



CRANBERRY

• TOWNSHIP •

2024 COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

Executive Summary

March 7, 2024



• CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP •
PARKS & RECREATION

PASHEK  MTR



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This Plan reflects significant contributions of time, expertise, and advice from the following individuals, as well as input and perspective from a variety of stakeholders and the many people who live and/or work in Cranberry Township. This Plan would not have been possible without the valuable assistance of all.

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Executive Summary

Cranberry Township - Commitment to Excellence!

Cranberry Township is a rapidly growing community located north of Pittsburgh. It boasts diverse and vibrant neighborhoods, a bustling commercial district, and a highly rated school district. Some open areas still bear the marks of the Township's agricultural past. The Township also has an outstanding park and recreation department that is progressive and top-notch. The Township is not content to rest on its laurels and has set high standards for itself. If its parks and recreational programs are already great, why can't they be amazing?

In 2012, Cranberry Township formulated a Park and Recreation Plan to guide the development of parks and recreational programming for the next two decades. Over ten years later, the Township has achieved many of its goals and created a park system that is enjoyed not only by its residents but also by those from neighboring communities. However, the Township's priority in developing great parks and unparalleled recreational programming needs re-evaluated as it has grown by leaps and bounds and the demographics are shifting. What does the current generation want to see in their parks and programs? What does Cranberry Township need to offer in the next five or ten years? And how should the Township prioritize these needs?

At the core of this planning process are people. To answer the questions above, this project involved an extensive public engagement campaign to ensure that the aspirations of the people who live here have been heard. Leadership and the Study Committee discussed the community's comments to develop a plan that the Township can own and put into action. The Township also assessed its current assets to understand what it has and how these assets can be further developed to fulfill the goals it has set. All of these efforts working together will bring the Parks and Recreation of Cranberry Township from great to amazing!

94% of survey respondents say parks and recreation in Cranberry is important to their quality of life.

when
asked...



DISCOVER

Identifying Existing Conditions

Cranberry Township takes pride in its exceptional parks and recreation facilities. Over 500 acres of parkland features a variety of opportunities including playing fields, trails, pavilions, a dog park, fitness stations, dek hockey, programming space at the Municipal Building, and a fishing pond as well as gems such as:

- The Waterpark which provides something for everyone including slides, splash pad, water climbing wall, lap lanes, sand volleyball court, sun deck rentals, concessions, party room, diving board, and plenty of space to sun yourself.
- An 18-hole Championship disc golf course and a 6-hole Learn to Play recreational course.
- The Cranberry Township Pickleball Association (CTPA) provides 19 of the best and largest dedicated pickleball courts in Western PA including six which will be available under a heated dome during the winter season.
- The Miracle League of Southwestern PA ballfield and play arena was designed to provide great experiences for those with varying accessibility needs.
- The Cranberry Highlands Golf Course, voted the best municipal golf course in 2009 by Golf Digest, provides a challenging game for all players.
- The Seneca Valley School District offers exceptional student-athlete experiences which compliments classroom learning and overall development. It's state-of-the-art facilities include Nextier Stadium, the AHN Aquatic Center, Myers Law Group Stadium, baseball and softball fields, a tennis complex, and the Raider Field House.



ENGAGE

Listening to the Community

The project team focused heavily on public and stakeholder engagement to identify and frame the key community desires around which the plan would be built. Residents of Cranberry Township engaged with the process in multiple ways. Four methods of engagement allowed participants to provide feedback through a variety of opportunities. Some of the questions posed were:

- *What is your impression of the parks?*
- *Are they well-maintained?*
- *How can they be improved?*
- *What programs would your family participate in?*



Study Committee

1

This committee of 12 people met with the planning consultant 11 times. Their role was to guide the planning process, discuss the issues, create strategies, and respond to the information gathered from the community.

Public Meetings

2

Several community events were utilized to gather information from the public at large: 2022 & 2023 Community Days, Halloween Event, and 55+ Club Luncheon.

Public Input

3

Both a paper and online questionnaire were created to obtain as many opinions and perspectives on various parks and recreations topics. Over 2,000 people responded!!!

Key Person Interviews

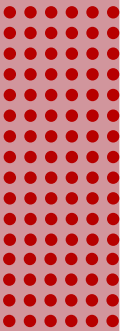
4

The Township identified various community leaders, business owners, & residents for interviews on specific topics. Fifteen one-on-one discussions with these people clarified issues for the Study Committee to further discuss.

