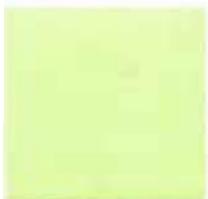


Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan



2006



- Introduction
- Background
 - The Process
 - The Vision
 - The Blueprint For Success
- Moving Forward

• Introduction

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan represents a year-long self evaluation undertaken by the City's leadership, community groups, and the public as a way to effectively and proactively enhance the Allentown extensive parks and recreation system. This document summarizes data collection, public involvement and planning activities. It describes the analysis and conclusion of these summaries and makes specific recommendations. Chapter 2 – Allentown Tomorrow – The Vision for the Future, outlines a comprehensive vision for how the City's parks and recreation system should meet the needs of the citizens in the 21st Century. The remaining portions of the Master Plan document provide detailed analysis of the system as it exists today and presents a comprehensive series of projects, policies and organizational strategies which will reshape the City's parks and recreation system in way that achieves the desired vision.

• Background

The City of Allentown is the third largest city in Pennsylvania after Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Located in Lehigh County, Allentown is 18 square miles in size. The City is located close to major highways that position Allentown as a convenient place to live and work. The Pennsylvania Turnpike's Northeast Extension, Interstate 78, Routes 33, 22 and 309 make commuting to the Pocono's, New York City, northern New Jersey, Harrisburg, Bucks County and Philadelphia possible.

Allentown is a community of neighborhoods. The citizens take great pride in the neighborhoods in which they live. The demographics of the City and its neighborhoods are changing dramatically, with an aging and diversifying population. An example of this diversification is exhibited by the fact that the City has one of the highest percentages of Latino populations in the Commonwealth.

Some key facts about Allentown that influence the planning of community facilities such as parks and recreation include:

- **The City personifies Pennsylvania's "Brain Drain" with the loss of about 2.3 percent of citizens in the 25 to 44 age cohort.** This age group is essential in growing an economically strong community. At the same time this population was shrinking, the children and youth population increased by about four percent. A surprising finding was that the age group of 65 years plus also decreased in the 1990's. The trend elsewhere is towards a growing percentage of the population aged 65 or older.
- **Households with single people, single heads of households and single parents have increased.** Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of married-couple householders in Allentown decreased from 45.4 percent to 39.4 percent. In more than 1,000 households, grandparents are the primary caregiver for the children and youth in the household. Householders living alone increased from 31.7 percent to 33.1 percent. The percentage of non-family households increased from 38.1 percent to 40.2 percent.

- **Income levels are lower than elsewhere in Lehigh County and Pennsylvania.** In fact, the per capita income in Allentown is only $\frac{3}{4}$ that of the County.
- **The sheer number of children and youth, over 15,000 people, mandates that the City develop a program plan to reach this targeted demographic.** Over 35 percent spend more than 35 percent of their income on housing rental or mortgage.

The City of Allentown has 1432.9 acres of dedicated parkland for active and passive recreation, including a 147.83 acre municipal golf course. In addition, the Allentown school district has 119.28 acres of land, much of which has recreation facilities. These combined areas represent approximately 13.2% of the City's total landmass of 11,735 acres.



One of many public visioning sessions held during the planning process

The Process

Through an allocation of funding allocated by the Trexler Trust, the City undertook a comprehensive evaluation of its parks and recreation resources within the City. Acknowledging the significant demographic trends, combined with the

Images for Allentown's Park and Recreation System

These image goals represent the benchmark against which all projects, policies, initiatives, etc. should be evaluated. The City should strive to elevate a great park system to a world class urban park system for a city its size.

- Parks that are cleaner and safer than ever with well-maintained facilities.
- Public perception that recognizes the cleanliness and high caliber of park maintenance.
- The riverfront as the hub of activity in the community through a "mixed use development within a park".
- Parks with full recreation programming through a variety of providers for sports, the arts, special events, fitness, and social and family gatherings.
- Playgrounds that are modern, creative, interesting, beautiful, and serve people of various ages not just kids.
- Recreation programs that anticipate and respond to changing demographic characteristics of cultural diversity, an active aging population and a renaissance of urban living as the Baby Boomers retire and rediscover cities as desirable places in which to live.
- A city-wide pathway system that connects people to facilities, parks, schools, the downtown, the river, and neighborhoods as well as to connections in adjoining communities that will take them for long distances elsewhere in the region and beyond.
- Wild natural areas protected and interpreted to cultivate stewardship of the environment.

- A public transportation system that incorporates recreation as a primary destination.
- Stable investment in operating the park and recreation system.
- Public private partnerships that involve a wide range of corporate supporters who invest in the system in recognition of the importance of parks and recreation as an essential public service.
- A work force that experiences growth in their own human development and potential as essential contributors to the innovation, commitment and improvement of Allentown's parks and recreation system.
- An underlying pervasive theme of excitement, enthusiasm and belief that parks and recreation is a crucial factor in creating a thriving community of the 21st century.



Trexler Park sets the standard of quality for Allentown's entire Parks and Recreation System.



City's wealth of parks and recreation facilities, the intent was to determine where the City stood in meeting the community's current needs and to position the parks and recreation system to best meet future trends. The City of Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the planning process that was employed to develop the Plan, utilized a comprehensive approach and evaluated the system's real strengths and weaknesses, developed a vision for the future and outlined a series of "big picture" and site specific recommendations to move the City towards achieving the overall vision.

The Vision

Allentown is a "city in a park". The park, recreation and open space system greatly contributes to the city's vitality. People live, work, do business, and play in the safe, clean and attractive environment of a vibrant, thriving community. The City must continue to build on these strengths through the promotion of a few, yet strategic, core values.

The Core Values of Allentown's Parks and Recreation System:

- Promote the physical, mental, and social well being of the people who live, work and visit here.
- Weave its rich cultural diversity into the fabric of community life through recreational opportunities and events.
- Establish safe public spaces and fosters positive public perception about park safety.
- Set the bar for environmental stewardship within the Lehigh Valley.

Through an extensive public visioning process, a vision statement based on a set of "image" goals for the system was established.

A Blueprint for Success

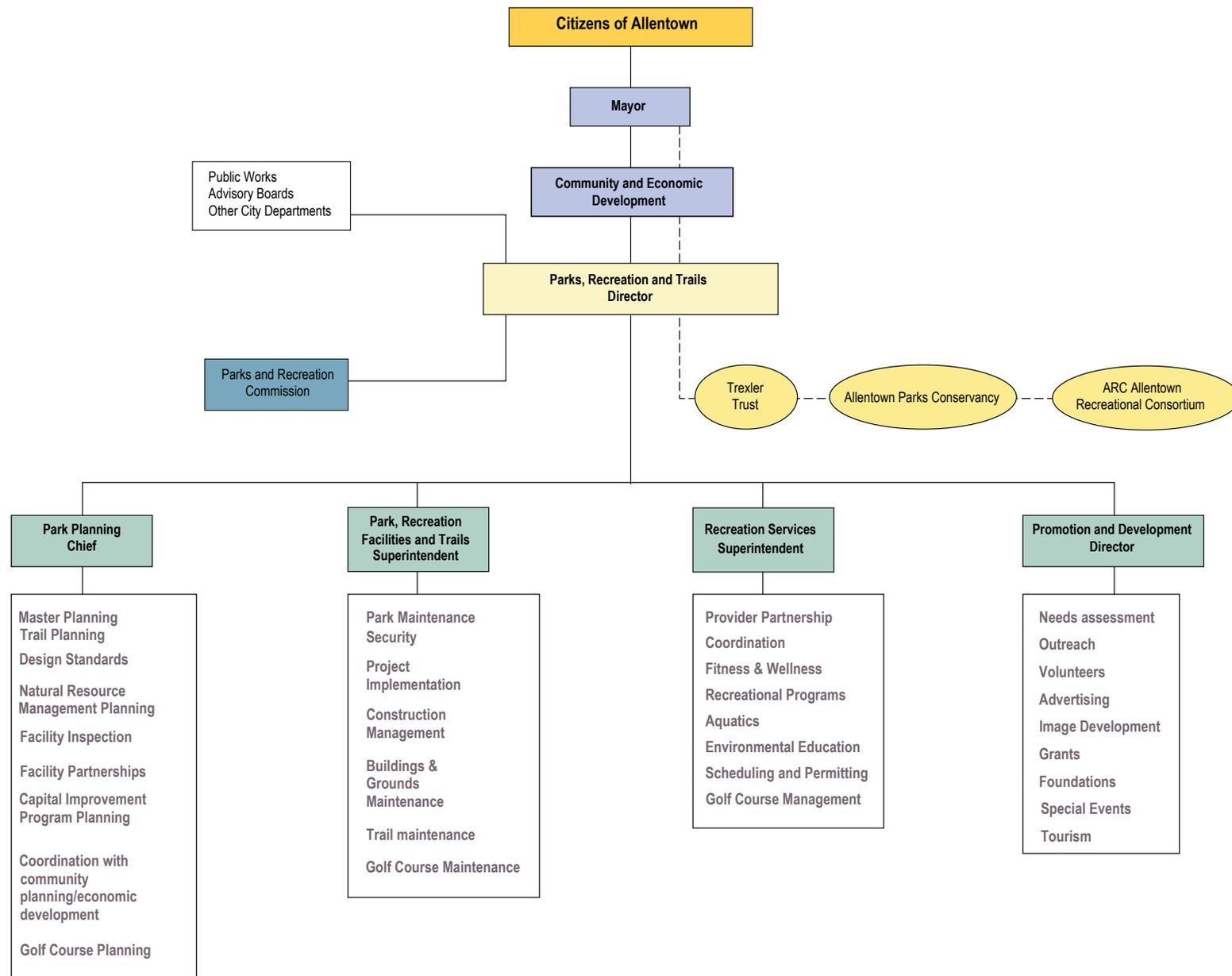
The Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified a list of the major policy/organizational actions and physical project-

oriented initiatives which form a roadmap or "blueprint" for success.

Policy/Administrative Recommendations

1. Create one centralized department for parks, recreation and trails. This would consist of merging the Parks Department and the Recreation Department to create the Allentown Parks, Recreation and Trails Department (APRTD). The Department should be a cabinet level department.
2. Institute the Allentown Parks Conservancy through the Trexler Trust. This would be similar to entities that exist for urban parks system throughout the United States including the Parks Council in New York City or the Friends of Fairmont Park in Philadelphia.
3. Establish the Parks, Recreation and Trails Department director's position based upon an updates skill set to match the goals of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These skills would include leadership, skill in articulating the vision for Allentown as a premiere urban parks & recreation system, experience managing a large urban park and recreation system, degree in parks and recreation or a related field, certification as a Certified Park and Recreation Professional, expertise in both service and park planning, delivery, evaluation, partnership development, financial management, and strategic planning. Adopt the recommended organizational structure.
4. Institute an Allentown Parks, Recreation and Trail Commission. Include people on this board that are influential and who have specific expertise in areas needed to advance the vision and goals of Allentown's Park and Recreation Plan. Expertise should include advertising and promotion, resource management and conservation, economic development, community planning, fundraising and partnerships, recreation, parks and so on. Membership should reflect the diverse community of Allentown by race, gender, age, neighborhood, and physical ability. Establish the

City of Allentown Parks, Recreation, and Trails Department Organizational Chart (proposed)



mission, goals, roles, responsibilities and ground rules for the Commission.

5. Reorganize the combined department according to the new organizational structure.
6. Organize a partnerships organization with other service providers. Work on a yearlong program, Allentown Recreation Partners, in collaboration to determine best practices for meeting changing community needs through parks and recreation.
7. Develop a program management plan in conjunction with the partnerships project.
8. Develop a maintenance management plan.
9. Develop marketing and outreach plan.
10. Work out a ten year program with the Trexler Trust regarding financing, projects and priorities identified in the Master Plan.

Physical Project Initiatives

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommends a series of initiatives that capitalize on the great opportunities or trends within the City and the Lehigh Valley region.

1. **Create a City and Regional Trail and Greenway Network** • “All Trails Lead to Allentown” The City lies in a strategic location within the region to place it at the center of a major regional trail network. In several places, including inside and outside the City’s limits, trails exist or are being considered. A comprehensive network of trails linking the City to the region and vice versa, could serve as a major stimulus for regional cooperation and partnership and provide for unlimited recreation and multi-modal opportunities. The creation of a regional network could be the pilot for future regional partnerships on various parks and recreational endeavors. The goal of this initiative is a

comprehensive and highly interconnected trail network that links as many of the City’s parks together as possible.



The Lehigh Canal is an important linear resource for the City and Region.

2. **Develop Parks in the North and East Neighborhoods** • “Filling in the Blanks” Although the City has a wealth of parkland, there are several neighborhoods, many that are densely populated, that are deficient in reasonably accessible park and recreation resources. The City should strive for all residents in the City to have reasonable access to parkland within a 10-minute walk from their residence. Existing resources, such as school sites should be evaluated for enhancements that create more park-like settings.



Schools serve as important recreation nodes, especially in the denser neighborhoods.



3. **Expand Active Recreation and Alternative Sports Resources and Facilities** • “Allentown ~ The Sports Trend Setter” Allentown has an excellent reputation for being a center for major sports activities, especially through events such as Sports Fest. However, the City lacks the types of facilities to truly support this regional reputation and to serve basic local needs. The City should strive to meet the needs for all standard active sports and create a setting for new and cutting-edge activities to flourish.
4. **Continue to Upgrade and Diversify the Existing Parks to Fulfill Neighborhood and Niche Needs** • “Fine Tune a Great System” Maintaining a park system’s continued effectiveness relies on the understanding that park systems are dynamic. As the needs of a neighborhood and the broader community change based on shifts in demographics, parks need to be modified and re-thought to adapt and maintain their relevance. The City should promote a balance of active and passive recreation in all parks and meet both the needs of the neighborhood and in some manner contribute to the “bigger picture” of the overall system. Each park should contribute something unique to the overall park system.
5. **Better Utilize the Waterfront** • “Tapping the Hidden Resource” The Lehigh River Waterfront including the Lehigh Landing Area, Buck Boyle Park, Canal Park, the future America on Wheels Museum as well as numerous other untapped resources, represent a major opportunity for the City to reconnect its population with the river as an environmental, social and economic resource. The City should expanding opportunities to create an exciting and vibrant waterfront “place” that serves the City’s residents, acts as a regional attraction, and is a model for waterfront revitalization nationally, for City’s of comparable size.
6. **Promote Downtown Parks, Plazas, Spaces and Walkways – Making the Happening Place** • “The Downtown Core” With all of the recent, pending and planned redevelopment in the Downtown area, the timing is opportune for a focus on the creation of additional public spaces and

interconnected courtyards, green-alleys and walkways. Several recent downtown redevelopment projects focus on infill housing for seniors and artists’ lofts, etc. With this influx of residential uses, the need for diverse public open spaces and green spaces will increase dramatically. The City should support the efforts to make Downtown Allentown a 24-hour place through the creation of diverse public spaces and utilize public design elements to define Downtown’s image and therefore enhance the marketability and creation of its branded image.



The America on Wheels Museum will dramatically transform the public’s perception of the waterfront as a community resource

7. **Create an Attraction-Oriented Indoor Parks and Recreation Component to the City’s Park System** • “Create new Centers for Interactions that Enhance Community Pride and Economic Vitality. The ability of the City to meet the needs for indoor recreation facilities is very limited. In order to provide a truly balanced system, facilities for diverse activities from specific active recreation activities such as basketball to flexible indoor spaces for community groups are needed. Such a facility or facilities should serve both immediate local needs and as a regional attraction. Diverse activities, such as environmental education, commu-

nity health and therapy, and active sports programs should be juxtaposed in order to promote community interaction. The City should participate and promote regional efforts to create a model indoor recreation system including a destination-based indoor community center with active and passive activities and educational programs.



Midway Terrace , with some modern infrastructure improvements could be more utilized as a setting for some of the City's great park events.

8. **Expand and Diversify the Type and Location of the City's Great Events – “Invite the People to the Great Places of the City”.** The City's reputation for hosting major regional events is unparalleled. However, too many of the activities are placed in the same limited locations within the City. This exerts excessive impacts on a few parks and their adjacent neighborhoods. The influx of regional visitors for such events does provide the opportunity to continually highlight the City's various park resources, especially the waterfront area. The City should undertake a Strategic Event Program Plan to create new events and to evaluate how to modify the park system to best provide for existing and potential events. Such an effort should be linked with Policy Initiative #7 focused on developing a marketing and outreach plan.

• Moving Forward

This Master Plan focuses on transforming the parks and recreation from a system rooted in the past to a great urban park system of the 21st century. The City of Allentown must build accountability into parks and recreation management, tying resources to targeted outcomes and improvements in the quality of life in Allentown. The City alone can not fully achieve success. Partnerships are essential. While the recommendations present what the City is going to do to achieve a successful parks and recreation system of the future, the questions of how and when the City will implement the recommendations, is equally important. Therefore, the City should form an Implementation Committee, with representatives from the study committee formed to develop this Master Plan, along with key City department representatives, elected officials, the Trexler Trust and existing and proposed organizational groups. This Committee should be tasked with attacking the list of recommendations outlined in this documents and establishing accountability targets for accomplishment.





- Introduction
- Community Profile
 - Population Trends
 - Age
 - Target groups
 - Family Structure
 - Income
 - Education
 - Race

• Introduction

The City of Allentown is the third largest city in Pennsylvania after Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Located in Lehigh County, Allentown is 18 square miles in size. The City is located close to major highways that position Allentown as a convenient place to live and work. The Pennsylvania Turnpike's Northeast Extension, Interstate 78, Routes 33, 22 and 309 make commuting to the Poconos, New York City, northern New Jersey, Harrisburg, Bucks County and Philadelphia possible.

The Lehigh River, the Little Lehigh, Cedar, Trout and Jordan Creeks are important waterways that are the foundation of Allentown's linear park system. South Mountain, in the southern part of the City, is the most prominent feature of Allentown's natural landscape.

Allentown is a community of neighborhoods. The citizens take great pride in the neighborhoods in which they live. The city's demographics are changing dramatically with an aging and diversifying population.

1 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

**Table 1
State, County, and City Population
1980-2000**

	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1980- 2000
Pennsylvania	11,864,904	11,881,643	12,281,054	3.5%
Lehigh County	272,349	291,130	312,090	14.6%
Allentown	103,758	105,090	106,632	2.8%

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census.

**Table 2
Allentown Percent of Population by Age Group**

Age Group	Allentown 1990 Population %	Allentown 2000 Population %	Lehigh County 2000 %	PA 2000 %
Under 5	7.2	7.1	6.0	5.9
5-19	16.9*	20.8	20.5	20.6
20-44	40.3*	37.7	34.7	18.8
45-64	17.7	19.1	23.0	29.7
65+	16.9	15.1	15.8	15.6
Median Age	33.8	34.5	38.3	38.0

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census. *Extrapolated because of differences in census reporting.

• Community Profile

Population Trends

According to the U.S. Census of 2000, Allentown's population was 106,632 as shown in Table 1. Growth from 1990 to 2000 was 2.8 percent. The major change expected for Allentown is the aging of its citizenry as the baby boomers head into retirement and life expectancy continues to increase. This will require an adjustment in recreation planning with a focus on clients of all ages not just youth.

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission forecasts Allentown's population to stabilize at about 106,652 in 2010 to 106,673 in 2030.

Age

As interests change throughout one's lifetime, it is important to look at the age groupings in order to target services. Table 2 represents population by major age group changes between 1990 and 2000 as well as comparisons with Lehigh County and Pennsylvania.

