:
- **P3** – The 19-acre Singer Property is immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of Cedar Hill Road Park. The site is partially wooded, generally level, with limited access potential from Grindleton Lane. This property could “square out” the park and expand recreation opportunity.
  - **P4** – The Limekiln Simmons Elementary School site has frontage to both Limekiln Pike and Grindleton Lane. The old school building is currently leased for day care use and other tenants. Outdoor facilities include one basketball court, baseball/soccer field, and multi-purpose paved area. Indoor facilities include a library, multi-purpose room, fourteen regular classrooms, gym/lunchroom, and one art room. This property could serve as a day care and cultural center connected to the Cedar Hill Road Park if an access easement or all or a portion of the aforementioned Singer Property were acquired at the end of Grindleton Lane.
8. **NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS** – There are not enough strategically located neighborhood parks to ensure that all geographic areas of the community are served. Therefore, the provision of one or more additional neighborhood parks is recommended:
- Chestnut Creek Park currently functions only as a community park because of the limited variety of recreation facilities. However, this 64.6-acre site has the potential to serve a dual purpose, functioning also as a neighborhood park, which would provide enhanced coverage for the northern corner of the township. It is recommended that neighborhood-level facilities be constructed here to take advantage of this Township resource.
  - Although not currently owned by the Township, three additional sites have been identified as potential locations for future neighborhood parks, should opportunities arise to acquire all or part of them:
    - **P5** – This approximate 20-acre site owned by the Lakeside Youth Service was previously recommended as a park in the 1991 plan, but demand for parkland in Customer Service Area A has not yet warranted its acquisition. The land lends itself as a suitable location for a neighborhood park with fairly level open fields and woodlands. The land is also strategically located along a proposed trail. Although the need to establish a public recreation area here is not acute at this time, it is recommended that the Township consider this opportunity, particularly if residential development continues in this locale.
    - **P10** – In Customer Service Area D, this 9-acre open space owned by Willow Grove Bank (former Braccia Property) is mostly surrounded by existing development. Open space is at a premium in this fairly densely

developed geographic area, especially along the fringes near neighboring Upper Dublin Township. This site is an open space opportunity that could function as a small recreation area for a part of the township that is not currently served by a neighborhood park.

- **P15** – The Hideaway Swim Club consists of a 13-acre private membership swim club with a swimming pool, basketball courts, and tennis courts. This facility provides active recreation opportunities during the summer season, particularly to the youth of families in the immediate adjacent residential neighborhoods. It should also be noted that this site is accessible by foot from Butternut Drive, Springbrook Road, and Aspen Lane. It serves a long term, important recreation role within Customer Service Area B and the community as a whole, and while acquisition may not be imminent, the preservation of the property is important.
9. **NEIGHBORHOOD PARK EXPANSION** – There are opportunities to enlarge and enhance two existing neighborhood parks:
- **P14** – The southeasterly portion of the Hankin Property, including frontage to County Line Road, would be an approximate 20-acre addition to Maple Park. Currently, the park is linear in nature and includes a basketball court, a walking trail, and playground apparatus. The usability of the park would be greatly enhanced by this area that would “square out” the park and add the potential for active recreation facilities. The land also runs parallel to and behind Winding Road.
  - **P16** – Meetinghouse Park is currently on a short-term lease from the Horsham Meeting of Friends. A substantially longer lease or fee simple purchase of this 6.5-acre park is recommended. The land immediately north and east of the park is generally open space and would make a logical and natural addition to the park, extending northwardly toward Moreland Avenue. This property also could be purchased from the Horsham Friends Meeting or a long-term lease could be negotiated to ensure use by Township residents.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Distribute recreation facilities based on existing and projected populations, with consideration given to unmet needs and expected demand in the customer service areas.