Recommendations: A Vision for the Future

...to create a vibrant and inclusive community where the benefits of parks and recreation are accessible to all, fostering health, happiness, and creating a strong sense of belonging. We strive to be the catalyst for positive change, leading the way in transforming our community into a haven of natural beauty, active lifestyles, and unforgettable experiences.

the vision



Through innovative programs, state-of-the-art facilities, connections, and sustainable practices, we seek to inspire individuals of all ages and backgrounds to embrace the wonders of nature and explore the limitless possibilities of recreation. Our vision centers on four core principles:

- 1. Community Engagement:** We envision a community united by shared experiences, forging connections through various recreational activities. By encouraging participation, feedback, and collaboration, we will build an environment where everyone feels heard, valued, and empowered to shape the future of our parks and recreational offerings.
- 2. Preservation and Sustainability:** We are committed to being good stewards of the environment, preserving the natural beauty of our parks and green spaces for generations to come. Our sustainable practices will promote conservation, safeguard wildlife habitats, and mitigate our ecological impact, creating a harmonious balance between urban life and nature.
- 3. Health and Wellness:** Promoting physical and mental well-being is at the heart of our vision. We strive to provide accessible fitness opportunities, sports programs, and recreational activities that inspire active, healthy lifestyles, enhancing the overall quality of life for our community members.
- 4. Cultural Enrichment and Education:** We believe that parks and recreation should be platforms for cultural exchange and personal growth. By offering diverse educational programs, arts and cultural events, and recreational workshops, we aim to foster creativity, empathy, and lifelong learning.

Together, as a united community, we will realize this vision of Parks and Recreation, enriching lives, embracing nature, and creating a thriving and sustainable environment that makes our Township a truly exceptional place to live, work, and play.



In order to continue this vision, the Study Committee created three main objectives:

- 1 **Quality and Diversity in Parks and Facilities**
- 2 **Corridors of Connection and Open Space**
- 3 **Innovative Programs to Enhance the Quality of Life**

These objectives have been built upon the Township’s desire to further their parks and recreational programming and the input given by the community through the survey, one-on-one conversations with stakeholders, and ideas shared and discussions had with the public. They also align with Pennsylvania’s Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2020-2024 (SCORP). These strategies are categorized into three main priority levels: Short, Mid, and Long. The parties responsible for each strategy is identified per the Implementation Chart Key below.

IMPLEMENTATION CHART KEY

PRD	Parks and Recreation Department	K9	Canine Committee
DPW	Department of Public Works	CTAA	Cranberry Township Athletic Association
EAC	Environmental Agency Council	C	Communication Department
M	Township Manager	BOS	Board of Supervisors
P	Planning Department		



Quality & Diversity in Parks & Facilities

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES 1 - 3 YEARS

Health and
Wellness



Recreation
for All



STRATEGY 1: Develop a Master Plan for Powell Farm.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Scope of work should include staffing, maintenance, programming, funding, and partnership opportunities.
- ☐ Utilize a variety of native plantings which will provide shade, habitat, and stormwater management.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, M, P **STATUS:** In Progress

STRATEGY 2: Continue to advance the implementation of Community Park North with funding assistance through DCNR 2023 Grant award.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Begin engineering and permitting process.
- ☐ Develop phasing of implementation.
- ☐ Develop Facility Management and Operations Procedures.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, DPW **STATUS:** In Progress

STRATEGY 3: Develop a Waterpark Master Plan.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Develop a long-term vision for the future of the facility.
- ☐ Conduct a facility and building assessment.
- ☐ Develop Public Engagement strategies.
- ☐ Review management and operation procedures.
- ☐ Evaluate the need for an indoor aquatic component.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, DPW **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 4: Identify remaining areas in all the parks and facilities which are not ADA compliant including parking, pavilions, playgrounds, sports fields, and amenities.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Develop a strategy to become compliant with the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all parks.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, DPW **STATUS:** In Progress

STRATEGY 5: Evaluate the need and opportunity for a skate park.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Identify potential locations based on skate park size, budget, parking, and visibility.
- ☐ Discuss amenity design with community members and local skate park advocates.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 6: Establish playground equipment and fitness equipment maintenance and replacement plans.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Implement playground audit recommendations and establish replacement funding strategies.
- ☐ Prioritize removal based on safety standards. Prioritize replacement based on available funding.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, DPW **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 7: Identify areas of shade near existing and proposed amenities.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Utilize a variety of native plantings which will provide shade, habitat, and stormwater management.
- ☐ Evaluate opportunities to utilize stormwater funding to meet MS4 goals and stormwater management best practices.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, EAC **STATUS:** In Progress

STRATEGY 8: Continue partnerships and open communications with the Athletic Associations and School District.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Annually review priorities and establish improvements and funding opportunities for desired improvements.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, CTAA **STATUS:** Ongoing

MID TERM STRATEGIES

4 - 6 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Continue to evaluate dog park and dog friendly trail opportunities and enhancements.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Continue to work with K9 group on an annual basis to identify challenges and improvements based on use.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, K9 **STATUS:** Ongoing

STRATEGY 2: Implement the Community Park concept plan recommendations.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Prioritize and determine phasing of recommendations.
- ☐ Take steps to find funding to put plan into action.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, DPW **STATUS:** In Progress

LONG TERM STRATEGIES

7 - 10 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Evaluate potential new park and open space locations.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Open space in the northeast region of the Township should be analyzed in order to provide amenities for the residents in that area.