The U.S. Census Bureau considers a change of 2.5 percent significant. Between 1990, the age cohort of 5 to 19 increased by 23 percent. The 20-44 year age group decreased by 2.6 percent. This age cohort is an important group because it represents the segment of the population that is crucial to a thriving economy. The loss of people in this age group mirrors the "brain-drain", a problem under serious consideration at the state level. Surprisingly, the population percentage 65 years and older actually decreased by 1.8 percent. This is an unusual census finding. Usually this segment of the population is increasing.

The City's median age of 33.8 is five years younger than the median age of both Pennsylvania 38 and Lehigh County at 38.3.

Different Generations - Different Views of the World

Longer lives have produced several generations with different views of the world: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Gen X and Gen Y. Their formative experiences have molded specific preferences and beliefs among these different age groups.

Each group has its own attitudes, sensibilities, hot buttons and cultural expectations. Clarifying the needs and desires of all generations is essential in public service. Finding out how to reach and involve different generations of people in everything from programs and services to funding in parks and recreation in a positive manner is complex. For example, one generation alone, Gen Y, has three segments: adults, teens and children.

For program planning and public outreach, understanding potential client groups is essential. Figure 1 represents information about various generations along with implications for program and service planning and in devising outreach strategies to implement this plan.

Table 3
Detailed Population Groups by Age Group
2000

Area	Age Group												Median Age	
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60-64	65-74	75-84		85+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
PA	5.9	6.7	7.0	6.9	6.1	12.7	15.9	13.9	5.0	4.2	7.9	5.8	1.9	38.0
Lehigh County	6.0	6.9	7.1	6.5	5.6	12.7	16.4	14.0	5.0	4.0	7.8	5.8	2.2	37.4
Allentown	7.1	7.2	6.8	6.8	7.9	14.8	15.0	11.6	4.0	3.5	7.1	5.9	2.1	43.3

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census

Figure 1 - Generations¹ and Implications²

¹ Paul, Pamela, September 2001. *Getting Inside Gen Y, American Demographics, Volume 23(9)* pp 42-49.

² Smith, J. Walker and Clurman, Ann. 1997. *Rocking the Ages: the Yankelovich Report on Generational Marketing.* (New York, NY: Harper Business).

Generations¹ and Implications²

Traditionalists – Born before 1946. Affected by the Great Depression. Hard work. Self-sacrifice. Respect for authority and institutions. Earned their material comforts the good old-fashioned way. Reaching this group: Stress frugality & their right to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Use endorsements of well-known people with wisdom of experience.

Baby Boomers – Born 1946 – 1960. Born into prosperity and affluence. “Permissive” upbringing. Feel special and privileged. Challenge authority. Champion the unconventional. Focused on self-fulfillment. Strong sense of entitlement and self-worth. Reaching this group: Stress family and family activity. Supply products and services that make boomers feel like young active winners.

Gen X – Born 1960-1980. Lived with social and economic obstacles that are harder than those faced by Traditionalists and did not exist for Boomers. Technology and media opened them to wider choices in lifestyle than previous generations. Sophisticated and savvy about the world. Skeptical. Reaching this group: Use candor, humor, and pragmatic approaches.

Gen Y (Echo Boomers) – Born 1980-2000. Group so large and complex that it is viewed as three distinct groups: adulthood, teens and tweens. Multi-cultural diversity. Broader definition of family. Affected by violence and scandal: 9/11, Columbine, Iraq, terrorism, and political scandals. More watchful and careful about their personal safety. Mistrustful of the media. Information Age influence: shorter attention spans, boredom and over-stimulation. Reaching this group: Use technology: videos, computers, web. Capitalize on hope and optimism. Inclusive multi-cultural programs and services. Participative planning enabling people to be heard through pulling together.

Allentown's Target Groups

Allentown can use population figures to target age groups. Table 4 presents the raw number of citizens by age group. One of the prime target groups is the age group 5 to 14. This group has 15,000 children and youth suggesting that this is the target audience for departmental programs serving this age group. The family life stage age group of 35 to 54 has about 28,400 people suggesting that family oriented programming is important. About 16,000 people are 65 and older.

Table 4
Allentown's 2000 Population
Age Group Raw Numbers

Age Group	Number
Under 5 Years	7,586
5-14 Years	15,011
15-19 Years	7,301
20-34 Years	23,186
35-54 Years	28,403
55-64 Years	8,004
65- 84 Years	13,913
85 Years+	2,228

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census

Family Structure

One of the most marked changes in Pennsylvania's population in recent years has been the alteration of the family structure. Households have experienced a decline in married couples and households with children. Households with single people, single heads of households and single parents have increased. Between 1990 and 2000, the:

- Percentage of married-couple householders in Allentown decreased from 45.4 percent to 39.4 percent.
- Householders living alone increased from 31.7 percent to 33.1 percent.
- Percentage of non-family households increased from 38.1 percent to 40.2 percent.

The U.S. Census Bureau began to track the number of grandparents as caregivers. In Allentown, 1,022 households indicated that the grandparents were responsible for grandchildren. The proportion of households with all working parents is significant. About 62 percent of households with children under the age of six, in Allentown, have all parents working. Most women work: About 60 percent of the employable population is working; 55 percent of females over 16 years are in the work force.

Income

The City has lower income levels than the state and Lehigh County. Table 5 shows the income comparisons for the City, the County and the State. The City's poverty rate is double that of Lehigh County; Allentown has half of all persons living in poverty in Lehigh County. The City's per capita income is only 75% of that of Lehigh County.

Table 5
Median Per Capita Income 1999

Area	Household	% Change 1990-1999	Family	Per-Capita	% Poverty
Pennsylvania	\$40,106	37.9	\$49,184	\$20,880	11.0%
Lehigh County	43,449	23.5	53,147	21,897	9.3
Allentown	32,016	23.2	37,356	16,282	18.5

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census

Education

Educational attainment is the strongest indicator of an individual's income potential, attitudes and spending habits. The trend nationally is toward higher levels of education. Overall Allentown has a comparatively lower proportion of citizens with high school diplomas, bachelor's degrees, or advanced and professional degrees. Table 6 represents the educational attainment levels for the city, county and the state. It is important to note that in 1990, about 21 percent of the Allentown population over 25 years of age were college graduates which is higher than the total of bachelor's degrees and advanced/professional degrees combined (15.4%) in 2000.

Table 6			
Educational Attainment of People 25 Years and Older 2000			
	High School Graduate + %	Bachelor's Degree %	Advanced or Professional Degree %
Pennsylvania	38.1	14.0	8.4
Lehigh County	81.1	14.6	8.7
Allentown	72.7	10.1	5.3

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census

Race

The face of Allentown is changing as shown in Table 7. The community is becoming more diversified. People of color represent about 27 percent of the population, about doubling the 1990 proportion of 14 percent of the community. The Latino population more than doubled from 11.7 percent to 24.4 percent. Allentown has one of the highest percentages of Latinos in Pennsylvania.

Table 7						
Racial* Composition by Percentage of Population						
	Allentown		Lehigh County		Pennsylvania	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
	86.2%	72.5%	91.3%	87%	88.5%	85.4%
African American	5.0	7.8	2.0	3.6	9.1	10.0
Latino – of any race*	11.7	24.4	5.1	10.2	1.8	3.2
American Indian	.2	.3	.08	.4	0.1	0.1
Asian	1.3	2.3	1.2	2.4	1.1	1.8

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census

*Numbers do not total 100% because the Latino group includes all races.

Table 8			
Housing Information 2000			
	Allentown	Lehigh County	Pennsylvania
Owner Occupied %	53.0	68.8	71.3%
Renter Occupied %	47.0	31.2	28.7%
Detached single family homes %	22.8	47.8	55.9%
Median House Value	76,900	113,600	\$97,000
Median Gross Rent	\$541	\$586	\$531

Source: Penn State Data Center and U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000 Census

Housing

Table 8 shows information about housing in Allentown. Housing is an indicator of affluence. Generally those who can afford to own their own homes are more affluent than those who rent. Owner occupied housing decreased from 57 percent in 1990 to 53 percent in 2000. Housing values are lower than Lehigh County and the Commonwealth. About 32 percent of renters pay 35 percent or more of their income in rent, which is higher than the county's rate of 29 percent. Only about one in five housing units in Allentown are single family detached homes.

Demographic Analysis

The City of Allentown is becoming more diversified with about one in four residents now being a person of color. The City has one of the highest percentages of Latino populations in the Commonwealth (This has major implications for language in an area where many people speak either English or Spanish in Allentown).

The City also personifies Pennsylvania's "Brain Drain" with the loss of about 2.3 percent of citizens in the 25 to 44 age cohort. This age group is essential in increasing an economically strong community. At the same time this population was dropping off, the children and youth population increased by about four percent. A surprising finding was that the age group of 65 years plus dropped off in the 1990's. The trend elsewhere is towards a growing percentage of the population aged 65 or older.

Households with single people, single heads of households and single parents have increased. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of married-couple householders in Allentown decreased from 45.4 percent to 39.4 percent. In over 1,000 households, grandparents are the primary caregiver for the children and youth in the household. Householders living alone increased from 31.7 percent to 33.1 percent. The percentage of non-family households increased from 38.1 percent to 40.2 percent.

Income levels are lower than elsewhere in Lehigh County and Pennsylvania. In fact, the per capita income in Allentown is only 75% that of the County.

The sheer number of children and youth at over 15,000 people mandates that the city develop a program management plan to reach this targeted demographic.

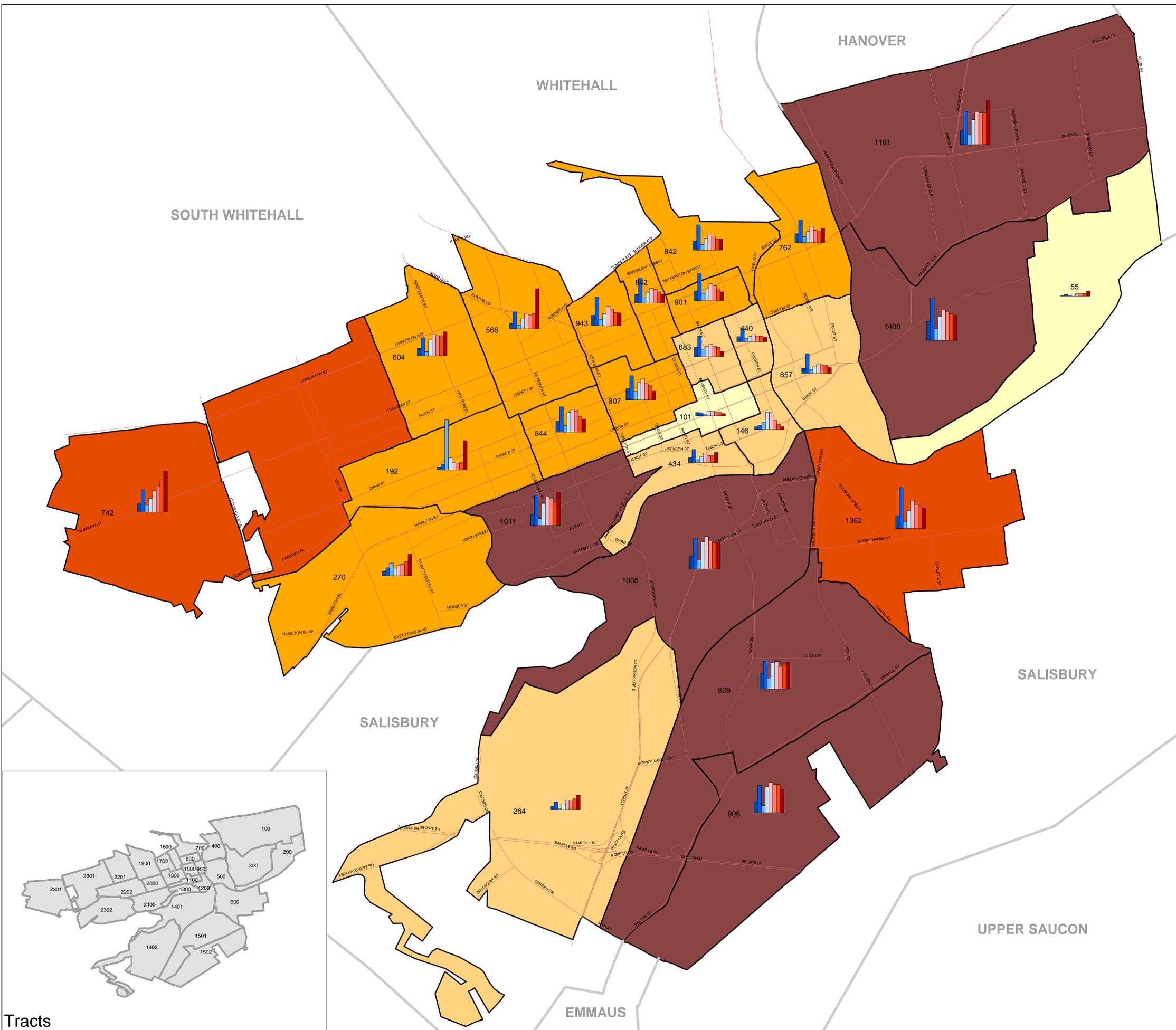
Conclusions and Recommendations

The City could consider the following:

1. Add people that represent the diverse comparison of the City's population onto the Recreation Board.
2. While setting user fees and charges, consider the significant portion of the population living at the lower income levels.
3. Develop a program management plan that is based upon number of residents within age groupings, racial diversity, language needs, and neighborhood location. Develop specific goals in terms of actual numbers/percentage of targeted age groups to be involved in city programs. The actual numbers can help city recreation staff to formulate actual program goals regarding participation. For example, 525 children ages 7 to 15 are in the summer playground program but there are over 15,000 children ages 5 to 14 living in Allentown. While many children go to programs at the YMCA, JCC, Boys/Girls Club and other places, it appears that there are children not being served.
4. Consider staffing to mirror the city population when positions become open.
5. Because Allentown is a City of neighborhoods, consider developing a program management plan that is based on a pilot project for an identified neighborhood with partnerships with other recreation providers.
6. Developing recreational need profiles on neighborhoods and by demographic classification is important for the Recreation Bureau to develop and maintain in a current condition with an eye towards trends. For example, female, Latino adolescents were identified as an underserved group in interviews and forums.

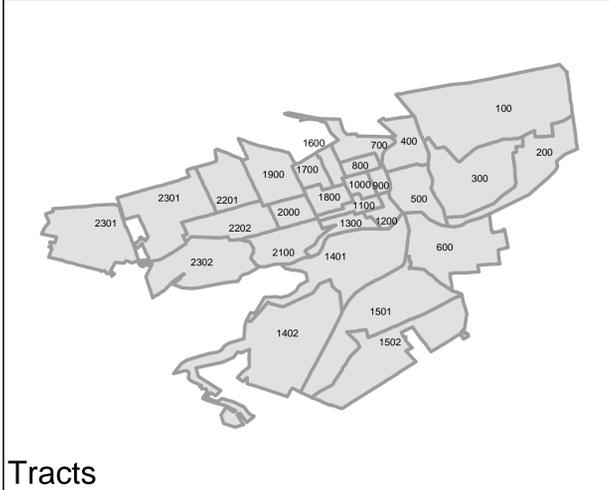
7. Use demographic information as a planning tool in the development of a program management plan.





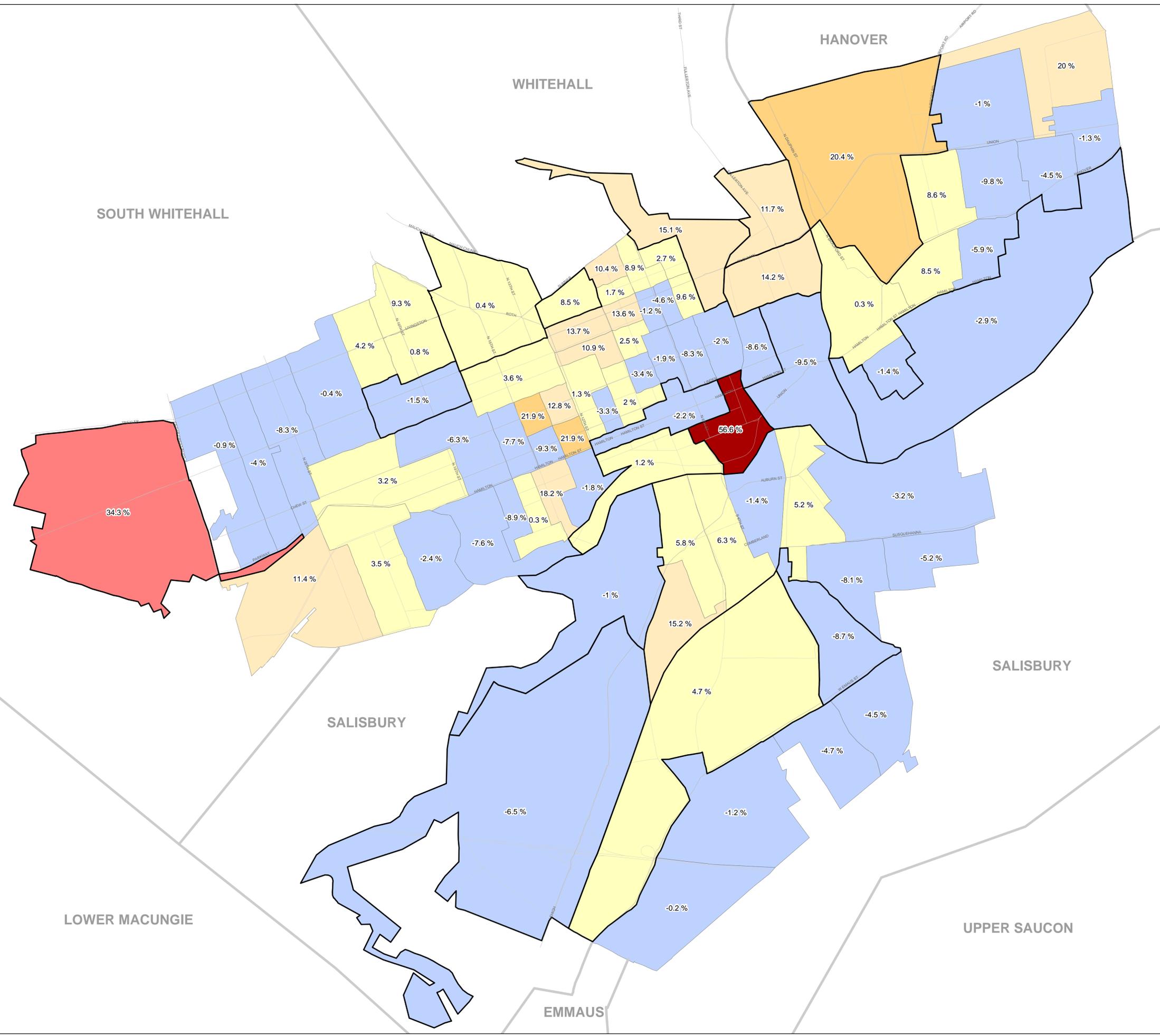
LEGEND

- Road
- Municipal Boundary
- Population by Age
 - Under 5 years
 - 5 - 17 Years
 - 18 - 21 Years
 - 22 - 29 Years
 - 30 - 39 Years
 - 40 - 49 Years
 - 50 - 64 Years
 - Over 65 Years
- Total Population
 - 589 - 1500
 - 1501 - 3000
 - 3001 - 4500
 - 4501 - 6000
 - 6001 - 7412



Population Change 1990 - 2000

(percent of blockgroup)



LEGEND

- Municipal Boundary
- Road

Population Change

- 9.8 - 0.0 %
- 0.1 - 10.0 %
- 10.1 - 20.0 %
- 20.1 - 30.0 %
- 30.1 - 40.0 %
- 40.1 - 50.0 % (None)
- 50.1 - 56.6 %