### Recommendations

10. **RECREATION FACILITIES** – It is recommended that additional facilities be constructed at Township parks to better satisfy the recreation needs of customers. Reasonable estimates of facility needs were derived by collectively analyzing the information presented in chapters 3 and 4 along with the experience and judgment of the Study Committee, patterns in the use of existing facilities, and trends in participation for particular recreation activities and sports. Below is a facility-by-facility breakdown for the recommendations, organized according to township-wide demand revealed

by the recreation survey:

- Bicycling Trails – Addressed under Recommendations 17 and 19.
- Hiking/Walking Trails – Addressed below and under Recommendation 17.
- Fitness/Exercise Trails – The Township currently provides a grouped fitness station along the trail in Deep Meadow Park. All existing and future trails will be available to customers for general fitness training, such as jogging and running. It is recommended that a loop trail be constructed at Chestnut Creek Park. A series of fitness stations for exercises (i.e., warm up, flexibility, strength, cool down) installed at intervals along the trail in Lukens Park at Dresher Road is also recommended.
- Outdoor Swimming Pool – In recognition of strong customer interest in a pool and due to the impact that such a facility could have on the municipal capital and operating budgets, it is recommended that the short-term and long-range costs be examined if the Township has further interest in providing it within the park system. A feasibility study should be prepared, but not before a pre-feasibility study or marketing report is completed. The purpose of the marketing report would be to: 1) closely assess the future viability of swimming pool operations in surrounding communities, 2) refine the concept of the pool/aquatic facility contemplated in the Township, including partnership ideas, and 3) publicize the current availability of pools to ensure that customers are aware of existing opportunities.

It is also recommended that if the feasibility study renders a positive decision regarding the advisability of constructing the pool/aquatic facility based on projected usage and financial capabilities, then the issue should be put to referendum for the voters to make the final decision.

- Nature Areas and Interpretive Trails – The Hatboro-Horsham School District offers the Jarrett Nature Center at Dorothea H. Simmons Elementary School. And Cedar Hill Road Park currently serves as the Township's nature area. It offers a nature trail, nature blinds, outdoor classroom, and an extensive wooded setting with a creek, floodplain, and wetlands. The role of the park as a nature center is recommended to expand. Once the Township takes control of the Anderson House in the year 2010, it should be used as an environmental education center possibly in partnership with the Park Creek Watershed Association whose offices could be housed there.

Consideration should be given to establishing nature areas in Lukens Park at Dresher Road, Clearbrook Park, and the proposed RoMynalo Inc. Property (refer to Recommendations 12 – P7), which is documented by The Nature Conservancy as a unique forest. It is envisioned that these sites be auxiliary to Cedar Hill Road Park and would involve mostly self-guided lessons to interpret the features special to each park.

- Indoor Recreation Center – Existing indoor spaces are provided at the Township's administrative building and various school district properties. The Township Library that is under construction will offer a large

community room. And in 2004 the Township Public Works garage will be converted into a Community Center building with kitchen facilities and a large room capable of being divided into two smaller rooms for recreation activities and meetings.

It is recommended that the Township monitor how effective all existing and soon-to-be constructed indoor recreation facilities serve customer needs before committing to undertaking any further buildings. The usage of indoor spaces should be tracked and demand monitored for future analysis and decision-making.

- Dog Park – Existing rules and regulations prohibit dogs in the park system, except on a leash directly around the pond in Kohler Park and along the Power Line Trail. There is a customer group of dog owners that have requested the creation of a fenced, off-leash area within a park, and the Park and Recreation Board has endorsed this proposal.

It is recommended that a dog park be accommodated, provided that it be constructed and maintained in partnership with the dog park advocacy group and user group contingency. However, because such a facility is geographically sensitive, it is recommended that a decision be deferred until more detailed analysis and consideration can be conducted.

- Ice Skating Areas – The Township opens the pond in Kohler Park for skating when the ice is of sufficient thickness, which is especially weather dependent due to the depth of the water and the fact that it is fed by natural sources. It is recommended that consideration be given to developing an outdoor skating area in either Deep Meadow Park or Chestnut Creek Park. Design and construction parameters should be researched and a decision made as to the skating area's location based, in part, as to whether it would be developed to serve as a joint ice hockey rink in the winter and an in-line hockey court during the warmer months.
- Environmental Education Center – As noted above under “nature areas and interpretive trails,” it is recommended that the Anderson House at Cedar Hill Road Park serve as a future environmental education center. Partnerships with the Park Creek Watershed Association, the school district (Jarrett Nature Center staff), and Montgomery County (Department of Parks' Nature Center staff) should be established to operate the center and to provide programming.
- Outdoor Amphitheater – Cedar Hill Road Park offers a small outdoor seating area for small gatherings, such as lectures and classes, but it is not sized to handle a large performance or crowd. The gazebo at Kohler Park is used for performances, but it is not large enough or electrically equipped to house a large band nor acoustically designed for music. It is recommended that the construction of an outdoor amphitheater be pursued in partnership with the school district, the Hatboro-Horsham Educational Foundation, and/or the Celestia Performing Arts Center. Sites that should be explored for its location include school district property near the high school, the Hearne Property, or Cedar Hill Road

Park (Phase IV).