RESPONSIBILITY: M, P, BOS **STATUS:** In Progress



Corridors of Connections & Open Spaces

Technology



Funding &
Economic
Development



Sustainable
Systems



Recreation
for All



Health and
Wellness



SHORT TERM STRATEGIES 1 - 3 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Continue to build out the cycling/pedestrian network through trails, paths, and sidewalks to create safe, attractive, and convenient connections between and among destinations and neighborhoods.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Evaluate whether such improvements can be made part of the paving projects and/or the Township road maintenance program.
- ☐ Communicate and collaborate with neighboring municipalities, county, and trail advocates on the benefits of regional planning and connectivity.

RESPONSIBILITY: P

STATUS: Ongoing

NOTE: This will happen with the SS4A Grant in 2024.

STRATEGY 2: Continue to develop partnerships with neighboring communities, businesses, and private owners to strengthen funding opportunities through County, DCNR, and DCED funding sources.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Build out a cycling and pedestrian network that could connect with neighboring communities.

RESPONSIBILITY: P

STATUS: Ongoing



MID TERM STRATEGIES

4 - 6 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Continue to invest in infrastructure improvements that enhance the public realm and pedestrian experience (lighting, street furniture, signage, landscaping, sidewalks, etc.).

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Identify funding, sponsorships, and locations.

RESPONSIBILITY: M, P **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 2: Promote health and wellness through trails and connections.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Develop additional trail walks at Township parks.
- ☐ Partner with PA DCNR and the Walk with a Doc program.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** Ongoing

STRATEGY 3: Enhance wayfinding and signage throughout the Township with the guidance of the UPMC Sportsplex at Graham Park Signage Plan.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Determine funding strategies and locations of new signage.

RESPONSIBILITY: P **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 4: Increase mobile connectivity in outdoors and trails.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Stay current with new apps, data, equipment which are constantly changing and evolving.
- ☐ Develop Wi-Fi connections in strategic locations to enrich their experiences and comfort levels.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** Forthcoming

LONG TERM STRATEGIES

7 - 10 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Explore the feasibility of partnering with a Land Trust to purchase, own, and protect open space.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Identify steep slopes, forested areas, and open space as development continues in the Northeast region.
- ☐ Link land owners with land conservation options.

RESPONSIBILITY: M, P, BOS **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 2: Increase connections from neighborhoods to Township parks.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Seek ways to partner with landowners for the expansion of trails and greenway systems.

RESPONSIBILITY: P **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 3: Establish and grow a green corridor network.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Acquire land and trail easements for the development of trail and the expansion of greenways.
- ☐ Ensure that Township ordinances consistently and effectively implement the vision.
- ☐ Create linear passive recreation space.

RESPONSIBILITY: P, M, BOS **STATUS:** Forthcoming

Innovative Programs to Enhance the Quality of Life

SHORT TERM STRATEGIES 1 - 3 YEARS

Health and
Wellness



Recreation
for All



STRATEGY 1: Complete an Arts, Culture, and Recreation Center Feasibility Study.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Scope of work should include potential locations, amenities, staffing, operations, revenue, expenses and funding opportunities.
- ☐ Determine indoor space opportunities and needs related to Arts, Culture, Youth Services (Daycare, Before and After School Services), and Aquatics.
- ☐ Match facility programming with needs of the community.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, M, P **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 2: Build and expand signature events and programming. with connections to new Park and Recreation position.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Consider additional investments that are unique to Cranberry Township.
- ☐ Continue to monitor Statewide and National trends.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD, M, BOS **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 3: Develop a Parks and Recreation Operations Plan.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Ensure sufficient capacity of the Parks and Recreation staff is maintained as programming increases.
- ☐ Evaluate program success by providing program participants the opportunity to share ideas through program evaluations.
- ☐ Identify desired evaluation criteria and develop a framework to improve efficiency and intended cost recovery level.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** In Progress

STRATEGY 4: Continue to evaluate trends in facilities such as youth sports, adult sports, and passive recreation.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Determine ongoing needs and keep pace with the current demand.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 5: Evaluate current amenities and storage for programming summer camp.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Consider expansion of existing facilities, additional restrooms, and court activities.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** Forthcoming