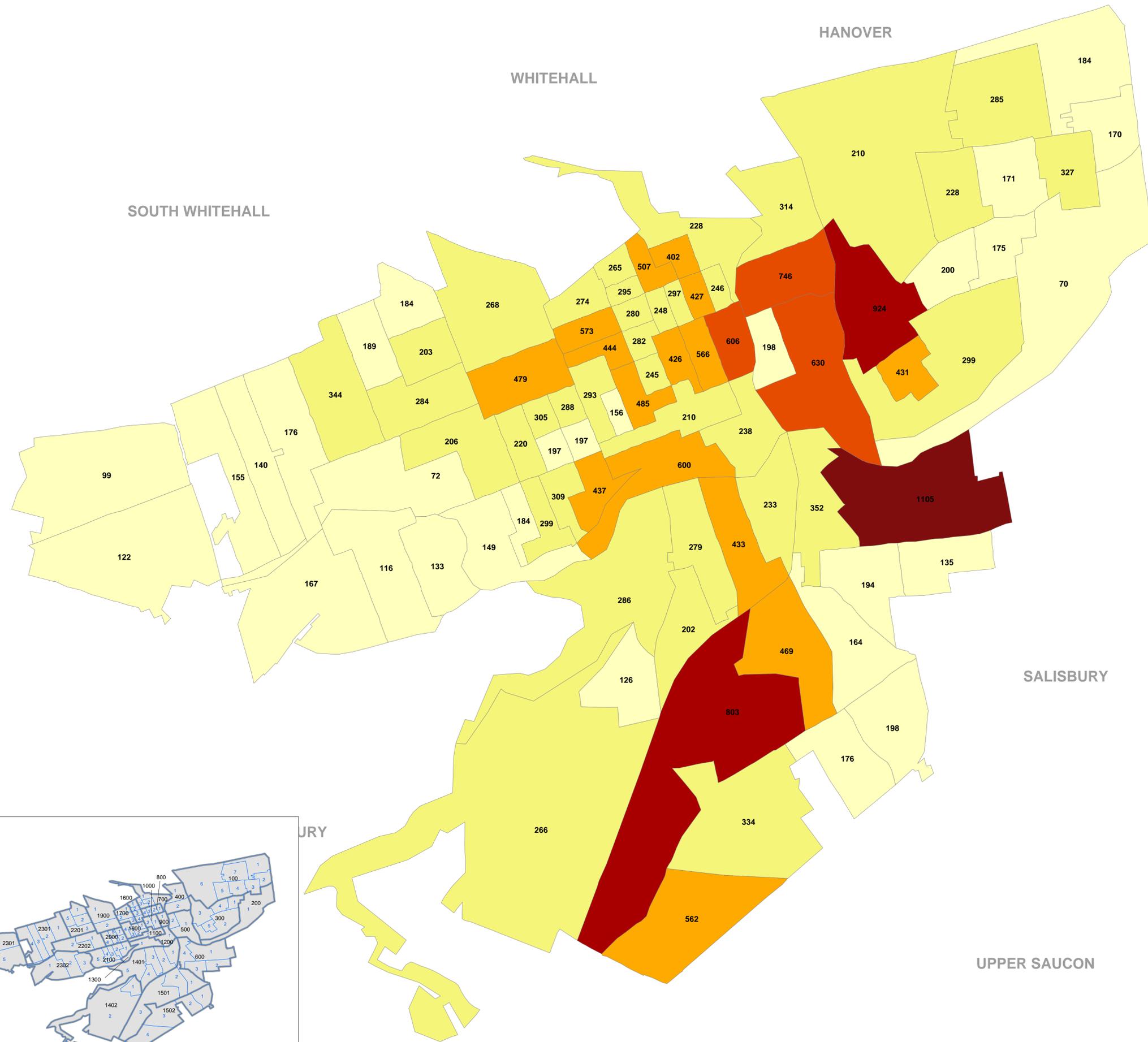
- Aggregated Block Groups
- Block Group

Due to changes in the block group boundaries, some 1990 and 2000 block groups had to be aggregated so as to compare like geographies.



C R J | A

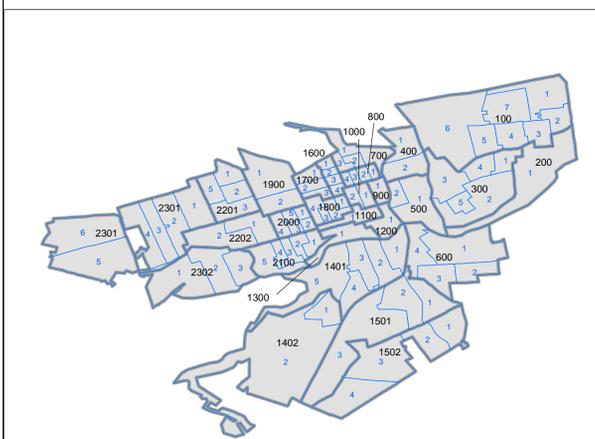
Population Under the Age of 18



LEGEND

Population Under 18

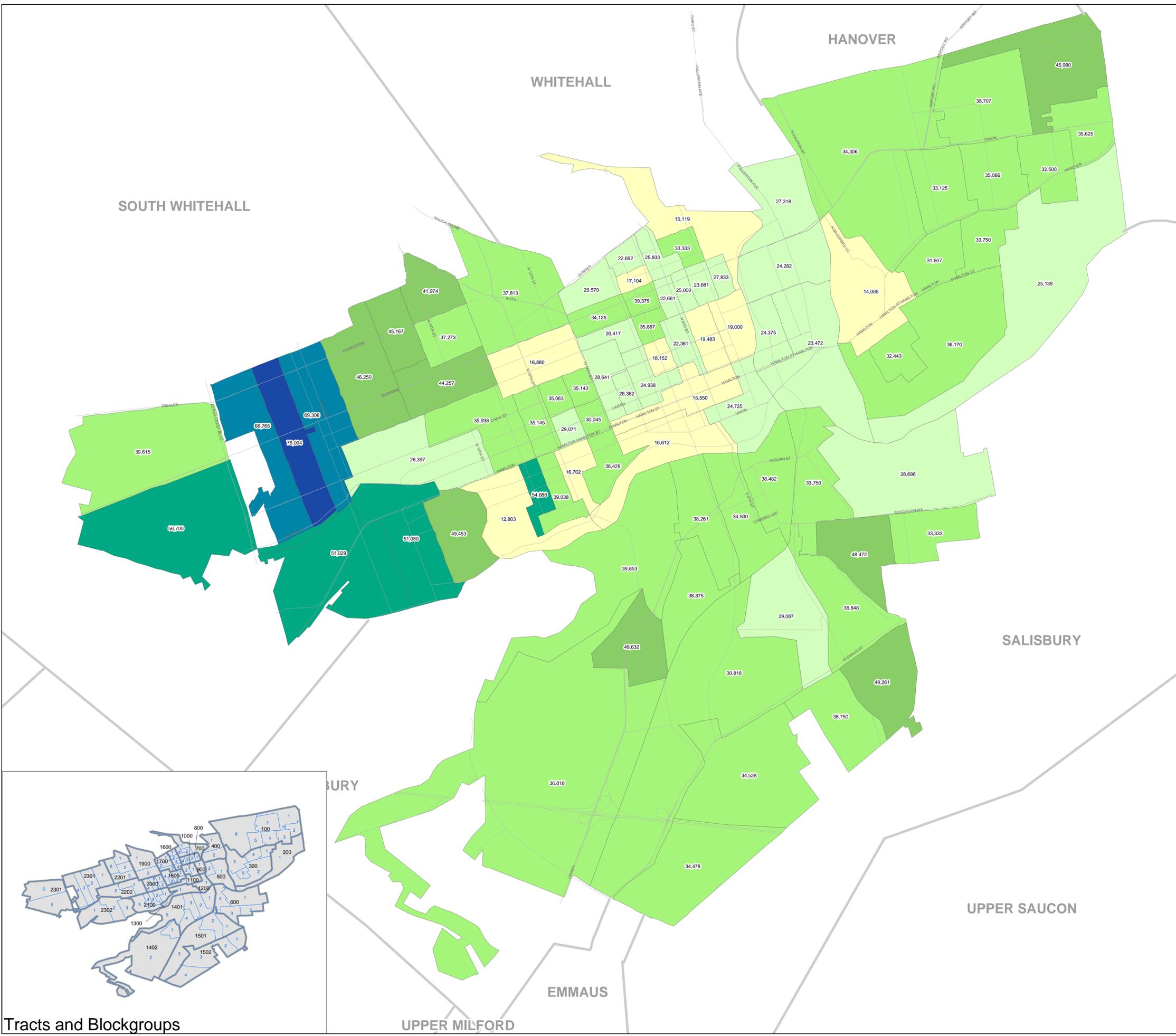
Light Yellow	70 - 200
Yellow-Green	201 - 400
Orange	401 - 600
Dark Orange	601 - 800
Red	801 - 1000
Dark Red	1001 - 1105



Tracts and Blockgroups

Median Annual Earnings per Household

The Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

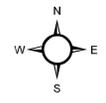


LEGEND

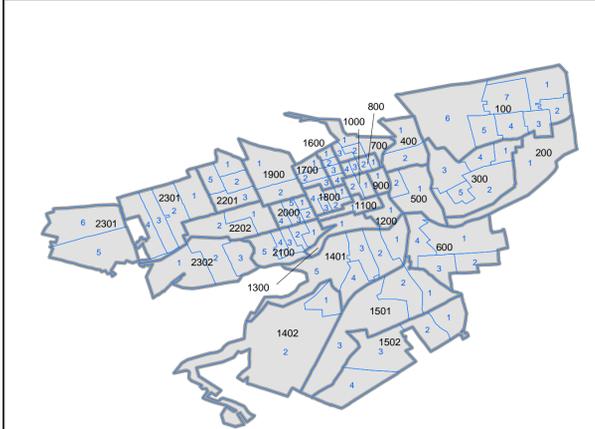
- Municipal Boundary
- Road

Median Household Income

- 12,803 - 20,000
- 20,001 - 30,000
- 30,001 - 40,000
- 40,001 - 50,000
- 50,001 - 60,000
- 60,001 - 70,000
- 70,001 - 76,094

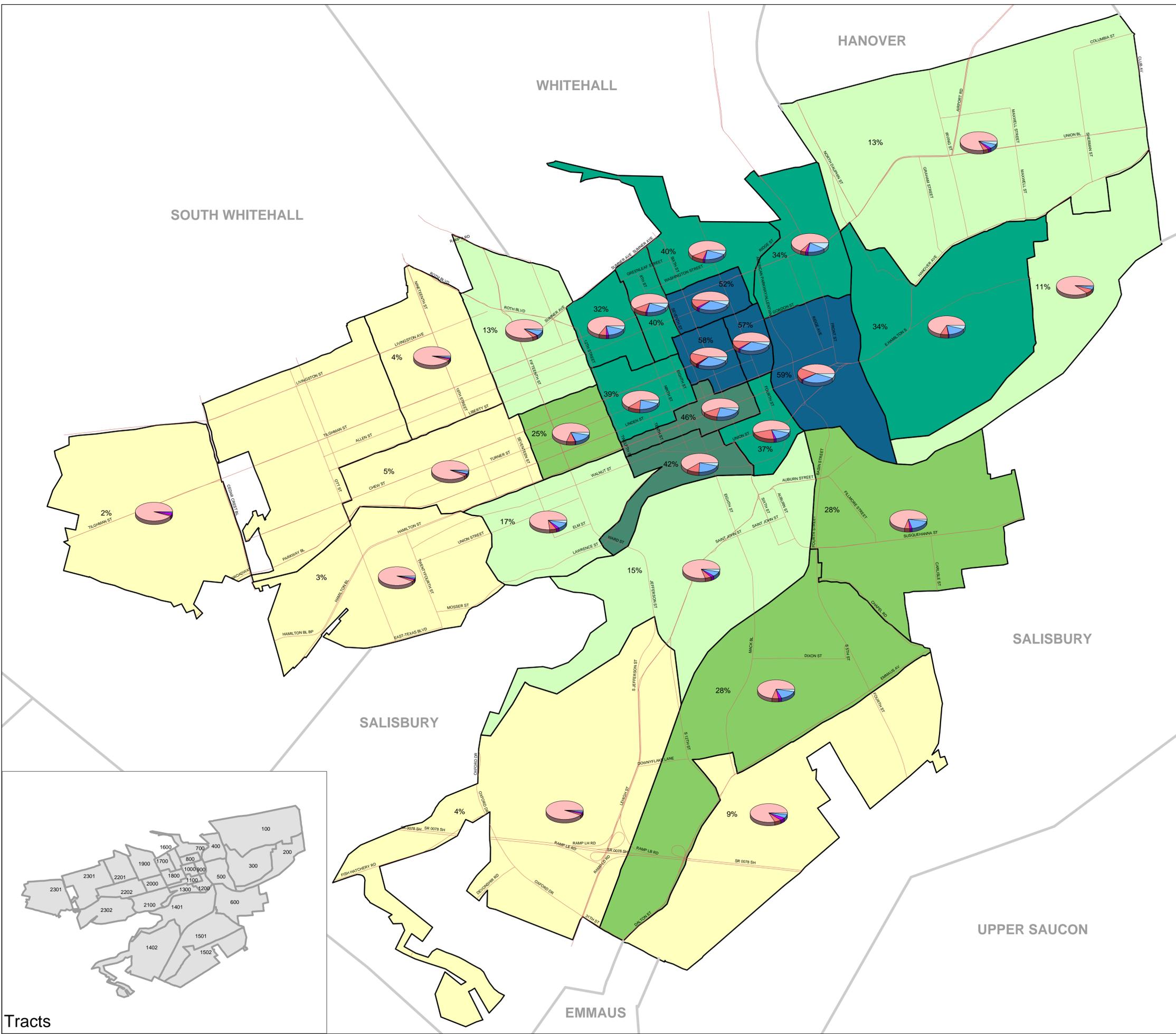


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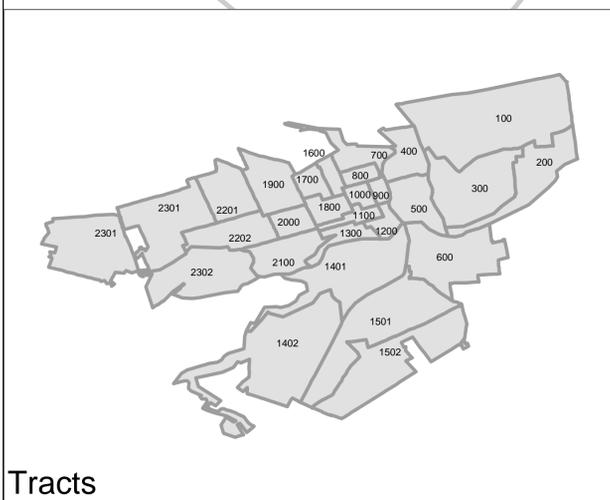
Tracts and Blockgroups

Demographics



LEGEND

- Road
- Municipal Boundary
- Race
 - White
 - Black
 - American Eskimo
 - Asian
 - Hawaiian Pacific
 - Other
 - Multi-Race
- Hispanic Population %
 - 2.00 - 10.00
 - 10.01 - 20.00
 - 20.01 - 30.00
 - 30.01 - 40.00
 - 40.01 - 50.00
 - 50.01 - 59.00





- The Vision
 - Allentown's Park and Recreation System
 - Allentown's Urban Park System
 - Images for Allentown's Park and Recreation System
- The Blueprint for Success

- The Vision

Allentown's Park and Recreation System

Allentown, Pennsylvania is a "city in a park". The park, recreation and open space system contributes to the city's vitality. People live, work, do business, and play in the safe, clean and attractive environment of a vibrant, thriving community.

Allentown's park and recreation system is a neighborhood-based system of indoor and outdoor facilities, open space, and recreation opportunities connected to the city's showcase community parks and preserved natural areas through a system of pathways, greenways and blueways. The entire system is developed and maintained through collaborative efforts among regional partners that include municipal, business, educational, social, cultural, and environmental interests. Together they have achieved a premiere system that offers a quality of life distinct to the Lehigh Valley.

2 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Allentown's urban park system:

- Promotes the physical, mental, and social well being of the people who live, work and visit here.
- Weaves its rich cultural diversity into the fabric of community life through recreational opportunities and events.
- Unites the entire system of land, the river, facilities, programs and services in a single image that personifies Allentown as a community of the 21st century rooted in its 240 year heritage.
- Establishes safe public spaces and fosters positive public perception about park safety.
- Sets the bar for environmental stewardship in the Lehigh Valley.

Images for Allentown's Park and Recreation System

- Parks: cleaner and safer than ever with well-maintained facilities.
- Public perception that recognizes the cleanliness and high caliber of park maintenance.
- The riverfront as the hub of activity in the community through a "mixed use development within a park".
- Parks with full recreation programming through a variety of providers for sports, the arts, special events, fitness, and social and family gatherings.
- Playgrounds that are modern, creative, interesting, beautiful, and serve people of various ages not just kids.
- Recreation programs that anticipate and respond to changing demographic characteristics of cultural diversity, an active aging population and a renaissance of urban living as the Baby Boomers retire and rediscover cities as desirable places in which to live.

- A city-wide pathway system that connects people to facilities, parks, schools, the downtown, the river, and neighborhoods as well as to connections in adjoining communities that will take them for long distances elsewhere in the region and beyond.
- Wild natural areas that are protected and interpreted to cultivate stewardship of the environment.
- A public transportation system that incorporates recreation as a primary mission.
- Stable investment in operating the park and recreation system.
- Public/private partnerships that involve a wide range of corporate supporters who invest in the system in recognition of the importance of parks and recreation as an essential public service.
- A work force that experiences growth in their own human development and potential as essential contributors to the innovation, commitment and improvement of Allentown's parks and recreation system.
- An underlying pervasive theme of excitement, enthusiasm and belief that parks and recreation are crucial factors in creating a thriving community of the 21st century.

• The Blueprint for Success

1. Create one centralized department for parks, recreation and trails.
 - Merge the Parks Bureau and the Recreation Bureau to create the Allentown Parks, Recreation, and Trails Department. The new Department should be a cabinet level department.

2. Institute the Allentown Parks Conservancy through the Trexler Trust similar to the Parks Council in New York City.
3. Establish the Parks, Recreation and Trails Department director's position based upon a skill set that includes leadership, skill in articulating the vision for Allentown as a premier urban parks & recreation system, experience managing a large urban park and recreation system, degree in parks and recreation or a related field, certification as a Certified Park and Recreation Professional, expertise in both service and park planning, delivery, evaluation, partnership development, financial management, and strategic planning.
4. Institute an Allentown Parks, Recreation and Trail Commission. Include people on this board who are influential and who have specific expertise in areas needed to advance the vision and goals of Allentown's Park and Recreation Plan. Expertise should include advertising and promotion, resource management and conservation, economic development, community planning, fund raising and partnerships, recreation, parks and so on. Membership should reflect the diverse community of Allentown by race, gender, age, neighborhood, and physical ability. Establish the mission, goals, roles, responsibilities and ground rules for the Commission.
5. Organize the Department according to the new organizational structure.
6. Organize a partnerships organization with other service providers. Work on a yearlong program, *Allentown Recreation Partners*, in collaboration to determine best practices for meeting changing community needs through parks and recreation.
7. Develop a program management plan in conjunction with the partnerships project.
8. Develop a maintenance management plan.
9. Develop a marketing and outreach plan.
10. Prepare a ten-year program with the Trexler Trust regarding financing, projects and priorities.