- Playground Apparatus – Practically all of the Township’s parks offer playground equipment. Samuel Carpenter Park does not because it is intended to cater more to adult-oriented recreation. Neither does Chestnut Creek Park, but it is recommended that a playground be constructed here to serve customers’ neighborhood-level park needs.
- Fishing Areas – The pond at Kohler Park is stocked and available for fishing. Creeks in the township as well as Bradford (Dam 611) Park are also offer public fishing opportunities. These are believed to adequately serve customers, and no additional fishing area are recommended.
- Historical Sites – The State-owned and administered Graeme Park is a historic site. The adjacent Township-owned Strawbridge Property Open Space is planned as a partnership project with the Horsham Preservation and Historical Association and the Historical Property Preservation Institute. A lease is presented being executed with the historic groups to operate the site as an 18<sup>th</sup> Century working farm with historic house, barn and outbuildings. No further Township involvement with historic sites is recommended at this time.
- Handicapped Facilities – Everybody’s Playground, a large universal access and destination playground in Lukens Park at Dresher Road, was recently constructed in partnership with the Horsham Rotary Club. No additional special facilities for persons with disabilities are contemplated as being needed at this time. It is recommended that the Township continue to make its parks and facilities barrier free.
- Tennis Courts – A good supply of tennis courts is provided at Samuel Carpenter Park, Hatboro-Horsham High School (lighted for night play), and Keith Valley Middle School. No additional courts are recommended.
- Basketball Courts – Samuel Carpenter Park provides the only outdoor basketball courts. It is recommended to construct 1 or 2 courts in Lukens Park at Dresher Road. Also, the Township should explore why the courts in the parking lots at schools were removed.

The Hatboro-Horsham Youth Basketball Association (Hhoops) has proposed to partner with the Township to construct a building for an indoor basketball gymnasium. It is recommended that negotiations under this partnership continue and that an outdoor court also be constructed in conjunction with the building.

- Skateboard Park – It is recommended that skateboard parks be researched so that an appropriate role for the Township to take in creating a “local-sized” facility can be defined. If deemed appropriate, a suitable location should be found, preferably in a community park.
- Picnic Areas and Pavilions – The majority of the parks provide picnic tables, and there is one pavilion each at Samuel Carpenter, Deep Meadow, and Kohler parks. Three (3) new pavilions will be constructed during the next year at Jarrett Road Park, Chestnut Creek Park, and Lukens Park at Dresher Road. No additional picnic pavilions are recommended at this time.

- Multi-Purpose, Turf Playfields – There are a total of 6 multi-purpose playfields provided at Samuel Carpenter Park (3), Lukens Park at Dresher Road (2), and Cedar Hill Road Park (1). No additional fields are recommended at this time.
- Soccer Fields – The Township offers a total of 11 soccer fields at Kohler Park (6), Samuel Carpenter Park (3), Cedar Hill Road Park (1), and Lukens Park at Dresher Road (2). No additional fields are recommended at this time.
- Senior Citizen Facilities – The construction of the Township Library and the conversion of the Township Public Works garage into a Community Center will provide a kitchen (only in the later facility) and indoor rooms for senior citizen activities and meetings. No additional facilities are recommended at this time.
- In-Line Hockey Courts – There is one (1) in-line hockey court offered at Kohler Park. It is recommended that another court be constructed. As in the above “ice skating areas” recommendation, the facility should be located in either Deep Meadow Park or Chestnut Creek Park. And it might be developed as a joint ice hockey court for winter season use
- Softball Fields / Baseball Fields – A total of 17 baseball/softball fields are provided throughout the park system. There are 11 youth fields at Deep Meadow Park, 3 adult fields at Lukens Park at Dresher Road, 2 adult fields at Carpenter Park, 1 adult field at Cedar Hill Road Park, and 1 field at Wayne Avenue Park. No additional facilities are recommended at this time.
- Shuffleboard Courts – There are no existing shuffleboard courts offered. It is recommended that 1 or 2 courts be constructed at the Community Center building.
- Football Fields – With 3 full size and 2 half size football fields at Chestnut Creek Park, no additional fields are recommended.
- Horseshoe Courts – Although there are no existing horseshoe courts provided in the parks, some will be constructed at Kohler and Cedar Hill Road parks. No additional courts are recommended.
- Volleyball Courts – There are currently 2 sand volleyball courts at Carpenter Park and 2 grass courts at Cedar Hill Road Park. No additional courts are recommended
- Lacrosse Fields – At the present time, it is believed that multi-purpose fields and soccer fields will be able to accommodate the projected need for lacrosse. Therefore, no dedicated lacrosse fields are recommended.
- Bocce Courts – The Township currently does not have any bocce courts. It is recommended that 1 or 2 be constructed at the Community Center building.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Acquire and develop parks with facilities that reflect needs and priorities as expressed by customers during all planning and design processes.

