

SOUTH HEIDELBERG TOWNSHIP

COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION, PARK, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT FACTS

Location:	South Heidelberg Township, Berks County
Project Overview:	Development of a comprehensive recreation, park, and open space plan for the Township to identify needs and implementation strategies.
Total Project Cost:	\$80,000
DCNR C2P2 Request:	\$40,000. A 50% local match is required (\$40,000).
CFA Greenways, Trails, Recreation Request:	\$68,000. A 15% local match is required (\$12,000).



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Much of South Heidelberg Township's (Township) parks and recreation areas were developed without the benefit of a comprehensive plan, which has led to a disjointed park system inadequate to meet current and future needs of the citizens in the community. The Township's fields, courts, and open spaces are spread disproportionately throughout the Township with many of its parks maintaining their original facilities. In some cases the spaces are unusable, while some parks lack certain facilities and others have too many. ***This Project's scope will include a study of the Township's existing recreation, park, and open space facilities and development of a plan for short-term and long-term improvement priorities and cohesive development strategies.***

PARKS & REC COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BACKGROUND

The Township completed a comprehensive park and recreation plan in 1993, but the Township has changed dramatically since then and the plan no longer fits the needs of the community. The Township's population has grown by more than 3,000 residents since 1993, and numerous residential developments have been established throughout the Township, each with their own recreational spaces. This has resulted in a disjointed park system with varying levels of adequacy. In addition, recreational improvements have not kept pace with this growth, and some parks have antiquated equipment and facilities in need of improvements.

COMMUNITY NEED

The Township provides use of its parks and open space to various youth and high school sports organizations, such as Conrad Weiser Youth Soccer, Conrad Weiser Youth Baseball, Conrad Weiser High School Football, and Conrad Weiser High School Soccer. During the summer months, the Township provides a playground program for children. Children ages five (5) to fifteen (15) can participate in an eight (8) week program of organized activities led by an adult playground program coordinator and eight (8) college-aged playground leaders. The program annually has over one hundred fifty (150) registered children who participate. The Township conducts

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several recreational events at its open space and parks, including Annual Easter Event/Easter Egg Hunt, Annual Christmas/Holiday Lights and Festival, Halloween Trunk or Treat and Movie Night, and three (3) Outdoor Movie Nights per year.

While Township-provided programs and activities are exceptional, the parks in which they take place require improvements. ***South Mountain Park does not have basketball courts, lacks adequate parking, and has a pavilion that is undersized for its summer playground program. Heidelberg Run East has several small parks located haphazardly between or in the back of homes, none of which are adequate for the residents to use. In addition, the Township has large open spaces being underutilized in the Heidelberg Run East housing development.***

To address these needs, the Township desires to advance a comprehensive planning initiative to:

- (1) Determine the recreational needs of the community through a public participation process;
- (2) Inventory existing park, recreation, and open space facilities;
- (3) Define short-term and long-term priorities and evaluate costs; and
- (4) Devise an implementation plan for future development.

STATE PROGRAM FUNDING REQUESTS

The Township is applying to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) for funding, as well as the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) Greenways, Trails, Recreation Program (GTRP). Applications have been submitted to both programs, as the grant programs are very competitive.

DCNR C2P2:

The Project's total cost is estimated at \$80,000. DCNR C2P2 requires a 50 percent local match. As such, the Township is requesting \$40,000 in DCNR C2P2 grant funds to be used towards the Project's completion.

CFA GTRP:

The Project's total cost is estimated at \$80,000. CFA GTRP requires a 15 percent local match. As such, the Township is requesting \$68,000 in CFA GTRP grant funds to be used towards the Project's completion.