- Core Values
- Goals and Objectives
 - Plan Foundation
 - Parks and Recreation as a System
 - Parks and Recreation as Economic Development
 - Internal Coordination and Operations
 - Best Management Practices
 - Partnerships
 - Communications
 - Performance Modeling and Benchmarking

• Core Values

The following statements present the guiding principles upon which the Allentown *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* is based.

• Goals and Objectives

Plan Foundation

1. The plan will be Allentown-centric. That is, the plan will focus on the overall good of the city and the citizens, rising above individual or special interests, for the long-term invigoration of the community, as much as possible, through parks and recreation.
2. The plan will focus on taking the parks and recreation system that is rooted in the past into a great urban park system of the 21st century.

Parks and Recreation as a System

1. All of the city-owned or operated open space assets (parks, recreation facilities, historic sites, natural areas, trails and greenways) will be managed as an integrated system, that is interconnected by physical linkages, management, operational, and programmatic policies, and shared staff, facilities, and resources.
2. The municipal open space system will use trails and greenways (open space connectors) to link parks, historic sites, and natural areas (open space nodes) into a continuous network of open space resources.
3. Local and regional connectors will be encouraged to connect people to parks, schools neighborhoods, and conservation areas via public access, scenic landscape, or natural habitat corridors, to municipal and regional public open space.
4. Allentown's park and recreation system, including events, activities, and programs, will be accessible to all residents and visitors, providing reasonable accommodation through physical access as appropriate to the individual sites, physical features, mission, and landscape character, and educational and interpretive materials.

Parks and Recreation as Economic Development

1. The City will mainstream parks and recreation into overall community planning as a tool for economic revitalization.
2. Parks and recreation related projects would be viewed as essential in the revitalization of the City of Allentown.
3. The City will do ongoing research regarding the quality-of-life and economic benefits of parks and recreation in order to promote the City as a great place in which to live, work, visit and operate a business.

Internal Coordination and Operations

1. Allentown's parks include two complementary components: the facilities/programming areas and overall parklands that function as important landscapes. These systems should be managed jointly.
2. The newly formed Parks, Recreation, and Trails Department will collaborate to ensure that all sites provide the appropriate recreation and landscape interpretation opportunities. The mission of each individual site, and the facilities and programs offered, will enhance and coordinate with missions, programs, and facilities at the other sites within the system.
3. In addition, the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Department will coordinate with, and collaborate with as appropriate, the Department of Community and Economic Development, Public Works Department, and the Mayor and City Council.
4. Staff, equipment, scheduling and programming will be coordinated at a system level to ensure the most efficient use of funding, personnel, and management resources.
5. The City of Allentown's park and recreation system will be interpreted and promoted to educate the public about the city's unique resources.

Best Management Practices

1. Development of facilities and programming of activities at each park and recreation facility and trails, as well as system-wide land maintenance and management policies will be conservative of natural, scenic, and heritage features as well as recreation opportunities.
2. The City's park and recreation system will be a model for responsible land management policies in the Lehigh Valley, using and demonstrating best management practices at each facility within the system to preserve and protect the most sensitive and desirable landscape resources and recreation facilities.

3. A Maintenance Impact Statement for park development, improvement or rehabilitation will enable the City to plan for the efficient allocation of limited resources and ensure that the introduction of new facilities does not compromise existing facilities by spreading resources too thinly.

Funding

1. Sufficient capital and operating funds shall be consistently provided to safely, efficiently, and effectively manage and maintain the city park, recreation and trail system with general access to open space properties free of charge but facilities and programs fee-based as appropriate.
2. While the Trexler Trust has generously provided annual funding for the parks, the city's partnerships, sponsorships and other private investment need to be tapped.

Partnerships

The City of Allentown will seek out, encourage, and participate in partnerships with other public agencies, non-profit and educational organizations, the business and corporate community, volunteer organizations, and other individuals and groups that can provide funding, advocacy, or stewardship assistance or whose properties, programs, or activities can enhance the effectiveness of the municipal park and recreation system.

Communications

1. The mission, enhancements, and opportunities for public use of all areas of the city park and recreation system will be regularly communicated by newsletters, website, and other methods to ensure widespread awareness and understanding of the system's many economic, social, personal and environmental benefits.
2. Opportunities will be identified, encouraged, and publicized for volunteer involvement such as site improvement projects, ongoing stewardship activities, "friends" groups, fund raising, and special events.

Performance Modeling and Benchmarking

The City of Allentown will adopt the model of great urban park systems in the United States in order to achieve its own status as such. This includes setting standards and defining benchmarks for the following:

1. **Mission Statement.** Adopt a mission statement that sets forth the kind of community that can be achieved in Allentown in part through parks and recreation.
2. **Show Leadership.** Develop strong leadership to articulate the potential and importance of parks and recreation in an aggressive fashion.
3. **Listen and Respond to the Community.** Become highly responsive to community needs. Involve key stakeholders in the planning process and in undertaking projects. Honor the diversity of the community through effective programs, opportunities and facilities.
4. **Build Allentown's Park and Recreation Constituency.** Develop a base of public supporters with individuals, community organizations, business, social service organizations, the schools and other private and public organizations.
5. **Work with Others!** Cooperate fully with other community organizations and boards.
6. **Adopt a Business-Like Approach for Parks and Recreation.** Collect data, document facts and figures, use organizations for data collection, report and disseminate information to stakeholders.
7. **Implement the Plan.** Carry out the actions to be accomplished with a schedule for implementation, who will be responsible and how Allentown will get the resources to undertake the action.
8. **Establish Accountability.** Adopt practices that insure accountability of tax dollars and other resources, as well

as that document the clear benefits to the City of Allentown.

9. ***Be Action Oriented.*** Move quickly and take advantage of emerging opportunities and changing needs.





- Introduction
- Recommendations
 - Greenway Network
 - North & East Parks
 - Active & Alternate Facilities
 - Upgrade, Diversify & Fine Tune
 - The Waterfront
 - Green Core
 - The “Indoor” Component
 - Diversify Locations for Events

- Introduction

In order for Allentown to achieve the vision that it desires for its residents, a number of strategic projects should be considered. These projects are outlined in the following initiatives, each corresponding to a specific big “idea” or concept area (e.g. waterfront, trails, indoor centers, etc.). These projects provide a detailed approach for action strategies for achieving the overall goal and the community vision. However, even the most stalwart city would be challenged to accomplish all of the projects, if each item were pursued simultaneously. Therefore, the most significant action strategies, those focused on getting projects initiated with the hope that some will advance faster than others towards completion, have been presented.

In order to facilitate the understanding of the Plan language, a Glossary of Acronyms is listed in Appendix A.

• Recommendations

A. City and Regional Trail and Greenway Network – “All Trails Lead to Allentown”

The City is strategically located within the region to place it at the center of a major regional trail network. In several places, including inside and outside the City’s limits, trails exist or are being considered. A comprehensive network of trails linking the City to the region and vice versa, could serve as a major stimulus for regional cooperation and partnership and provide for unlimited recreation and multi-modal opportunities. The creation of a regional network could be the pilot for future regional partnerships on various parks and recreational endeavors. Reference **Proposed County Greenway Diagram** in the maps portion of this Chapter.

Goal: Create a comprehensive and highly interconnected trail network that links as many of the City’s parks together as possible.

Objective #1: Provide the highest degree of accessibility to every City park and physically inter-connect the parks as much as possible.

Policy: City street improvements and new land development projects should be designed in a manner to ensure the maximum level of interconnectivity through sidewalks, trails, bike-ways, bike lanes and other physical connections.

Action Strategies

- **Create a comprehensive trail map for the City and the region** – The City has a wealth of existing trails, from the Little Lehigh Parkway to Lehigh Canal Park, as well as pathways in many of the smaller neighborhood parks. It is unlikely, however, that a majority of the public is familiar with all of the trails that exist within the City. A simple, yet comprehensive up-to-date, map would serve as a valuable resource for all and likely promote users to visit new parks within the system, not just those with which they are most familiar. This effort would also identify all of the “missing links” in the existing trail system.

- **Prioritize the construction of new trail linkages within the City** – These projects could be advanced immediately but should also be viewed as regional projects to help aid the initial success and importance of an organized “Trail Coalition.” A list of potential projects has been identified in Chapter 5: Parks Assessments and Recommendations. Several examples include creating trails that would connect Canal Park to Keck Park to Reservoir Park and then continue east to Bethlehem; connect Union Terrace Park to Cedar Beach Park with a block-long link; and connect Fountain Park to the waterfront area with trails through the former incinerator site.

Methods, Tools, and References

- Capitalize on City community volunteers interested in trails and walking paths to collect the needed data.
- Utilize the City’s GIS digital mapping resources to create an inventory of trails.

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, Trexler Foundation, PENNDOT Transportation Enhancements Program, The Wildlands Conservancy, FHWA and CMAQ Grants

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006
(form Coalition and apply for grants)

Objective #2: Connect the City’s parks, trails and natural resources to similar resources in the region and beyond. Reference **Regional Resources Diagram** in the maps portion of this Chapter.

Policy: The City should work in concert with regional initiatives to form multi-municipal greenways and trails.

Action Strategies

- *Form a Regional Trail Coalition which at the minimum would include as many of the surrounding municipalities as possible* – This effort could be jointly sponsored by the City, the County, and the Wildlands Conservancy. Representatives from the regional walking and bicycle groups should be included in the composition of the Coalition. A regional entity, greater than the City alone, will contribute to drawing regional participants and better position the initiative for eligibility for state and federal funding for planning, design and construction.
- *Partner with regional entities, especially Lehigh County, to develop a regional greenways plan* – Focusing on the major water corridors, a greenway land and water trail, as well as linear environmental protection corridors, could be created which tie natural resource spines to recreation facilities and ultimately foster potential positive economic development impacts.



Methods, Tools and References

- Capitalize on regional community volunteers interested in trails and walking paths to collect the needed data.
- Utilize the City GIS digital mapping resources to create an inventory of trails.

Partners and Funding Sources

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, Wildlands Conservancy, Delaware and Lehigh Canal Heritage Park

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006 (form Coalition and apply for grants)

B. Parks in the North and East Neighborhoods – “Filling in the Blanks”

Although the City has a wealth of parkland, there are several neighborhoods, many that are densely populated, that are deficient in reasonably accessible park and recreation resources. Reference **Parks per Neighborhood Diagram** and **Park Service Area Diagram** in the maps portion of this Chapter.

Goal: *All residents in the City should have parkland within a 10-minute walk from their residence.*

Objective #1: *Infill the voids in the City’s park system to ensure it serves all of the City’s population.*

Policy: *The opportunity to add new parkland in strategic locations to complete the City’s distribution of parks to its residents should be considered.*

Action Strategies

- *Identify acquisition opportunities that may exist now or that may be possible in the future within the North End neighborhood* – This neighborhood is deficient in parkland, especially when considering the high density of residential development in the North End and the limited number of existing parklands. This neighborhood is essentially only served by Stevens Park and the Old Fairgrounds Playground in the core of the neighborhood, and Jordan Park near the very northern fringe. The area west of 7th Street and north of Tilghman should be studied.
- *Identify acquisition opportunities that may exist now or that may be possible in the future within the East Side community* – This neighborhood, especially at its extreme

eastern end, is in need of additional park space. The Allentown State Hospital site represents an opportunity to create new active recreation fields. Specifically, a small portion of the rear area of the site could be partitioned off from the rest of the complex and be designed to accommodate two or three soccer fields. This area could be accessed by the adjacent neighborhood streets and linked to Keck, Reservoir and Canal Parks via a new trail along the ridge line above the Lehigh River.

Methods, Tools and References

- Perform a field inventory of parcels within the North End neighborhood to identify possible sites for a new neighborhood park. Blighted, abandoned or under-utilized properties should be inventoried.
- Initiate a dialogue with the State Hospital to determine the possibility of creating a lease or purchase agreement for the undeveloped portion of land in the rear of the State Hospital Complex.
- Utilize the City's GIS digital mapping resources to create a database of the inventoried properties.

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, Trexler Foundation, Private Foundations

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2008 - 2010

Objective #2: Utilize and enhance school land to serve as neighborhood parkland when not being utilized for school activities – especially in the neighborhoods that are most underserved by existing parkland. (School Owned Facilities Service Area Map).

Policy: The City should work with the Allentown School District to develop a formal agreement for the utilization of school property to enhance park and recreation opportunities.

Action Strategies

- **Trexler Middle and Sheridan Elementary Schools should be considered as models for a pilot joint management partnership for school/neighborhood parks** – Both of these schools are located in neighborhoods that are in need of additional park lands. Trexler School's larger site is almost campus-like and represents an opportunity to create more of a park-like setting with potentially new active recreation facilities. Sheridan School is in a dense neighborhood with limited green space. Through public visioning exercises, school-age children specifically mentioned that the school grounds should be "greener" and have more things for pre-teen and early teen aged kids, not just playground equipment.

Methods, Tools and References

- Initiate a dialogue between the City and the School District regarding management partnerships on strategic school sites. This is especially important as the School District is currently undertaking its own Facility Master Plan.

Partners and Funding Sources

The Allentown School District, DCNR, Trexler Foundation, Private Foundations, Corporate Sponsors/Partnerships

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2008 - 2010

C. Expand Active Recreation and Alternative Sports Resources and Facilities – "Allentown ~ The Sports Trend-Setter"

Allentown has an excellent reputation for being a center for major sports activities, especially through events such as Sports Fest. The City, however, lacks all of the types of facilities needed to truly meet this regional reputation and to serve some basic local needs.

Goal: Meet the needs for all standard active sports and create a setting for new and cutting-edge activities to flourish.

Objective #1: Develop competition-grade soccer facilities in the City.

Policy: A strategy should be developed to create at least five competition grade soccer fields within the City's limits.

Action Strategies

- **Evaluate parcels along the waterfront that may have other development limitations for the creation of soccer fields** – The potential brownfields properties near the waterfront, especially adjacent to the sewer treatment plant should be studied for the creation of at least one soccer field along with other support recreation uses.
- **Evaluate large parcels in the City that may have other development limitations for the creation of at least two soccer fields per site** – The State Hospital Complex may have the potential for fulfilling some of the need for soccer fields. The rear portion of the site should be studied for the creation of three new soccer fields.
- **At least one of the existing ballfields located in Union Terrace Park should be converted into a permanent soccer field** – The existing field should be upgraded and converted into a soccer-only facility.

Methods, Tools and References

- The US Soccer Foundation www.ussoccerfoundation.org

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, PADGS (State Hospital), Trexler Foundation, Private Foundations, Soccer Associations,

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006 - 2007

Policy: A regional destination-oriented skate park facility should be developed in the City, preferably in conjunction with other alternative sports-oriented recreation facilities.

Action Strategies

- **Undertake a site feasibility study for a skate park** – A site or a list of suitable sites should be assembled for consideration. The area adjacent to the City's sewer treatment plant and other under utilized sites along the waterfront area should be considered.
- **Explore private-public partnerships to develop and operate a skate park facility** – Many municipalities have formed partnerships with non-profit and for-profit organizations to operate and maintain such a facility. This scenario may address potential liability issues that may exist with the City's operations of such a facility.



Objective #2: Develop a large-scale skate park.

Methods, Tools and References

- Boston's Big Dig Skate Park www.skateparks.com

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, Trexler Foundation, Private Foundations, Local Skate Clubs

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2008 - 2010

D. Continue to Upgrade and Diversify the Existing Parks to Fulfill Neighborhood and Niche Needs – “Fine Tune a Great System”

Maintaining a park system's continued effectiveness relies on the understanding that park systems are dynamic. As the needs of a neighborhood and the broader community change based on shifts in demographics, parks need to be modified and re-thought to adapt and maintain their relevance.

Goal: *All of the parks in the City have a balance of active and passive recreation and meet both the needs of the neighborhood and in some manner contribute to the “bigger picture” of the overall system. Each park contributes something unique to the overall park system.*

Objective #1: Continue to upgrade each park through regular capital improvements and subtle adjustments to each park's programming of facilities.

Policy: Maintaining existing parks should be treated as the highest priority over creating new parks. As new facilities are needed, existing facilities will be evaluated for current effectiveness.

Action Strategies

- See Chapter 5: Park Assessment and Recommendations for individual park evaluations and recommendations
- Update annual Capital Improvement Plan to implement individual park upgrades – Proposed improvements

should be prioritized and linked to constantly updated 10 year CIP program.

- **Projects should be evaluated for their potential for funding from grants and other outside sources and other improvements should linked to larger projects** – New projects which are the most likely to be funded should be advanced and utilized to upgrade parks that require otherwise typically un-fundable improvements.
- **A mechanism for organized and funded special interest groups that desire to fund the development of specialized facilities should be created** – When special interests groups approach the City to support existing facilities or to fund new facilities, there should be a specific project qualification and evaluation process. This process should determine the eligibility of the organization to meet certain minimum standards, the validity and need for the project, and long term capacity to support the proposed facility.

Methods, Tools and References

The Philadelphia Park Alliance www.philaparks.org

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, Trexler Foundation, Wildlands Conservancy, Private Foundations, Local Special Interest Groups/Clubs

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2008 - 2015

Objective #2: Continue to upgrade and improve existing pool facilities per the recommendations identified in Appendix C of this document.

Policy: Maintain pool facilities to meet current safety standards and consider improvements which expand their economic viability.

Action Strategies

- **Initiate a detailed record keeping method for tracking daily users and special user groups** – Having detailed information on daily user counts, age groups, user satisfaction,

needs, etc., would greatly aid the City when making decision regarding improvements and changes to policies.

- **Consider improvements which expand the potential to rent facilities to special groups during off-peak times and evenings** – Making some strategic improvements, such as introducing lighting and other special event supportive facilities, could create new opportunities to generate revenue which could greatly improve the economic viability of the pools.
- **Program long term facility improvements in a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan** – Proposed improvements should be prioritized and linked to an annually updated 10 year CIP program.

Methods, Tools and References

- Pennsylvania Department of Health, Public Bathing Place Manual www.dsf.health.state.pa.us/health
- The National Pool and Spa Institute www.nspi.org
- National Recreation and Parks Society – Aquatic Division www.nrpa.org

Partners and Funding Sources

Trexler Foundation, DCNR, corporate and private foundation (including site specific sponsorships)

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006-2008

Objective #3: Develop a park focused on the needs of dog owners in an area within walking distance of the downtown.

Policy: A park oriented towards the needs of dog owners and located in order to serve the denser residential areas, especially those under development in the downtown, should be developed.

Action Strategies

- **Undertake a site feasibility study for a park focused on urban dog owners** – A site close to downtown such as the eastern portion of Fountain Park, east of Lehigh Street, or on the incinerator site, should be considered. The park should be designed in a manner that meets the needs of dog owners, is safely delineated from adjacent parkland, and is two acres or less in size. The park’s design should not hinder the larger trail network of the City or limit park inter-connectivity. Maybe the incinerator site.
- **Develop a formal relationship with a “Dog - Friends of the Parks” type of organization** – Such an organization should be tasked with the responsibility of monitoring utilization, safety and cleanliness of such a park.

Methods, Tools and References

The Dog Park
www.thedogpark.com

Partners and Funding Sources

Private Dog Park Groups

Priority Level: Medium to Low

Time Frame: 2010+

E. The Waterfront –“Tapping the Hidden Resource”

The Lehigh River Waterfront including the Lehigh Landing Area, Buck Boyle Park, Canal Park, the future America on Wheels Museum as well as numerous other untapped resources along Jordan Creek and the Little Lehigh River, represent a major opportunity for the City to reconnect its population with the river as an environmental, social and economic resource. Reference **Waterfront Schematic Plan Diagram** in the maps portion of this Chapter.