## Recommendations

11. Again, it is recommended that the Township involve customers throughout the planning process for park system expansions and improvements, including the design phase. Organize meetings with surrounding neighbors to design and develop recreation areas according to a consensus. Seeking input from nearby customers can foster a sense of ownership and strengthen public support for park projects, which could transfer into the formation of partnerships for funding/donations and volunteer services not only for park construction but also for long-term management.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Ensure that adequate natural areas are protected, restored, and enhanced as part of the park system.

## Recommendations (refer to Figure 49 located in the rear pocket of this plan)

12. OPEN SPACE – Response to the recreation survey conducted as part of this plan showed a strong support for the Township to be more active at preserving open space and natural features throughout the community. There was also significant interest in the provision of natural areas as part of the park system. Therefore, the protection of the Township’s creeks, wetlands, woodlands, and remaining open spaces is appropriate to increase the Township’s inventory of natural areas. Eight sites have been identified for their importance as open space to be preserved in the future if opportunities present themselves:
- P1 – This swath of open space would preserve the Little Neshaminy Creek stream valley, floodplain, and woodlands as well as accommodate a proposed trail. It would be part of a larger regional greenway effort affecting multiple properties extending both upstream and downstream along the creek.
  - P2 – This is an approximate 20-acre pocket of mature woodlands associated with the open landscape of the Whitemarsh Memorial Park Cemetery. It could serve as a key node for passive activity along a proposed trail.
  - P6 – About 15 acres of the Heffernan Property is expected to be dedicated as open space to the Township when the site is developed as an industrial park.
  - P7 – This site is part of a larger unique natural area comprised of a good quality forest, which is uncommon in Horsham Township. The mapped area of the RoMynalo Inc. Property coincides with the approximate acreage to be set aside as open space and dedicated to the Township as part of a planned business campus.
  - P8 – This triangular vacant parcel is the 30-acre Larocca Property. It has extensive frontage along County Line Road and could be acquired to enlarge and enhance the overall “scenic qualities” of the adjacent Township-owned Strawbridge Property Open Space and historic area,

- including the landscape surrounding Graeme Park.
- **P11** – The 71-acre Natural Lands Trust Inc. property consists of a mix of open and wooded lands, traversed along its westerly frontage by a stream valley and its accompanying floodplain soils. It provides natural wildlife habitat and scenic values.
  - **P12** – College Settlement of Philadelphia is a scenic 123-acre property that provides camp experiences for disadvantaged youth. Facilities include playgrounds, fishing pond, camping, environmental education cottage, play fields, swimming pool, tennis courts, picnic pavilions, and watershed preservation. The site is traversed by stream valley and floodplain, includes a large pond, and consists of a mix of heavy woods as well as open meadows. Portions of the south and easterly section of the site are traversed by soils and land patterns that indicate the presence of regulated wetlands.
  - **P13** – The Kuhn Day Camp Property north of Witmer Road is used for passive recreation purposes in conjunction with the College Settlement of Philadelphia. The site has access to the Power Line Trail corridor, enjoys ample road frontage, and consists of slopes generally favorable for active recreation in the 3-5% range. The westerly edge of the property is traversed by a band of floodplain soils along which there are very substantial stream valley and woodland vegetation groups. The site is easily accessible by vehicle and would be accessible by foot from Saw Mill Valley residential community as well as the planned residential development of Horsham Towne. The site consists of ball fields, basketball court, and picnic shelters in a park-like setting.
13. Significant environmental features within existing Township parks and open spaces should be inventoried and understood. The Township should pursue improvements to parks, including the preparation of park master plans that guide future development, so that natural resource areas are conserved.
  14. The Township should ensure the allocation of adequate resources to properly manage its open space sites by taking an active role to control the character and health of sensitive plants and animals and to maintain natural processes.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Provide facilities at parks that interpret the system and teach a conservation ethic.