STRATEGY 6: Continue to support the 55+ Club and Senior Center to coordinate programming.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Develop programming expectations and desired additional amenities and staff requirements.
- ☐ Continue to work with program leaders to identify opportunities to offer a range of programs and activities to encourage active and independent living.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD **STATUS:** Forthcoming



MID TERM STRATEGIES

4 - 6 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Increase nature-oriented programs such as hiking, environmental education, sustainable gardening, birding, and astronomy.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Support efforts provided by other regional recreation providers which increases opportunities for economic benefits.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD

STATUS: Forthcoming

STRATEGY 2: Increase inclusive and diverse programming to provide opportunities for all members of the community.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Develop new recreation programming that meet community needs for existing residents and enhance community's desirability for prospective residents.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD

STATUS: Forthcoming

STRATEGY 3: Develop opportunities for young professionals to mingle and develop relationships.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Provide opportunities for pick up sports, food truck events, and health and wellness programs designed for young professionals.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD

STATUS: Forthcoming

STRATEGY 4: Provide additional teen opportunities: hang out spaces, E-sports, dances, volunteer opportunities, outdoor adventure.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Partner with youth and school groups to gain a better understanding of successful programming opportunities.
- ☐ Promote the economic benefits of Parks and Recreation in regards to deterring crime, positive development of youth, healthy family bonds, and a sense of community.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD

STATUS: Forthcoming

LONG TERM STRATEGIES

7 - 10 YEARS

STRATEGY 1: Use communications to reinforce and identify an image for the Parks and Recreation Department.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ Refresh branding and identity as new facilities and programming develop.
- ☐ Facilitate pop-up events that cultivate energy and test demand for additional programs.
- ☐ Take the pulse of the community to reinsure the direction and benefit of new programs.

RESPONSIBILITY: PRD

STATUS: Forthcoming



Success and Implementation

The first step is to adopt the Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Update. The second step is to implement the Plan.

Cranberry is gifted with great parks and open spaces that provide diverse opportunities for recreation and relaxation. It also has natural infrastructure to support a healthy and resilient community, as well as an already vibrant park and recreation department. The implementation of this Plan will continue to grow the Township's exceptional parks and recreation system.

The Township has set its sights high, but it isn't alone. Resources are continually available for funding, best practice guidance, and benchmarking. As the plan is re-evaluated on an annual basis, the **National Recreation and Park Association's** (NRPA) yearly reviews, continual surveys, and insights into the current and future trends should be examined as well. NRPA's resources will bring guidance to how this Plan should be implemented as trends and demographics shift.

Where do Cranberry's Objectives and Steps of Action stand in light of Parks and Recreation in America? As the Township continues to grow, so do the needs of its residents and neighbors. Parks and recreation is continual. It evolves. It changes as communities grow and demographics shift. Re-evaluation, conversations, and an eye on current trends should be an action Cranberry takes as it implements each Step of Action in this Plan. This will take Cranberry's Parks and Recreation from great...to amazing!

INFOGRAPHIC

2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review Key Findings

Residents per park:

2,287



Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents:

10.8



Residents per playground:

3,759



Full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) per 10,000 residents:

8.9



Percentage of full-time staff dedicated to operations/maintenance:

46%



Operating expenditures per capita:

\$94.77



Revenue to operating expenditures:

24.6%





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- Gyms
- Other Fitness
- Outdoor Recreation
- Private/Non-Profit Program Providers
- Sports

Key	Name	Type
1	Snap Fitness	Gyms
2	Fit Body Boot Camp	Gyms
3	Mand Fitness	Gyms
4	Beyond Parallel Fitness Community	Other Fitness
5	The Exercise Coach	Other Fitness
6	FutbolFit	Other Fitness
7	D3 Training North Pittsburgh	Other Fitness
8	Fitness Station	Other Fitness
9	Disrupt Edge Training Academy	Other Fitness
10	Rose E. Schneider Family YMCA	Private/Non-Profit Program Providers
11	Crossroads Church	Private/Non-Profit Program Providers
12	Christ Bible Church	Private/Non-Profit Program Providers
13	X-Cal Gymnastics	Sports
14	Urban Air Adventure Park	Sports
15	Premier Martial Arts	Sports
16	Star Styled Dance Center	Sports
17	Fun Fore All Family Fun Park	Sports
18	Coerver United Soccer Camps	Sports
19	UPMC Lemieux Sports Complex	Sports
20	Rockstar Cheer Pittsburgh	Sports
21	Young Brothers Tae Kwon-Do	Sports
22	Sifu Slaughter's Kung Fu and Tai Chi	Sports
23	Public Lands	Outdoor Recreation