Goal: Create an exciting and vibrant waterfront “place” that serves the City’s residents, acts as a regional attraction, and is a

model for waterfront revitalization nationally for a city the size of Allentown.

Objective #1: Restore and redevelop the waterfront in a high-quality and cohesive manner.

Policy: Consider new development within the overall context of creating a comprehensive and functionally cohesive waterfront development. A master plan which identifies boundaries and evaluates the maximum potential build-out, parcel-by-parcel, should be developed. Currently, it appears that development is occurring in a piece-meal manner, with no overall vision for what could be achieved or how all of the development could link together-both physically and economically.

Action Strategies

- **Form a Waterfront Coalition to assist in the undertaking of a comprehensive planning initiative** - A group of key stakeholders should be formed, including landowners, special interest groups, City staff, etc., to begin a visioning and fund raising strategy. This initiative could be undertaken as part of a partnership between the City, regional interest groups, and a new oversight entity such as a Parks Conservancy.
- **Oversee a Comprehensive Waterfront Master Planning Process** – The City Planning Bureau, in conjunction with other city and regional entities, should embark on a master plan to identify waterfront opportunities and to direct growth in a manner that capitalizes on the parks and recreation assets of the area. A master planning consultant with primary expertise in waterfront master planning should be retained to undertake this effort. A significant part of the master planning process should focus on real estate economics and determine viable market sectors, especially market-rate loft housing, for redevelopment of large structures and new development on abandoned post-industrial land.
- **Identify local and state funding sources to support the creation of a master plan** – The size and scale of the waterfront, including both the Lehigh River and Jordan Creek waterfronts, requires a thorough evaluation of land hold-

ings, market conditions, parks and recreation connection opportunities, and other inter-related site elements. Funding for such an effort could be obtained jointly between DCNR, as a new parks and recreation initiative, and DCED as a major economic development stimulus project in the City. Other cities in the state, such as Reading in Berks County, are currently employing a similar strategy for reinvestment of its waterfront.

- **Employ a public involvement strategy as part of the master planning “visioning” process** – In order to address issues, and to gain public support and ensure that any new development meshes with existing neighborhood fabric, a series of public meetings and visioning session should be held.
- **Undertake a marketing and branding study to begin building a marketable identity around the waterfront** – The waterfront needs both a physical image and psychological image. Although it may take several years for a physical transformation to occur, the psychological branding of the place can begin through a careful marketing and promotion campaign. Creating a strong sense of place for the waterfront through a branding effort will be helpful in attracting investment and regional events. By creating another venue for regional events within the City, it will help to relieve the over-utilization pressures that currently exist at Cedar Beach Park.

Methods, Tools, and References

- **The Waterfront Center**, a non-profit education and urban planning organization, was formed in 1981 in the belief that waterfronts – where the land meets the ocean, bay, lake, river or canal – are unique, finite resources. Like the cities they help define, urban waterfronts are dynamic places, undergoing profound change. Waterfronts often represent the best opportunity for community enhancement and enrichment. www.waterfrontcenter.org
- **The National Park Service** – Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor www.nps.gov/dele.
- **The City of Reading – RiverPlace Project** www.riverplacepa.com

- *The City of Philadelphia – Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan for the North Delaware Riverfront* www.philaplan-ning.org/plans/ndr/ndrsum.html

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, DCED, DEP, Trexler Foundation, EPA-Region 3 Brownfields Program, The Wildlands Conservancy, The National Park Service - Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor.

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006-2007 (Planning)

Objective #2: Create a cohesive and interconnected public space, and a park and recreation experience along the waterfront and throughout the adjacent neighborhoods, thereby providing the framework for public activities and new investment in redevelopment and new development activities. Reference **Trail Network Diagram** in the maps portion of this Chapter.

Policy: Obtain property and access easements along the River's and Creeks' edges and develop a network of interconnecting trails, public spaces, and parks to support various types of recreational and event activities.



Action Strategies

- **Undertake a property ownership study of the waterfront area** – Utilizing the City's GIS parcel database, an inventory which shows property ownership, current utilization, and the present tax status, should be prepared. This database could be utilized as a strategic planning resource when undertaking the master planning effort and could potentially highlight land assemblage and access issues. Ownership of the former rail lines throughout the area, such as the line along Jordan Creek, should be determined for potential future trail development.
- **Prepare an inventory of known and potentially contaminated properties within the waterfront area** – This resource could target sites, some of which may have been underutilized for many years, for clean-up and could highlight potential sites for additional park land or other public open space areas, infill development including habitat restoration or active sports.
- **Create a waterfront access point and circulation strategy** – A schematic plan of how all trails might connect, would assist the City in evaluating development plans to ensure no new development precludes the potential for current or future public access to the water's edge, or for the interconnection of trails.
- **Ensure that the American Parkway is designed in a manner that does not preclude citizens of all age groups from safely and easily accessing parks and recreation resources** – Concerns were raised by the public that children from the 1st and 6th Wards cannot currently safely access Jordan Meadows Park due to traffic volumes and speeds along the American Parkway. As new improvements are designed, they should consider safe pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures to ensure vehicular demands are balanced with pedestrian and bicycle needs.

Methods, Tools, and References

- Prepare revisions to the City's zoning ordinances and maps to protect important access and circulation points.
- FHWA and PENNDOT Context Sensitive Design Solutions for roadways

4 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

- **The Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC)** is a nonprofit organization with more than 100,000 members and supporters. Founded in 1986, The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is located in Washington, D.C., with state and regional offices in California, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania. The purpose of the RTC is to build a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors to create healthy places for healthy people. www.railtrails.org

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, DEP, Trexler Foundation, EPA-Region 3 Brownfields Program, The Wildlands Conservancy

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006

F. Downtown Parks, Plazas, Spaces and Walkways – “Making the Happening Place - The Downtown Green Core”

With all of the recent, pending and planned redevelopment in the Downtown area, the timing is opportune for a focus on the creation of additional public spaces and interconnected courtyards, green-alleys and walkways. Several recent downtown redevelopment projects focus on infill housing for seniors and artists’ lofts, etc. With this influx of residential uses, the need for diverse public open spaces and green spaces will increase dramatically.

Goal: Support the City’s effort to make Downtown Allentown a 24-hour place through the creation of diverse public spaces and utilize public design elements to define the Downtown’s image, and therefore, enhance the marketability and creation of its branded image.

Objective #1: Create a network of interconnected public courtyards, alleyways and landscaped walkways.

Policy: Public roadways and alleyways will be designed to create an enhanced pedestrian and civic experience through urban design and landscape amenities.



Action Strategies

- **Prepare a downtown public spaces improvements plan** – Such a plan should focus on identifying opportunities to enhance existing public spaces, improve streetscaping, and create new pocket parks. Alleyways, especially those that are perpendicular to Hamilton Street, should be evaluated for pedestrian walkways and landscape enhancements in order to connect to the activity of the primary commercial core and to expand opportunities for new mixed-use building frontage. Specific improvements identified in the

Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Panel Report for the Downtown include: the creation of an Arts Walks, the greening of Center Square, and a new festival park at the sink hole site on 7th Street.

- **Form a downtown revitalization collaborative entity referred to in the ULI Report as the “Downtown Partnership.”** – A strong and organized group of local interested parties can contribute to protecting, managing and improving public spaces in the downtown core. Such a group could also provide special events programming, specifically for the Downtown.
- **Expand the role of arts in public spaces** – Build on the initiative that spearheaded the creation of the pending Arts Park and Arts District in the eastern portion of Downtown.

Methods, Tools, and References

- The Project for Public Spaces, New York City
- Society Hill Neighborhood Greenway (Philadelphia)
- City of Lancaster, PA network of alleyways and the public market

Partners and Funding Sources

DCED, DCNR, PHFA Private landowners and developers, Trexler Foundation

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2008- 2010

Objective #2: Promote the creation of public spaces on private property as part of the redevelopment process.

Policy: City should consider requiring new developments to dedicate a percentage of total cost for public accessibility and quality spaces. New developments should be connected to other developments through a network of interconnected public and privately owned spaces.

Action Strategies

Partner with land owners and developers to create additional public spaces – In addition to creating new public spaces on public land, partnerships should be created to develop semi-public spaces as part of private redevelopment projects.

Methods, Tools and References

- Prepare and enact revisions to the City’s zoning ordinances and maps to shape new development in a manner that creates public spaces and promotes pedestrian interconnectivity.
- Work with private developers to provide incentives for the creation of public spaces and to promote the mindset for a quality public realm.

Partners and Funding Sources

DCED, DCNR, Private landowners and developers, Trexler Foundation

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2008 - 2010

G. Create an Attraction-Oriented Indoor Parks and Recreation Component to the City’s Park System – “Create New Centers for Interaction that Enhance Community Pride and Economic Vitality”

The ability of the City to meet the needs for indoor recreation facilities is very limited. In order to provide a truly balanced system, facilities for diverse activities from specific active recreation activities such as basketball to flexible indoor spaces for community groups are needed. Such a facility or facilities should serve both immediate local needs and as a regional attraction. Diverse activities, such as environmental education, community health and therapy, and active sports programs should be juxtaposed in order to promote community interaction.

Goal: Create a model indoor recreation system including active and passive activities and educational programs. Create a destination-based indoor community recreation center.

Objective #1: Develop an indoor community center that primarily serves the City community.

Policy: A center that serves multiple City neighborhoods, yet has the capacity to host regional events and programs should be supported, whether developed by the City or in partnerships with other entities.

Action Strategies

- **Hold a community center summit and bring together all of the various groups that have been studying or are interested in developing an indoor facility** – A number of groups and organizations have been exploring the idea of constructing some type of indoor facility. Several concepts and approaches to building a facility have been explored, yet it appears that not all groups are communicating with each other.

Methods, Tools and References

The Greater Plymouth Community Center
www.plymouthcommunitycenter.org

The Lower Paxton Township Friendship Center
www.lower-paxton.pa.us

Partners and Funding Sources

DCNR, Trexler Foundation, Wildlands Conservancy, Private Foundations, United Way, Local Special Interest Groups/Clubs

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2008 - 2010

H. Expand and Diversify the Type and Location of the City's Great Events – "Invite the People to the Great Places of the City"

The City's reputation for hosting major regional events is unparalleled. However, too many of the activities are placed in the same limited locations within the City. This exerts excessive impacts on a few parks and their adjacent neighborhoods. The influx of regional visitors for such events does provide the opportunity to continually highlight the City's various park resources, especially the waterfront area.

Goal: Have a Strategic Event Program Plan to create new events and to evaluate how to modify the park system to best provide for existing and potential events.

Objective #1: Move or start new annual events along the waterfront in Buck Boyle Park and other potential gathering locations along the Lehigh River and Jordan Creek.

Policy: Each year events should showcase multiple parks in the City's parks system.

Action Strategies

- **Develop an events-oriented site development program as part of a Comprehensive Waterfront Master Planning process** – The creation of large civic spaces able to support public performances need to be considered as part of the overall development plan for Lehigh River waterfront. This effort would have to start from a community needs and market demand standpoint to determine the viability of expanding existing events or creating entirely new events or programs.

Methods, Tools and References

Partners and Funding Sources

Private Foundations, Corporate Sponsors, Local Special Interest Groups/Clubs

Priority Level: Medium

Time Frame: 2007+

Objective #2: Lessen the impact of holding several major events at Cedar Beach Park.

Policy: Facilities will be developed at other parks, especially along the waterfront, which support some of the events that currently may only be held at Cedar Beach Park.

Action Strategies

- **Determine the exact needs of the events that are currently being held at Cedar Beach Park** – Each event should be evaluated to determine what facilities and support resources are needed and determine if they could be held at another park location. Certainly some major events should remain at Cedar Beach Park; however, some other events might be better suited, possibly with only minor upgrades, at other parks in the City.
- **Improve the ability to utilize the amphitheatre at Union Terrace Park** – Through improvements such as a more formal staging area with lighting and sound, this wonderful resource could be better utilized. Also, if a physical connection could be made to connect this park to Cedar Beach Park it could help spread out events at that park.
- **Explore the opportunity to attract a privately developed indoor-outdoor arena or amphitheatre as an economic development initiative** – Such a facility could be of permanent construction or could be more mobile. The creation of a facility of this nature, especially along the waterfront could attract major events and draw people from the entire region. It could serve as a generated of revenue for events and other activities.

Methods, Tools and References

Chicago's Millennium Park
www.millenniumpark.org

Pittsburgh's Station Square Chevrolet Amphitheatre www.chevroletamphitheatre.com

Partners and Funding Sources

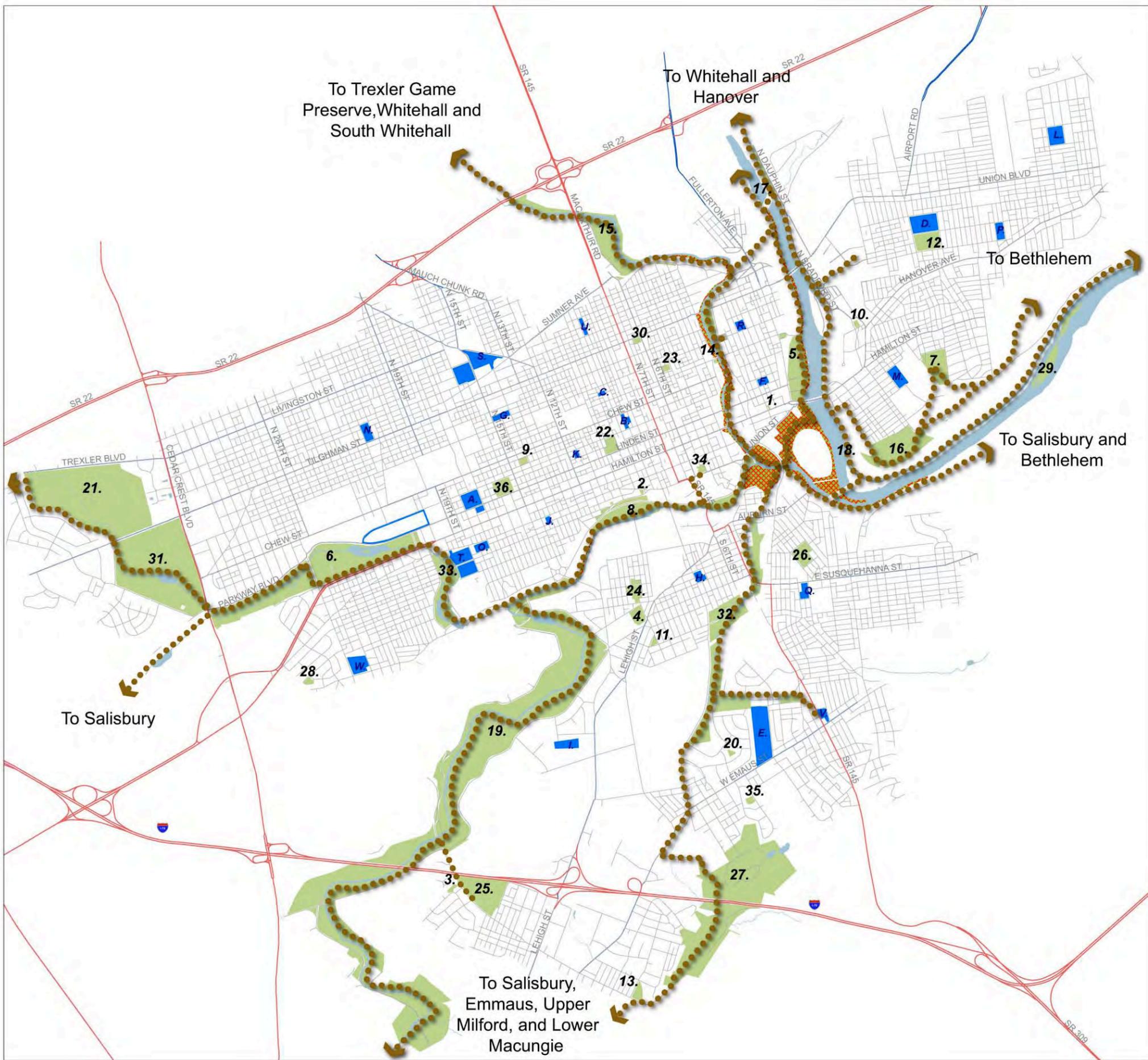
Private Entertainment Entities, Local Special Interest Groups/Clubs

Priority Level: High

Time Frame: 2006+



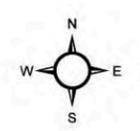
Potential Trail Network



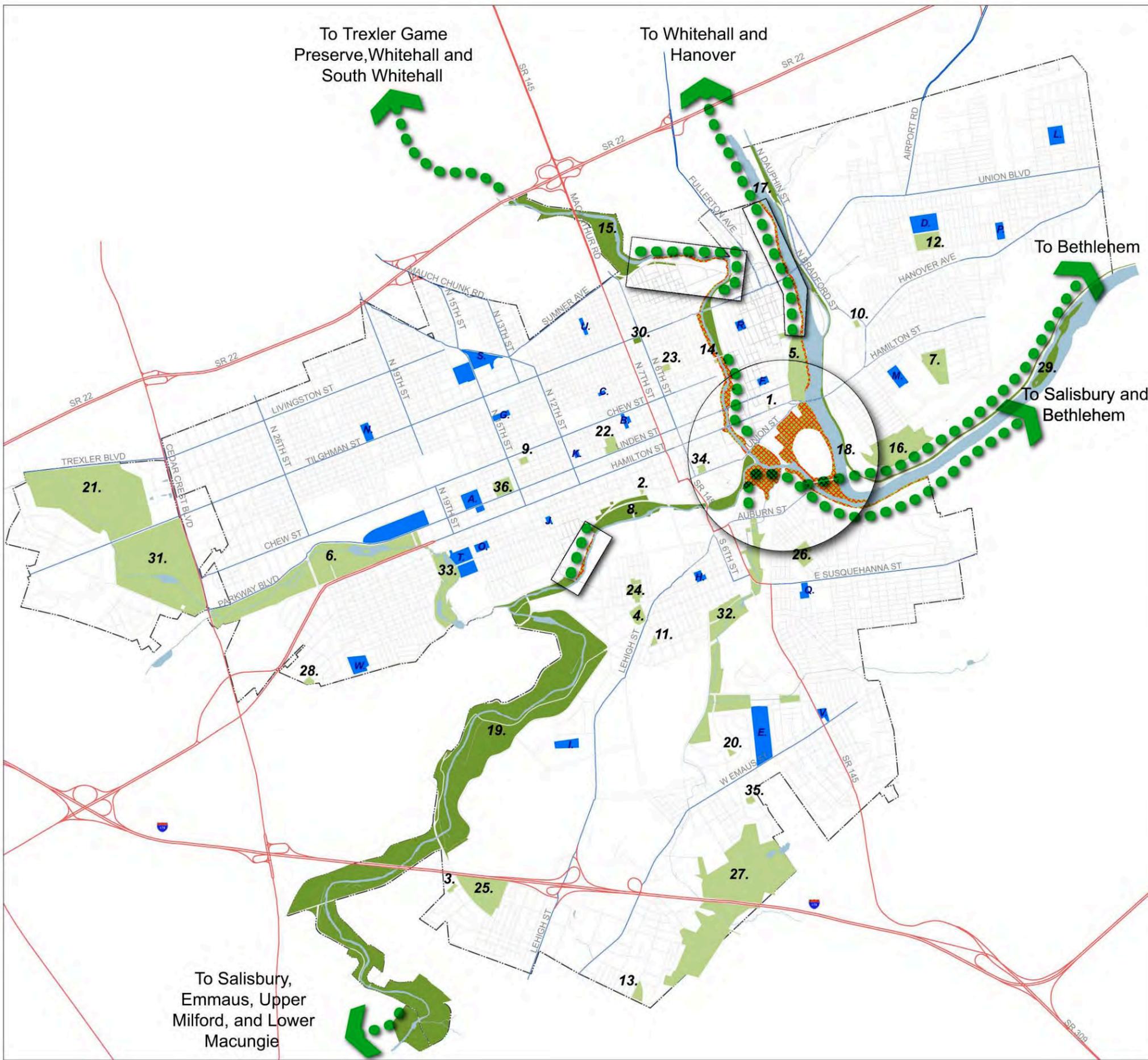
- | CITY OWNED | SCHOOL OWNED |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Fellowship East Lot | A. Allen High School |
| 2. NICE 13 Play Lot | B. Central Elementary School |
| 3. Salisbury Street Play Lot | C. Cleveland Elementary School |
| 4. Bicentennial Park | D. Dieruff High School |
| 5. Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing) | E. Dodd Elementary School |
| 6. Cedar Beach Park | F. Harrison-Morton Middle School |
| 7. East Side Reservoir | G. Jackson Elementary School |
| 8. Fountain Park | H. Jefferson Elementary School |
| 9. Franklin Park | I. Lehigh Parkway Elementary School |
| 10. Hanover Acres Play Lot | J. Lincoln Elementary School |
| 11. Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot | K. McKinley Elementary School |
| 12. Irving Street Park | L. Midway Manor Elementary School |
| 13. Ithaca Play Lot | M. Mosser Elementary School |
| 14. Jordan Meadows | N. Muhlenberg Elementary School |
| 15. Jordan Park | O. Raub Middle School |
| 16. Keck Park | P. Ritter Elementary School |
| 17. Kimmet's Lock | Q. Roosevelt Elementary School |
| 18. Lehigh Canal | R. Sheridan Elementary School |
| 19. Little Lehigh Parkway | S. Trexler Middle School |
| 20. Lumber & Benton Play Lot | T. Union Terrace |
| 21. Municipal Golf Course | U. Washington Elementary School |
| 22. Old Allentown Cemetery | V. Wilson Elementary School |
| 23. Old Fairgrounds Playground | W. Hamilton Park Elementary School |
| 24. Patriots Park | |
| 25. Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park) | |
| 26. Roosevelt Park | |
| 27. South Mountain Reservoir and Park | |
| 28. South Street Play Lot | |
| 29. Sterner Island | |
| 30. Stevens Park | |
| 31. Trexler Memorial Park | |
| 32. Trout Creek Park | |
| 33. Daddona Park (Union Terrace) | |
| 34. Valania Park | |
| 35. Walden Terrace Play Lot | |
| 36. West Park | |