### Recommendations

15. A good way for customers to learn about natural feature conservation is to experience natural areas firsthand and to have the importance of the features explained to them. The Township should collaborate and participate with resource agencies, schools, environmental organizations, and community-based groups to build customer awareness of environmental issues within the park system.
16. Where the Township practices proper land management approaches in its parks and open spaces, these areas should serve as a model and be

showcased, provided public access will not adversely impact the sensitive environmental characteristics. Develop interpretive materials (i.e., signs, brochures, etc.) that teach park visitors about the natural areas and promote stewardship responsibilities.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Provide open space connectors, greenways, and trails as major components of the park system.

**Recommendations (refer to Figure 49 located in the rear pocket of this plan)**

17. TRAILS – The public input gathered for this plan points to an overwhelming agreement that trails are important in the township. According to survey results, trails of various types are more popular than any other recreation facility. Aside from recreation, trails can be used for transportation if they are appropriately designed, constructed, and part of an interconnected network of other supportive facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

To date, the trails that exist are essentially disconnected. It is difficult, if not impossible, for customers in many geographic areas to safely travel by foot or on bicycle from their homes or workplaces to the trails or between destinations using only trails. Therefore, it is recommended that the Township strive to establish a well-integrated community-wide system in which trails work hand-in-hand with sidewalks as well as streets and roads that are safe for bicyclists. The trail component to such a system shown in Figure 49 includes the following:

- Power Line Trail Extension (T1) – This is the 2.1-mile westward continuation of the Power Line Trail between Kohler Park and Montgomery Township.
- Park Creek Trail (T2) – This 1.9-mile trail passes through Cedar Hill Road Park and Township-owned open spaces along the Park Creek valley. It also includes the spur connections to Worthington Court, Colby Lane, Sun Valley Drive, and Biwood Road.
- Little Neshaminy Trail (T3) – This .7-mile trail is located within the Little Neshaminy Creek Greenway between Montgomery and Warrington townships.
- Greenway Spur Trail (T4) – This .7-mile trail connects the Little Neshaminy Creek Greenway Trail to Fairway Drive.
- Chestnut Limekiln Trail (T5) – This .21-mile trail is located between Chestnut Lane and Limekiln Pike and is intended to link the Park Creek Trail and the Keith Valley Spur Trail by means of connections to sidewalks and residential streets.
- Keith Valley Spur Trail (T6) – This 1-mile trail connects Wedge Way to the Keith Valley Park Open Space.
- Keith Valley Trail (T7) – This 1.7-mile trail passes through the Park Creek valley between Samuel Carpenter Park and the intersection of County

Line Road and Keith Valley Road.

- Strawbridge Trail (T8) – This 1-mile trail passes through the Strawbridge Property Open Space between the Keith Valley Trail and County Line Road.
- Kohler Park Connector and Loop Trail (T9) – This .4-mile trail and crosswalk across Horsham Road connects Deep Meadow and Kohler parks and completes the loop trail between the soccer fields and the in-line skating hockey court.
- Library Trail (T10) – This .19-mile trail traverses the perimeter of the Dorothea H. Simmons Elementary School grounds and connects to the trail provided by the Township at the Library.
- Nature Area Link Trail (T11) – This .24-mile trail connects the Jarrett Nature Center trail to the trail provided by the Township at the Library.
- Sawyers Trail (T12) – This .15-mile trail passes through the Township's Sawyers Way Park and a vacant undeveloped lot as a connection between Walnut Avenue and the dense residential area serviced by Sawyers Way.
- Settlement Trail (T13) – This .44-mile trail passes through the College Settlement of Philadelphia Property as a linkage between Witmer Road and Tall Pines Lane.
- Camp Trail (T14) – This .25-mile trail passes through the Kuhn Day Camp Property as a link between Witmer Road and the Power Line Trail.
- Meetinghouse Trail (T15) – This .15-mile trail passes through the Horsham Meeting of Friends property and a residential lot to connect Wayne Avenue and Meetinghouse Parks.
- Blair Mill Trail (T16) – This .45-mile trail passes along the perimeter of the Blair Mill Elementary School property and Hatboro Borough's Blair Mill Park (baseball complex) and connects to Upper Moreland Township's Blair Mill Park playground and picnic area.

The preferred surface for these proposed trails is asphalt paving, but a compacted fine gravel mix would be a suitable alternative. The character of the corridor through which the trail passes should be taken into consideration in the trail surface selection. For example, the use of a soft surface or even an elevated boardwalk segment might be most compatible for a trail in an environmentally sensitive area.

18. GREENWAYS – There are multiple greenway initiatives that should be undertaken, all of which are related to other recommendations already presented:

- Little Neshaminy Greenway – Recommendation 12 of this chapter addressed an important greenway opportunity along the Little Neshaminy Creek (P1), which would be a short segment of a broader preservation initiative in other communities through which the creek passes. But the greenway segment in Horsham has merit on its own standing because of its environmental significance and for the role it plays in the proposed trail network for the township.
- Pennypack Greenway – The Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust strives to protect open space within the Pennypack Creek watershed,

which extends into much of the eastern portion of the community. The Township should support the Trust in its activities to complement the open

space along the creek and elsewhere in the watershed. Proposed preservation areas P11, P12, and P13 are of particular relevance, as they represent the headwaters of the Pennypack.

- Power Line Trail– The Township should coordinate with PECO Energy to enhance the electric transmission corridor used by the existing 2.5-mile Power Line Trail and the proposed 2.1-mile extension (T1). Although the utility corridor already functions as a de facto greenway, its value as a resource in the community can be improved by more actively managing the vegetation and landscape for aesthetic benefits and as a wildlife habitat area.
- Proposed Trails T4, T5, T6 – When implementing the Greenway Spur (T4), Keith Valley Spur (T5), and Keith Valley (T6) trails, the Township should attempt to set aside more than just the bare minimum width to accommodate the trails. Wider swaths of open space should be acquired to adequately buffer the trails from nearby development (existing/future) and to preserve adjacent natural features, thereby establishing broad naturalistic greenways to enhance the trail users' experience.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Provide sidewalks and on-road bicycle facilities as adjuncts to the park system.

**Recommendations (refer to Figure 49 located in the rear pocket of this plan)**

19. **SIDEWALKS** – Sidewalks are both a transportation and recreation resource in the township. The customary reason for providing sidewalks in a community is to give people the option of being able to walk places. Without sidewalks, it is unsafe and impractical to travel on foot. That is why it is recommended that the Township expand the sidewalk system to fill in gaps and to better link origins and destinations to one another, including linkages to parks. Further rationale for creating a better linked sidewalk system is for its ability to be used as a place for people to exercise and recreate, be it walking, jogging, or in-line skating. Providing more sidewalks throughout the community will, therefore, result in there being nontraditional recreation spaces closer to customer's homes and workplaces.

Too numerous and extensive to identify individually, Figure 49 maps the new sidewalks that are recommended. Collectively, the proposals add another 12.4 miles to the existing 64.3 miles of roads with sidewalks. The intent of the map is to show those roads or segments of roads that need a sidewalk. It does not specify whether it should be provided on one or both sides of the road. The Township will need to make those kinds of decisions at the time the walkways are being design engineered.

20. **ON-ROAD BICYCLE FACILITIES** – In addition to pursuing the development

of proposed trails and sidewalks as adjuncts to the park system, improvements to roads to make them safer for bicyclists are warranted. Bicyclists use roads for transportation and recreation purposes just as sidewalks serve both uses for pedestrians. Many people bicycle as a leisure time activity and for fitness and wellness benefits. Others bike as a way to commute back and forth to their workplaces, to reach the parks, and to run errands. Regardless of why people may want to ride their bicycles, the safety of bicyclists is an issue that the Township should address because certain roads are currently substandard from a bicycling safety point of view.

In Chapter 4, arterials and collectors were identified as being roads in the township that are least conducive to bicycling. The volume and speed of traffic on these roads are impediments to bicyclists, particularly to customers who are less experienced and skilled at riding. These same roads divide the community into numerous parts, further restricting the ability of customers to ride their bikes from one customer service area to another.