Legend

- Trails
- City Owned - New Use
- Allentown Parks
- Schools



Potential County Greenway



- | CITY OWNED | SCHOOL OWNED |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Fellowship East Lot | A. Allen High School |
| 2. NICE 13 Play Lot | B. Central Elementary School |
| 3. Salisbury Street Play Lot | C. Cleveland Elementary School |
| 4. Bicentennial Park | D. Dieruff High School |
| 5. Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing) | E. Dodd Elementary School |
| 6. Cedar Beach Park | F. Harrison-Morton Middle School |
| 7. East Side Reservoir | G. Jackson Elementary School |
| 8. Fountain Park | H. Jefferson Elementary School |
| 9. Franklin Park | I. Lehigh Parkway Elementary School |
| 10. Hanover Acres Play Lot | J. Lincoln Elementary School |
| 11. Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot | K. McKinley Elementary School |
| 12. Irving Street Park | L. Midway Manor Elementary School |
| 13. Ithaca Play Lot | M. Mosser Elementary School |
| 14. Jordan Meadows | N. Muhlenberg Elementary School |
| 15. Jordan Park | O. Raub Middle School |
| 16. Keck Park | P. Ritter Elementary School |
| 17. Kimmet's Lock | Q. Roosevelt Elementary School |
| 18. Lehigh Canal | R. Sheridan Elementary School |
| 19. Little Lehigh Parkway | S. Trexler Middle School |
| 20. Lumber & Benton Play Lot | T. Union Terrace |
| 21. Municipal Golf Course | U. Washington Elementary School |
| 22. Old Allentown Cemetery | V. Wilson Elementary School |
| 23. Old Fairgrounds Playground | W. Hamilton Park Elementary School |
| 24. Patriots Park | |
| 25. Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park) | |
| 26. Roosevelt Park | |
| 27. South Mountain Reservoir and Park | |
| 28. South Street Play Lot | |
| 29. Sterner Island | |
| 30. Stevens Park | |
| 31. Trexler Memorial Park | |
| 32. Trout Creek Park | |
| 33. Daddona Park (Union Terrace) | |
| 34. Valania Park | |
| 35. Walden Terrace Play Lot | |
| 36. West Park | |

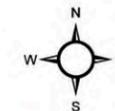
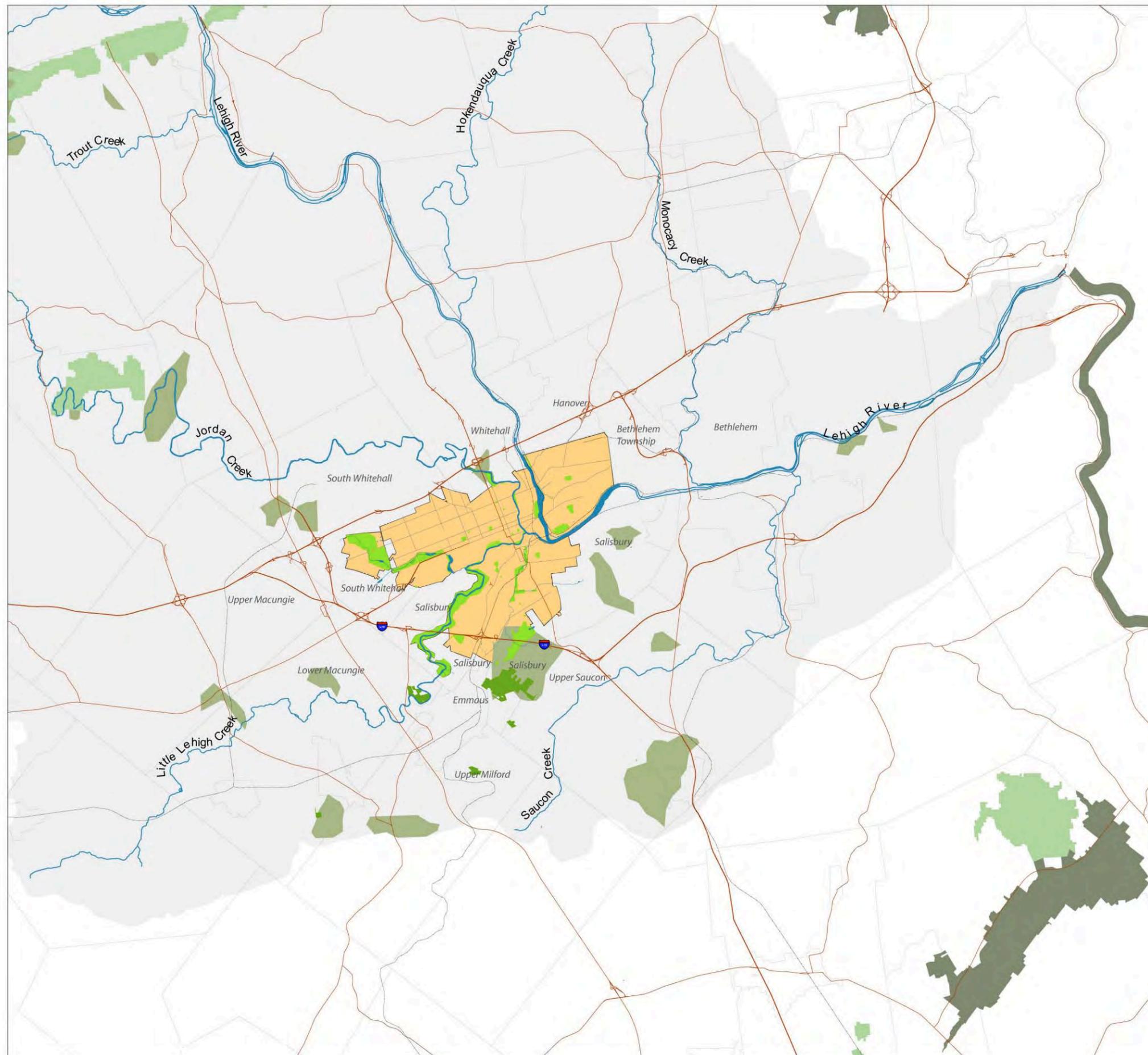
Legend

- City Owned - New Use (113.13 acres)
- Potential County Greenway (606.57 acres)
- Allentown Parks (833.40 acres)
- Schools
- Focus Areas
- Regional Connections

Regional Resources

Legend

-  Allentown City Parks
-  Gamelands
-  South Mountain Preserve
-  Lehigh & Northampton Nature Areas
-  State Parks
-  Wildlands Conservancy Area
-  Allentown



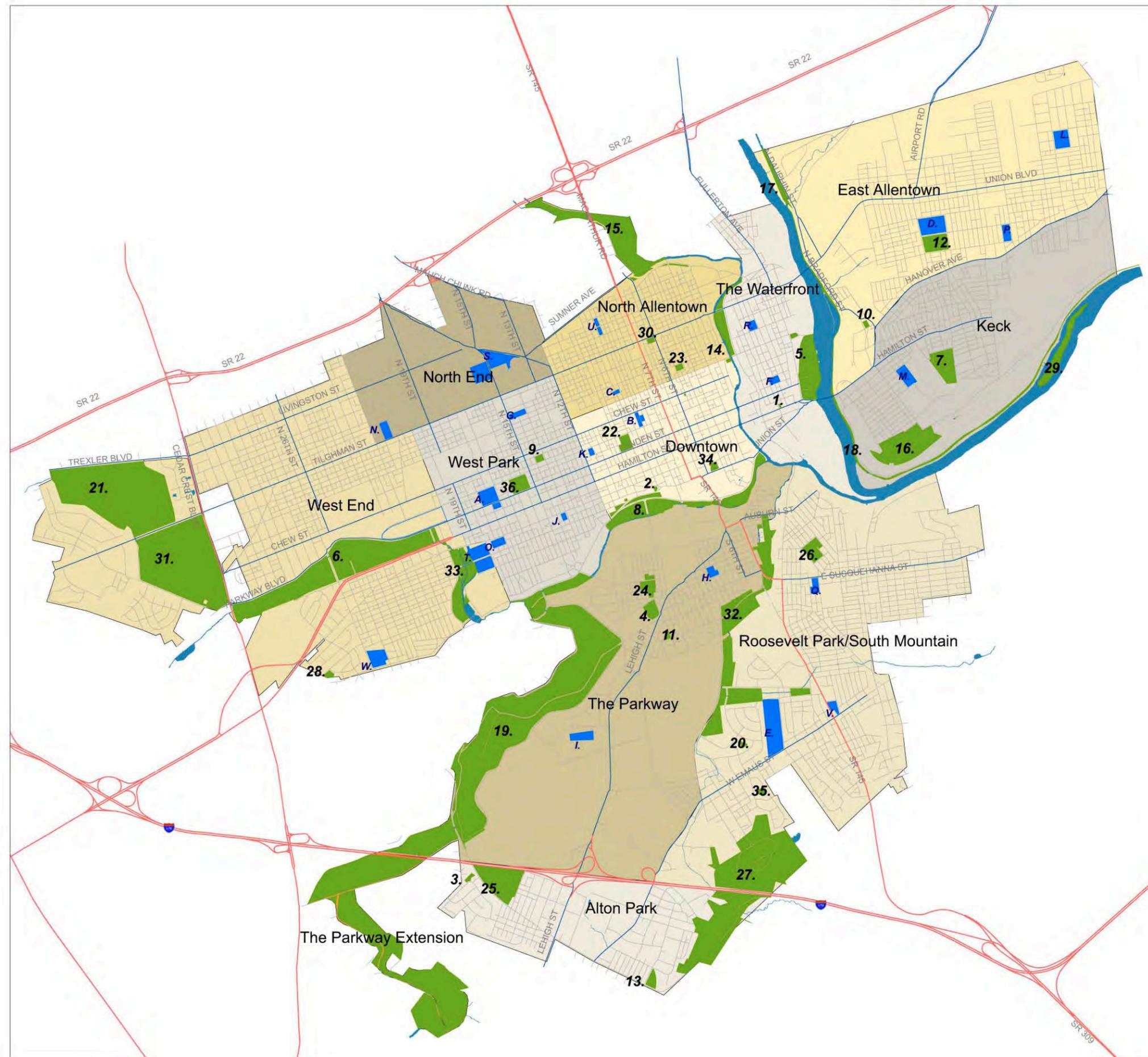
Parks per Neighborhood

CITY OWNED

1. Fellowship East Lot
2. NICE 13 Play Lot
3. Salisbury Street Play Lot
4. Bicentennial Park
5. Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing)
6. Cedar Beach Park
7. East Side Reservoir
8. Fountain Park
9. Franklin Park
10. Hanover Acres Play Lot
11. Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot
12. Irving Street Park
13. Ithaca Play Lot
14. Jordan Meadows
15. Jordan Park
16. Keck Park
17. Kimmet's Lock
18. Lehigh Canal
19. Little Lehigh Parkway
20. Lumber & Benton Play Lot
21. Municipal Golf Course
22. Old Allentown Cemetery
23. Old Fairgrounds Playground
24. Patriots Park
25. Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park)
26. Roosevelt Park
27. South Mountain Reservoir and Park
28. South Street Play Lot
29. Sterner Island
30. Stevens Park
31. Trexler Memorial Park
32. Trout Creek Park
33. Daddona Park (Union Terrace)
34. Valania Park
35. Walden Terrace Play Lot
36. West Park

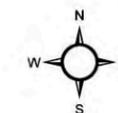
SCHOOL OWNED

- A. Allen High School
- B. Central Elementary School
- C. Cleveland Elementary School
- D. Dieruff High School
- E. Dodd Elementary School
- F. Harrison-Morton Middle School
- G. Jackson Elementary School
- H. Jefferson Elementary School
- I. Lehigh Parkway Elementary School
- J. Lincoln Elementary School
- K. McKinley Elementary School
- L. Midway Manor Elementary School
- M. Mosser Elementary School
- N. Muhlenberg Elementary School
- O. Raub Middle School
- P. Ritter Elementary School
- Q. Roosevelt Elementary School
- R. Sheridan Elementary School
- S. Trexler Middle School
- T. Union Terrace
- U. Washington Elementary School
- V. Wilson Elementary School
- W. Hamilton Park Elementary School



Legend

- Parks
- Schools



Park Service Area

CITY OWNED

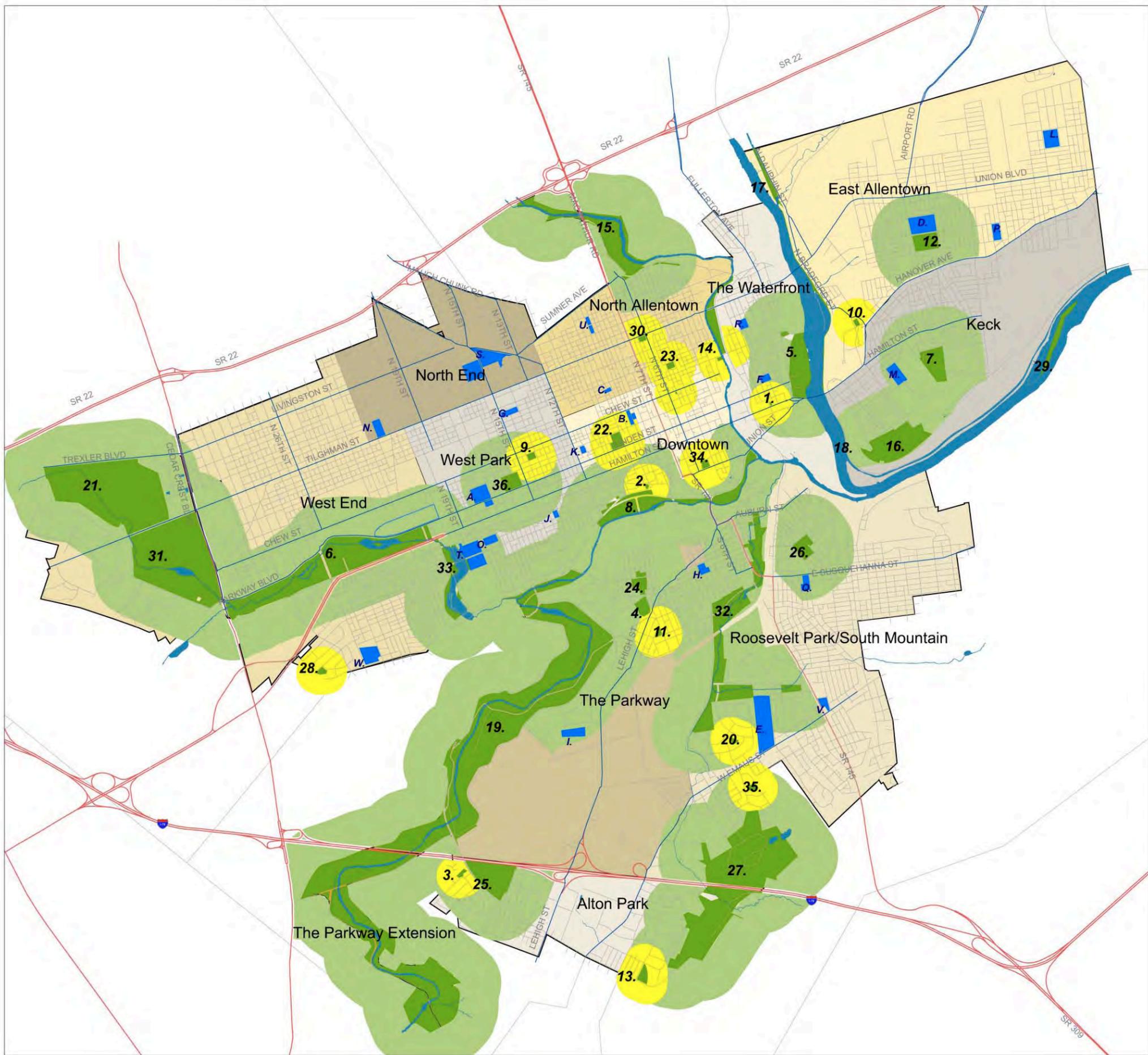
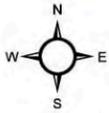
1. Fellowship East Lot
2. NICE 13 Play Lot
3. Salisbury Street Play Lot
4. Bicentennial Park
5. Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing)
6. Cedar Beach Park
7. East Side Reservoir
8. Fountain Park
9. Franklin Park
10. Hanover Acres Play Lot
11. Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot
12. Irving Street Park
13. Ithaca Play Lot
14. Jordan Meadows
15. Jordan Park
16. Keck Park
17. Kimmet's Lock
18. Lehigh Canal
19. Little Lehigh Parkway
20. Lumber & Benton Play Lot
21. Municipal Golf Course
22. Old Allentown Cemetery
23. Old Fairgrounds Playground
24. Patriots Park
25. Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park)
26. Roosevelt Park
27. South Mountain Reservoir and Park
28. South Street Play Lot
29. Sterner Island
30. Stevens Park
31. Trexler Memorial Park
32. Trout Creek Park
33. Daddona Park (Union Terrace)
34. Valania Park
35. Walden Terrace Play Lot
36. West Park

SCHOOL OWNED

- A. Allen High School
- B. Central Elementary School
- C. Cleveland Elementary School
- D. Dieruff High School
- E. Dodd Elementary School
- F. Harrison-Morton Middle School
- G. Jackson Elementary School
- H. Jefferson Elementary School
- I. Lehigh Parkway Elementary School
- J. Lincoln Elementary School
- K. McKinley Elementary School
- L. Midway Manor Elementary School
- M. Mosser Elementary School
- N. Muhlenberg Elementary School
- O. Raub Middle School
- P. Ritter Elementary School
- Q. Roosevelt Elementary School
- R. Sheridan Elementary School
- S. Trexler Middle School
- T. Union Terrace
- U. Washington Elementary School
- V. Wilson Elementary School
- W. Hamilton Park Elementary School

Legend

- Parks
- Schools
- Neighborhood Parks
1/8 mile buffer
- Community Parks
1/4 mile buffer



School Owned Facilities Service Area

CITY OWNED

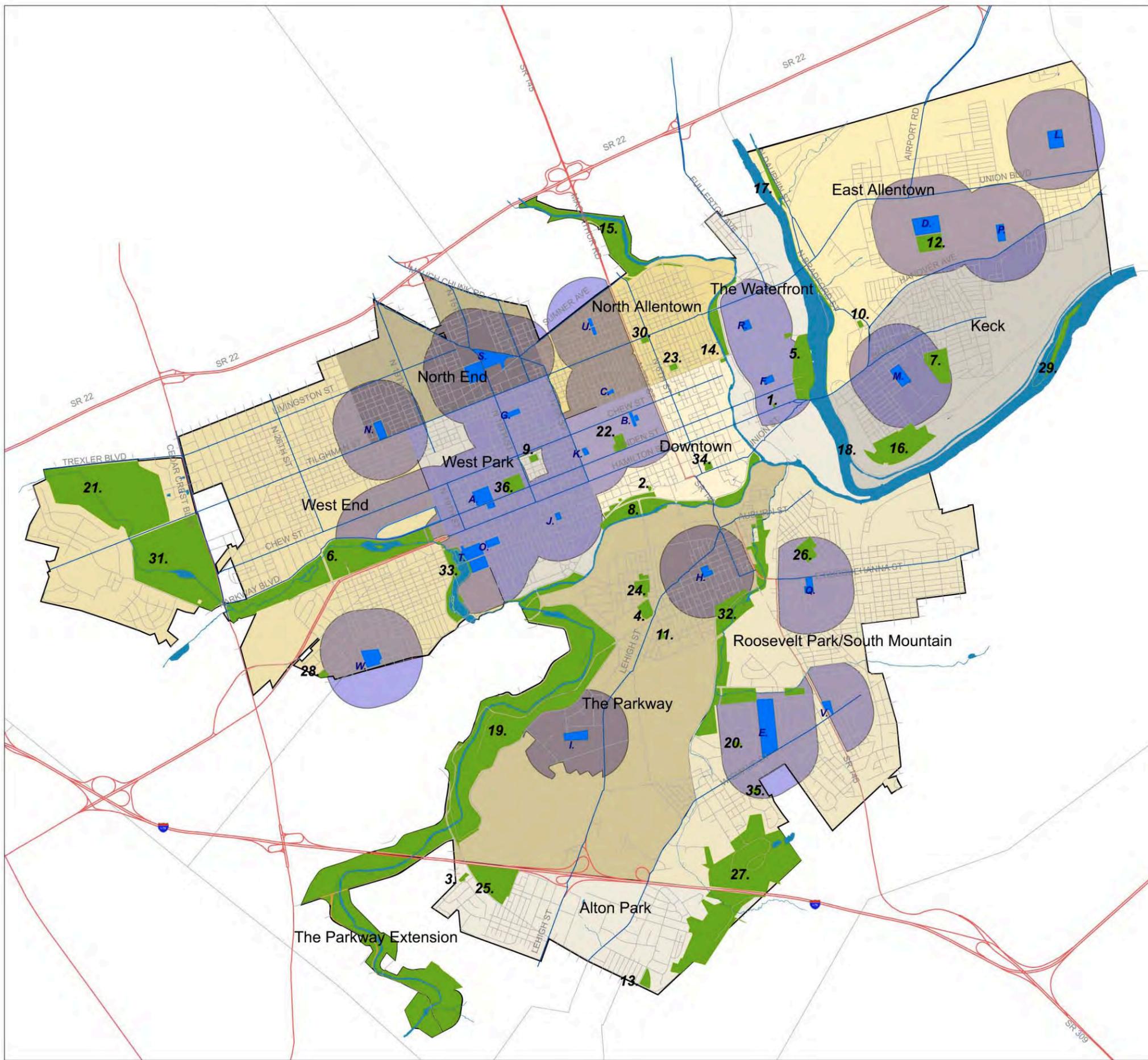
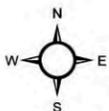
1. 2nd and Hamilton
2. 9th and Jackson Play Lot
3. Alton Park
4. Bicentennial Park
5. Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing)
6. Cedar Beach
7. East Side Reservoir
8. Fountain Park
9. Franklin Park
10. Hanover Acres Play Lot
11. Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot
12. Irving Street Park
13. Ithaca Play Lot
14. Jordan Meadows & Central Catholic
15. Jordan Park
16. Keck Park
17. Kimmett's Lock
18. Lehigh Canal
19. Little Lehigh Parkway
20. Lumber & Benton Play Lot
21. Municipal Golf Course
22. Old Allentown Cemetery
23. Old Fairgrounds Playground
24. Patriots Park
25. Percy Ruhe Park
26. Roosevelt Park
27. South Mountain Reservoir and Park
28. South Street Play Lot
29. Sterner Island
30. Stevens Park
31. Trexler Memorial Park
32. Trout Creek Park
33. Union Terrace
34. Valania Park
35. Walden Terrace Play Lot
36. West Park

SCHOOL OWNED

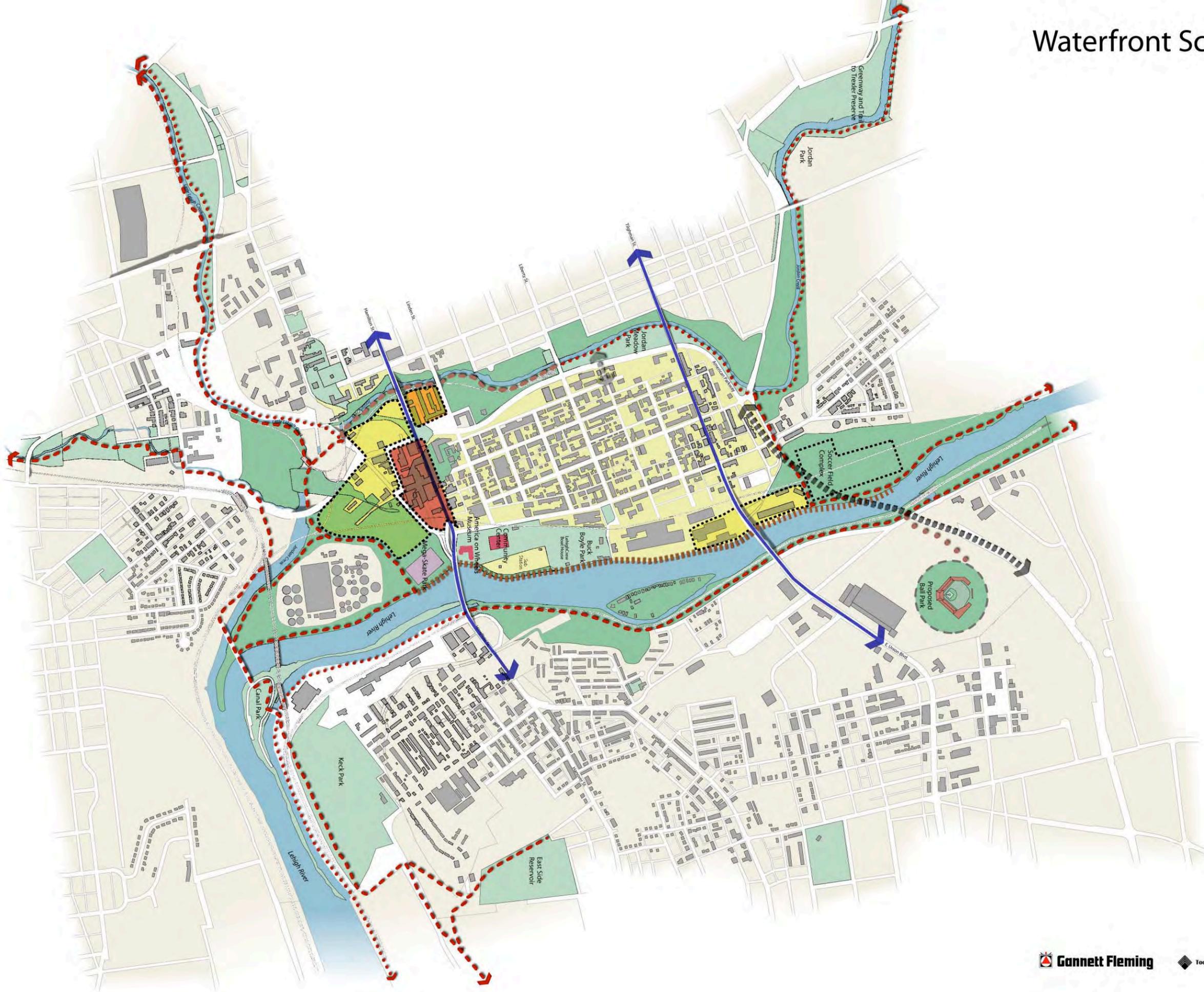
- A. Allen High School
- B. Central Elementary School
- C. Cleveland Elementary School
- D. Dieruff High School
- E. Dodd Elementary School
- F. Harrison-Morton Middle School
- G. Jackson Elementary School
- H. Jefferson Elementary School
- I. Lehigh Parkway Elementary School
- J. Lincoln Elementary School
- K. McKinley Elementary School
- L. Midway Manor Elementary School
- M. Mosser Elementary School
- N. Muhlenberg Elementary School
- O. Raub Middle School
- P. Ritter Elementary School
- Q. Roosevelt Elementary School
- R. Sheridan Elementary School
- S. Trexler Middle School
- T. Union Terrace
- U. Washington Elementary School
- V. Wilson Elementary School
- W. Hamilton Park Elementary

Legend

- Parks
- Schools
- Schools 1/8 mile buffer



Waterfront Schematic Plan



- ### Legend
- Existing Trail
 - Proposed Trail
 - Proposed Promenade
 - Connectors
 - Proposed Connectors
 - Potential Residential
 - Potential Residential Loft Housing
 - Neighborhood Commercial Center
 - Proposed
 - Existing



- Introduction
- Park System Classification
- List of Parks
- Individual Park Inventory
- Individual Park Assessments

• Introduction

The City of Allentown has 1432.9 acres of dedicated parkland for active and passive recreation including a 147.83 acre municipal golf course. In addition, the Allentown school district has 119.28 acres of land, much of which has recreation facilities. These combined areas represent approximately 13.2% of the City's total landmass of 11,735 acres.

The City of Allentown provides an exceptional level of programmed recreation services and facilities while adhering to a stringent maintenance regimen. An assessment of these facilities was undertaken to determine the current and future needs and if trends are being met. The factors used in this assessment include acreage, service area, community access, and physical facilities (sports fields, playgrounds, equipment, parking and connections between other parks and other community destinations). The overall analysis of parks and recreation facilities as presented in this plan was conducted using accepted National Standards.

The specific analysis of each of the individual parks and recreation facilities as presented in this plan was conducted by:

1. Completing an inventory of existing facilities.
2. Completing individual analysis of each park with relationship of user groups to the service area and community served.
3. Comparing existing parkland acreage and facilities to state and national standards.
4. Exploring trends in park and recreation facilities.

• Park System Classification

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) *Park, Recreation, Greenway and Open Space Guidelines, (1995)* classifies park and recreation facilities into several main categories: mini-park, recreation node, neighborhood park, regional/community park, school/community park, athletic complex, natural resource area/preserve and greenways.

1. Mini – Park

Definition: A small park located in a neighborhood setting with passive facilities, community gardens, playground/tot lot and possibly a small active use such as basketball, bocce ball courts and lawn space for volleyball.

Size: Varies, can be up to 2 acres depending on the setting.

Service Area: Less than a 1/4 mile service radius in a residential neighborhood, accessible by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks, and low volume residential streets.

Facilities: Based upon public input, facilities can include playgrounds, scenic areas and lunch time seating areas/gathering places.

Findings: Fellowship East Park, Franklin Park, Hanover Acres Playlot, Howard Keck Juniata Playlot, Ithaca Playlot, Lumber & Benton Playlot, Nice 13 Tot Lot, Stevens Park, Salisbury Street Playlot, South Mountain Playlot, Walden Terrace Playlot

2. Recreation Node

Definition: Similar to a neighborhood park with both active and passive facilities designed for a specific purpose.

Size: Up to five acres

Service Area: Less than a 1/4 mile service radius in a residential neighborhood, accessible by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks, and low volume residential streets.

Facilities: Based upon public input, facilities can include playgrounds, scenic areas and lunchtime seating areas.

Findings: South Mountain Playlot, Valania Park, Walden Terrace Playlot,

3. Neighborhood Park

Definition: Basic unit of the park system in meeting the active and/or passive needs of the neighborhood. Create a sense of place for a wide variety of ages living in the service radius.

Size: 5 to 10 acres minimum

Service Area: 1/4 mile to 1/2 mile service radius uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers accessible from throughout its service radius by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks or low volume residential streets.

Facilities: Neighborhood parks can be for active or passive recreation or a combination of both. Facilities can include ball fields and game courts, picnic and sitting areas, play equipment, trails and passive areas with natural features.

Findings: Bicentennial Park, Buck Boyle Park, Cedar Beach Park, Irving Street Park, Jordan Park, Keck Park, Patriots Park, Roosevelt Park, Daddona Park, Valania Park, West Park,

4. Regional/Community Park

Definition: Meets the broader recreational needs of several neighborhoods. Provides for both active recreation and preservation of a unique landscape. Allows for group activities neither desirable nor feasible in neighborhood parks.

Size: 30 to 50 acres

Service Area: .5 to 3.0 mile service radius; served by arterial and collector roads and accessible from throughout its service area by way of interconnecting trails.

Facilities: Designed for both active and passive uses, facilities can include: large play structures, game courts, ball fields, ice skating, swimming pools, picnic areas, open space, unique landscape features, nature study and ornamental gardens, parking lots and lighting as appropriate.

Findings: Bicentennial Park, Buck Boyle Park, Cedar Beach Park, Fountain Park, Irving Street Park, Jordan Meadows, Jordan Park, Keck Park, Patriots Park, Percy Ruhe Park, Roosevelt Park, Trexler Memorial Park, Trout Creek Park, Daddona Park, West Park,

5. School/Community Park

Definition: Combines the resources of two public entities to allow for expanded recreational, educational, and social opportunities in a cost-effective manner.

Size: Depends upon intended use. Size criteria for recreation nodes, neighborhood or community parks. School buildings are not considered in the acreage calculation.

Service Area: Based upon distribution of the schools. The location can guide how it fits into the park system classification. Service Areas for the site depends upon the type of use of the site.

Facilities: Development should be based upon the criteria of other park classifications. If athletic fields are developed, they should be oriented towards youth rather than adults.

Findings: Irving Street Park, Roosevelt Park,

6. Athletic Complex

Definition: Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities in fewer sites to allow for economy of scale, improved management, greater control over impacts to neighborhood and community parks such as over-use, traffic congestion, parking and domination of facilities by those outside the neighborhood.

Size: Depends upon intended use. Consideration should be given to acquiring an additional 25 percent to hedge against unforeseen circumstances.

Service Area: Strategically located community-wide facilities within reasonable driving times; near non-residential uses if possible.

Facilities: Development should be based upon the specific types of fields and courts.

Findings: Cedar Beach Park, Percy Ruhe Park

7. Natural Resource Area/ Preserve

Definition: Parks and recreation facilities that are oriented towards the preservation of significant natural features, open space, special landscapes, buffering and visual aesthetics.

Size: Dependent upon quality and extent of the resources and opportunity for preservation.

Service Area: Areas that, when preserved, can enhance the livability and character of the community by preserving as much of its natural features as possible.

Facilities: Resource rather than user-based, natural resource areas can provide limited passive recreational opportunities such as trails and nature study areas. They can also function as greenways.

Findings: East Side Reservoir, Kimmett's Lock, Sterners Island, Lehigh Canal Park, Little Lehigh Parkway, Old Allentown Cemetery, Trexler Memorial Park, Trout Creek Park, Daddona, South Mountain Reservoir

8. Greenways

Definition: Linear trail corridors that tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment, allowing for safe uninterrupted pedestrian movement between the parks and around the community and providing people with a desired outdoor recreation opportunity. Greenways emphasize use to a greater extent than do wildlife preserves. Bucks County refers to this park classification as a "link" park.

Size: 25' width minimum in a sub-division; 50' optimum; and 200'+ width desirable.

Service Area: Most desirable location is in conjunction with trail system planning.

Facilities: Developed for particular transportation mode most commonly for biking, hiking and in-line skating. Greenways can also be developed for canoes and cars.

Findings: Lehigh Canal Park

These standards and evaluations provide a frame of reference for establishing standards for parks in the City of Allentown. Because the community is heavily developed, working within the resources available requires tailoring the standards to serve the community in the most effective way possible.