Ironically, collectors and arterials also represent direct routes that bicyclists would logically want to take to reach destinations scattered throughout the township. Therefore, in order to safely accommodate bicyclists, the Township should ensure that the following roads (mapped as Proposed On-Road Bicycle Facilities in Figure 49) are retrofitted in accordance with the standards presented in Appendix F:

- State Roads:
  - Easton Road (Route 611);
  - Horsham Road (Route 463);
  - Limekiln Pike (Route 152);
  - Norristown Road; and
  - Welsh Road (Route 63).
- County Roads:
  - Butler Pike; and
  - Horsham Road east of Easton Road.
- Township Roads:
  - Babylon Road (included because it is a key link to the high school, elementary school, and future community library);
  - Dresher Road;
  - Keith Valley Road;
  - Lower State Road;
  - Meetinghouse Road;
  - Moreland Avenue;
  - Tennis Avenue; and
  - Witmer Road.

The standards in Appendix F prescribe certain types of on-road bicycle facilities based on varied roadway and traffic conditions. Their basic intent is to provide sufficient space for both motorists and bicyclists to safely coexist on the same road. It is recommended that the Proposed On-Road Bicycle Facilities on the System Plan Map (refer to Figure 49) optimally adhere to the

“preferred standards” or, as an alternative, comply with the “alternative standards” when precluded by physical or legal constraints.

Existing conditions of the subject roads infer that the provision of bike lanes will likely be the best approach to accommodate bicyclists. The specific on-road bicycle facility to actually be applied to each road will be determined by engineers and transportation planners when roadway improvements are planned and designed.

21. LINKAGES – As pedestrians and bicyclists, customers will likely want to travel to or from places of interest beyond township boundaries. Figure 49 identifies 10 key linkages to neighboring communities:
- L1 – Little Neshaminy Creek Greenway/Trail access points into Montgomery Township and Warrington Township;
  - L2 – Power Line Trail extension into Montgomery Township;
  - L3 – Lower Gwynedd Township link at McKean Road and possible connection to future municipal trail;
  - L4 – Warrington Township connection at Kansas Road to Bradford (Dam 611) Park;
  - L5 – Upper Dublin Township link to Maple Glen retail center;
  - L6 – Warminster Township link as a primary route to municipal and regional recreation areas;
  - L7 – Warminster Township link as a primary route to municipal community park;
  - L8 – Hatboro Borough link as a primary route to municipal community park and pool;
  - L9 – Connection to regional Cross County Trail; and
  - L10 – Upper Dublin Township link as a primary route to municipal recreation areas.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Improve accessibility for all customers by making parks and facilities barrier free.

### Recommendations

22. Recommended improvements to the park system go beyond the construction of new facilities at parks simply to meet the needs of the general population. The parks should be made accessible to persons with handicaps and disabilities. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act mandates that the Township provide “accessible” parks. In the planning, construction, and rehabilitation of buildings and facilities, accommodations should be made for accessibility. The Township may wish to make special arrangements to retrofit its existing parks in the earliest time frame possible rather than wait until other construction at the parks takes place.

**ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY:** Strive to achieve consistency in the style and materials used for signage, amenities, and structures within parks as a means of establishing uniform identity.

**Recommendations**

23. Install standardized signs and kiosks at parks and open space sites to improve ease of identification and information delivery in outdoor settings.



## TEXT REMOVED FROM FINAL VERSION

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The Township should formalize partnership opportunities by organizing an advisory focus group that meets periodically to discuss overall facility needs. The group would be comprised of representatives from the various providers of recreation services, whether or not they directly use the park system for their programs. The meetings would be a time of communication and coordination among all parties to recognize how each one contributes to the common goal of providing a comprehensive park system to Township customers. A primary purpose of the group meetings would be to coordinate as much as possible on shared use of the system's facilities and to identify trends or future facility needs. A secondary benefit of the meetings is that they could help to formalize partnerships, enlist participation in joint-construction projects, and perhaps ensure that providers are not competing and duplicating efforts.

A right of first refusal should be acquired from the Hatboro-Horsham School District

The site should be permanently preserved through the utilization of conservation easements.

The Township or some other bona fide conservation agency should obtain a conservation easement to prohibit development in perpetuity.

It serves a long term, important recreation role within Customer Service Area B and the community as a whole, and while acquisition may not be imminent, the purchase of a conservation easement and right of first refusal on the property is important.