• List of Parks

Fellowship East Lot

NICE 13 Play Lot

Salisbury Drive Play Lot

Bicentennial Park

Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing)

Cedar Beach Park

East Side Reservoir

Fountain Park

Franklin Park

Hanover Acres Play Lot

Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot

Irving Street Park

Ithaca Play Lot

Jordan Meadows

Jordan Park

Keck Park

Kimmett's Lock

Lehigh Canal Park

Little Lehigh Parkway

Lumber & Benton Play Lot

Old Allentown Cemetery

Old Fairgrounds Playground

Patriots Park

Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park)

Roosevelt Park

South Mountain Reservoir and Park

South Street Play Lot

Sterner Island

Stevens Park

Trexler Memorial Park

Trout Creek Park

Daddona Park (Union Terrace)

Valania Park

Walden Terrace Play Lot

West Park

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

- Individual Park Inventory

Table 4.1 Allentown Parks Facility Inventory

City Neighborhoods		WEST END					NORTH END	WEST PARK		NORTH ALLENTOWN			DOWNTOWN				THE PARKWAY			THE PARKWAY EXTENSION
	Parks	Trexler Memorial Park	Cedar Beach Park	South Street Playlot	Daddona Park (Union Terrace)	Municipal Golf Course	No parks	Franklin Park	West Park	Jordan Park	Stevens Park	Old Allentown Fairgrounds	Nice 13 Playlot	Old Allentown Cemetery	Valania Park	Fountain Park	Bicentennial Park	Patriots Park	Howard Keck Juniata Playlot	Little Lehigh Parkway
	Acreage:	134.39	109.62	1.2	30.35	147.82		1.89	6.44	52.34	0.88	1.06	0.34	4.06	1.32	41.62	4.64	5.54	0.4	475.91
Active																				
	T-ball															3		1		
	LL Baseball - 60'				1															
	Baseball -90'								1											
	Softball								2											
	Soccer full size				1										1					
	Practice Area								1											
	Volley Ball Courts		8					1	2					1	1			2?		
	Misc. Courts								4											
	Football field								1						1					
	Basketball		2					2	2	0.5				1	2			2		
	Golf course																			
	Tennis		2?						6											
	Playground			1	3			1	1	3	1	1		1	2			1	1	
	Swimming pool		1						1						3					
	Roller Hockey														1					
	Exercise trail		1?						√											1
	Concession Stand					√			√									√		
	Biking Trails	1													1					
Passive Recreational Facilities																				
	Passive open space							√	√											
	Picnic Tables		99		3				9	1	√			2						33
	Pavilion		3					1	2	1				1	1			1		
	Barbecue Pits/Grills		4						2											1
	Benches	√		√	√			√	√	√	√		√	√				√		√
	Paths/walkways	1	1					√	√						1					1
Support Facilities																				
	Security Lighting																			
	Facility Lighting								√											
	Drinking water	√	√		√			√	√		√				√			√		√
	Telephone																			
	Equipment shed																			
	Restrooms	√	√		√			√	√		√				√			√		√
	Trash receptacle	√	√	√	√			√	√	√		√	√	4	√			√		√
	Parking Spaces	83	175		40				220		200				70			√		425
General Utility Ratings																				
	Pedestrian access	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√	√							
	ADA access	√	√					√	√	√	√									

Table 4.1 (Cont.) Allentown Parks Facility Inventory

City Neighborhoods		THE WATERFRONT				ROOSEVELT PARK/SOUTH MOUNTAIN					ALTON PARK			EAST ALLENTOWN			KECK				
	Parks	Buck Boyle Park	Lehigh Landing	Fellowship East Lot	Jordan Meadows &	South Mountain Reservoir	Walden Terrace Playlot	Lumber & Benton Playlot	Trout Creek	Roosevelt Park	Salisbury Drive Playlot	Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park)	Ithaca Playlot	Kimmett's Lock	Irving Street Park	Hanover Acres	Keck Park	Lehigh Canal Park	East Side Reservoir	Sternor Island	Total Acreage
	Acreage:	8.58	0.5	0.5	11.76	163.43	1.16	0.5	79.23	6.86	0.7	27.5	3.07	5.18	9.8	0.73	36.87	29.56	14.88	12.3	413.11
Active																					
Recreation																					
		2							2	1		4			1		3				
	LL Baseball - 60'									1											
	Baseball -90'																				
	Softball														1						
	Soccer full size									1					1						
	Practice Area														1						
	Volley Ball Courts	1				1	1		1	1		1	1		1						
	Misc. Courts											2			1		2				
	Football field				1							2									
	Basketball	1			1		1	1	3	2		1	1		2	1	1				
	Golf course																				
	Tennis											3			4		2				
	Playground						1		1	1	1	1	1		1		1				
	Swimming pool	3							√	1					1		2				
	Roller Hockey				1					1											
	Exercise trail								1												
	Concession Stand	√							√		√				1						
	Biking Trails								1								1	1			
Passive Recreational Facilities																					
	Passive open space				√				√												
	Picnic Tables	2		1		6	1		12						1		3	9	10		
	Pavilion	1				1	1		1	1		1			1		1	1	1		
	Barbecue Pits/Grills					1			1									1	1	1	
	Benches	√		√		√			√		√			√			√	√	√		
	Paths/walkways			√	√				1			√					1	1			
Support Facilities																					
	Security Lighting														√						
	Facility Lighting				√						√			√							
	Drinking water	√				√	√		√	√	√			√			√				
	Telephone																				
	Equipment shed																				
	Restrooms	√				√			√	√	√		√	√			√	√	√		
	Trash receptacle	√		√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√		
	Parking Spaces	20			9				175	70		120		50			90	100	8		
General Utility Ratings																					
	Pedestrian access				√				√		√										
	ADA access								√		√										

- Individual Park Assessments

Fellowship East Park (00.15 Acres)

Features:

This park is classified as a mini/pocket park. It is located at the corner of Hamilton Street and North Second Street. This pocket park serves an area between American Parkway to the west, Chestnut Street to the north, Union Street to the south and North Front Street to the east. Although this neighborhood has a limited amount of parkland, this park is highly under-utilized and in many respects forgotten by the community.

This park contains:

- Trash receptacles
- Benches
- Paved path
- 1 picnic table
- Lighting

Issues/Constraints:

The location of this park along Hamilton Street, which is primarily commercial in character, limits its utilization. For its size the park requires a significant amount of maintenance and has suffered from continual vandalism. The dimensions of the park create limitations on its use.

Opportunities:

This park's greatest asset is as a park to "look at" instead of one to actually utilize by entering. It could be treated as a neighborhood gateway and greenspace. By removing the components of the park that directly serve visitors, the amount of maintenance could be reduced significantly. All of the hard-scape could be removed and a major piece of art work could be located there. The site could be fenced.

Local business should be approached to "adopt" this park.



Fellowship East Park from North 2nd Street

NICE 13 Play Lot

(00.34 Acres)

Features:

This park is classified as a mini/pocket park. This park serves the southern portion of the Downtown neighborhood. Specifically, the service area extends to Maple Street to the north, South 8th Street to the east, South 10th Street to the west and Union Street to the south. The playground is newer and in good condition. The fence needs to be repaired. The site has a steep slope at the intersection of South Jackson Street and South 9th Street which limits visibility into the park.

These areas contain:

- 1 Playground
- Benches
- Trash receptacles
- Fence

Issues/Constraints:

Due to the alignment of surrounding streets and the location of vegetation, the park is somewhat isolated from the surrounding neighborhood.

Opportunities:

The current location of fencing, vegetation and playground equipment could be reconfigured to better integrate the site with the adjacent building. Even though the building is privately owned, both the park and building could benefit from a stronger “designed” relationship. Adjusting the grading to elevate the equipment area would promote visibility and safety.

Interpretive elements, such as signage, could be developed to educate users to the importance of riparian areas such as those in nearby Fountain Park. The park is strategically located at a scenic overlook to view these areas. An overlook could visually connect the two parks and stimulate community pride by giving this left over parcel and playground a stronger identity as premium vantage point overlooking the Little Lehigh River and south Allentown.



View from South 9th and Union Streets.

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan



View from Salisbury Drive

Salisbury Drive Playlot

(00.96 Acres)

Features:

This is a mini/pocket park located along Salisbury Drive in the southern portion of the City, in the neighborhood generally located south I-78, called Alton Park. The park serves the northwest portion of the Alton Park neighborhood and is located across Salisbury Drive from Percy Ruhe Park. There is a playground and a turf area that are in excellent condition. The park is primarily used by the local residents.

This park contains:

- Playground
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles

Issues/Constraints:

There are no significant issues with this park.

Bicentennial Park

(04.64 Acres)

Features:

Bicentennial Park is a baseball facility with stadium seating, located at the intersection of Lehigh Street and Howard Street and serves the Parkway area. This facility was the home of the City's former minor league baseball team and is currently leased to an amateur team. The park is maintained well, has excellent lighting and provides more than 200 on site parking stalls.

This park contains:

- Regulation baseball field
- Restrooms
- Perimeter fencing
- 200+ parking stalls
- Lighting

Issues/Constraints:

The facility is not large enough to accommodate the needs of a Triple A Minor League Team.

The Park has excellent parking and seating with all necessary infrastructure to accommodate high school, collegiate or Single A baseball.

The location of this facility limits the opportunity for “spin-off” economic effects of a true minor league facility. This facility is best focused on non-professional league play especially to limit potential negative impacts on the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Issues have been raised by the community over the utilization of revenue generated by advertising signing.

The site is now leased to an organization for profit to sponsor league tournaments for non-professional leagues.

Opportunities:

Bicentennial Park is a significantly-sized facility that is well suited for tournaments and special events.



View from access lane near Lehigh Street

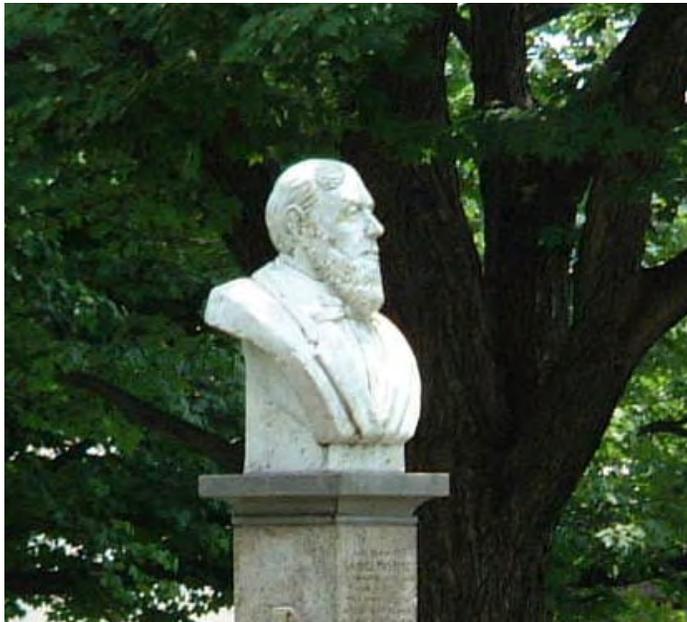


View inside Bicentennial Park

Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing) (08.58 Acres)

Features:

Buck Boyle Park is a neighborhood park consisting of two parcels separated by a Norfolk Southern railroad line and joined by Pump Place. The western parcel, adjacent to Front Street, is .70 acres and has a traditional “town square” feel with a monument to the first mayor of Allentown, Samuel McHose. The larger eastern parcel is 7.88 acres and has extensive frontage along the Lehigh River. The Lehigh University Steiner/Steinberg Boathouse is located at the river’s edge, along with a covered pavilion. This portion of the park is currently being reconstructed and includes a new playground, spray park and parking area. The former pool was removed and the area has been converted to parking. There is a Vacant parcel adjacent to this site, located to the south between this park and Lehigh Landing, the America on Wheels Museum and adjacent to a PPL electrical substation.



Samuel McHose, First Mayor of Allentown

This park contains:

- Boathouse
- Spray Park
- Parking
- Baseball/Softball fields
- Lighting
- Samuel McHose Monument
- Pavilion
- Restrooms

Issues/Constraints:

The park is divided by a Norfolk Southern rail line and is visually cut-off from the surrounding neighborhood by two and three story industrial buildings along Front Street. As a result the park feels like a park that is located in an industrial area, not an area that has been transformed.

The entrance into the park from Front Street is not inviting.

The adjacent substation is a looming presence.

Opportunities:

A gateway to the river and the park could be created at the entrance along Front Street. This could also serve as a way to visually draw the park into the streetscape of the neighborhood and improve the older and smaller portion of the park. The roadway into the park should also be improved as part of this project.

The parcel to the south of the site, adjacent to the PPL substation and the America on Wheels Museum should be studied for a community center. This should be undertaken as part of a larger waterfront master planning effort that ensures that all development (both privately and by the City) is done in a manner that maximizes the potential of each project. The America On Wheels Museum, Lehigh Landing and Buck Boyle Park and the surrounding land need to be viewed as an overall destination within the city.

The feasibility for redevelopment of the former Neuweiler Brewery building into a mixed-use facility, possibly with some form of recreation, should be explored. This building is an incredible gem, yet its abandoned and degraded state significantly impacts the quality and feeling of the adjacent park. This impact creates a false feeling that the park is not maintained and therefore, likely promotes vandalism in the park. If the building could be redeveloped it could add enormous vibrancy to the park and the surrounding community. This building should be demolished only as an absolute last resort.

A trail along the riverfront connecting areas to the south should be routed through Lehigh Landing, between the river, the PPL substation, and ultimately north to the area where the American Parkway will cross the river. At this point, it should be integrated into the American Parkway Bridge over the Lehigh River and also linked back to Jordan Creek.

The City should work with the National Park Service and the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor to develop opportunities to interpret the historic and cultural importance of the riverfront area.



Lehigh University Boathouse

Lehigh Landing (part of Buck Boyle Park) (35.66 Acres)

Features:

This area is not currently classified as a park, but after the completion of the America on Wheels Museum, will become a public waterfront plaza/promenade. The assembled parcels are primarily a former industrial complex. The site is adjacent to the PPL electric substation, an additional open parcel along Front Street and Buck Boyle Park to the north. The substation and its boundaries create a unique opportunity to develop a stronger waterfront identity for the City.

These areas currently contain:

- River Access
- Passive Open Space
- Plaza and Promenade (proposed as part of the America on Wheels Museum)

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan



View from Hamilton Street Bridge looking north toward proposed America on Wheels Museum site

Issues/Constraints:

The PPL electrical substation and associated utility facilities are clearly the greatest constraint to creating a great public park, or any new development, on the Lehigh River, in this area.

Planning of this overall area has, to this point, been somewhat “piece-meal” and lacks overall cohesiveness to ensure maximum utilization.

Opportunities:

The entire waterfront area on the west side of the Lehigh River should be “branded” as “Lehigh Landing.” This would incorporate Buck Boyle Park (at least the riverfront portion). The area south of Hamilton Street, including as much land as possible around the waste water treatment plant, should also be incorporated into the overall waterfront park.

Events and other opportunities to market events on the river should be developed; including facilities such as a riverfront amphitheater.

Trail connections along the entire western edge of the Lehigh River, including connections to the Little Lehigh River and Jordan Creek should be developed.

Cedar Beach Park

(109.62 Acres)

Features:

Cedar Beach Park is a regional park that serves the West End and West Park neighborhoods as well as the entire City and region. It is located between Trexler Memorial Park and Daddona Park and is the primary location for many of the City's premier events, including Mayfair and Great Tastes (new name will be "Tastes of the Valley"). It is bound by Parkway Boulevard to the north and Hamilton Street to the south. The site is split by Cedar Creek. Much of the park is in the flood plain and riparian areas associated with Cedar Creek. The park's many large annual events put enormous stress on its resources, including soil compaction and erosion. As well as serving as a setting for major events, Cedar Beach has seasonal activities which include swimming, ice skating and fishing, that make it a very attractive resource within the City.

This park contains:

- 6 Volleyball Courts (sand)
- 2 Volleyball (color coated)
- 4 Basketball Courts (lighted)
- 2 Tennis Courts (?)
- 2 Playgrounds
- 1 Swimming Pool
- Fitness Trail
- 99 Picnic Tables
- 3 Pavilions
- 4 Barbeque Grills/Pits
- Restrooms
- Parking
- Lighting
- Sidewalks

Issues/Constraints:

The park is a regional park that is used extensively by residents in the adjacent neighborhoods and by users from a much larger area, including outside the City.

The park is very attractive as a setting for day-to-day gatherings and special events. The park is used so much it is virtually "loved-to-death." The impact from so many events in one park can be seen in the amount of erosion and bare turf in areas most heavily used for such events.

The bridged intersections at Parkway Boulevard and Cedar Crest Boulevard are physical barriers prohibiting connection to Trexler Memorial Park and Daddona Park.

Riparian areas lack vegetation that naturally controls erosion and flooding. The edge of the lake appears to be degraded and is treated in a very "engineered" manner.

The interior parking lots promote flooding with extensive impervious surfaces, especially in the low-lying areas adjacent to the creek. As a result, the parking areas typically flood and are covered with silt and debris.



Cedar Beach Park event preparation

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Parking area near Cedar Creek after rain event

Opportunities:

A new parking strategy for the entire park should be developed. Parking should move to the edges and higher areas and the core of the park should be vegetated as much as possible, depending on the use of the area. Parkway Boulevard is wide enough to include diagonal on-street parking. Increased parking along the adjacent streets could reduce the need to provide additional off-street parking and could allow for the removal of most of the existing parking at the core of the park. As part of the redesign of the streets, traffic calming opportunities should be explored to better manage the speed of traffic, hence making the park more accessible by pedestrians, especially children, and particularly during major events.

The two parcels at the intersection of North Saint Elmo Street and Hamilton Street provide an opportunity to connect the park to Daddona Park via a trail. The two parks could be linked, including during special events, which could help relieve some of the pressures on Cedar Beach Park.

A perimeter trail, not on roadways, connected to Trexler Memorial Park and Daddona Park could be the beginning of a larger trail network.

Previous recommendations for Lake Muhlenberg should be revisited to ensure that they promote the area and not only as a quality aesthetic setting, but also as a healthier riparian environmental component of the park. Specifically, planting the edges of the lake and waterway with appropriate vegetation and using soft bio-engineering techniques to promote erosion control and create points of interests. This project is similar to one that was deployed in Trexler Park and could serve as a model for determining associated issues with riparian maintenance in other areas throughout the park system. An education program should be developed which explains the ecological importance of such methods and convey to park users that the City is not failing to do necessary maintenance but is acting proactively to solve a problem.



Cedar Beach Park



East Side Reservoir (14.88 Acres)

Features:

The East Side Reservoir is classified as a unique natural resource area that protects part of Allentown's water supply. The park is bounded by South Halstead Street, Union Street and South Inn Street. Its south and west portions border undeveloped forested land to the north of River Drive, which has steep slopes. Upon entering the park, visitors likely perceive very little of its assets. The pump house and a small parking area are visible. The primary open area consists of a lawn area that caps the reservoir and contains numerous vent stacks. The park serves as a passive open space for the adjacent neighborhood.



Top of East Side Reservoir



Existing overlook into the Lehigh River Valley

This park contains:

- 10 Picnic Tables
- Restrooms
- Pavilion
- 1 Barbeque Pit/Grill
- Benches
- Trail
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

The vent stacks are a major physical element in the landscape. They both limit the utilization of the flat open grass area and create a visually intriguing setting.

Parking is on the opposite side of the reservoir from the pavilion.

Opportunities:

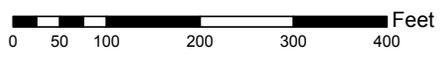
The site is located at a major prospect from which significant views of the City can be seen. This natural feature could be capitalized upon, and enhanced, by creating a raised platform, tower, or viewing area at the corner of the park which would provide for more complete viewing of the Lehigh River Valley and the City.

An interpretative playground could be constructed with the theme of "water-works" which highlight the site's relationship to the City's overall water supply system and its relationship to natural resources. This project could be done as series of sites with different components throughout the City and possibly in partnership with various city, regional state agencies and the Wildlands Conservancy to promote the health and welfare of the Lehigh River Watershed.

Alternative vegetation treatments such as meadow grasses should be considered for the existing turf cap over the reservoir to reduce the amount of mowing in this area.



East Side Reservoir



Fountain Park

(51.54 Acres)

Features:

Fountain Park is classified as a community/regional park. It is located along the southern edge of Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. Lehigh Street and South 8th Street also traverse the park. This park serves the neighborhoods of West Park, Downtown and The Parkway. The majority of the land is located along the riparian corridor of the Little Lehigh River. The 8th Street Bridge, the proximity of the Little Lehigh River to the roadway and the extreme change in elevation to the north divides the park into separate regions.

This park contains:

- 3 T-ball fields
- 1 Soccer Field
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Football field
- 2 Basketball Courts
- Lighting
- 2 Playgrounds
- 2 Pools
- 1 Roller Hockey Rink
- Biking Trail
- Pavilion
- Sidewalk
- Restroom
- Trash receptacles
- Parking



View from Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive into soccer field

Issues/Constraints:

Like the Lehigh Parkway, this park suffers from the effects of increased stormwater runoff created by development upstream and outside of the City.

Although this park is located close to the City's Downtown core, access is not easy due to significant changes in elevations. There are staircases in a few locations that provide access and create wonderful gateways into the park.

Several of the streets adjacent to the park handle high traffic volumes and are designed in a manner that promotes higher speed vehicular traffic. Specifically, the intersection of SR 145 and Union Street east of this intersection is not pedestrian or bicyclist friendly. As a result, this limits the ability of residents to safely access the park or travel between park segments.

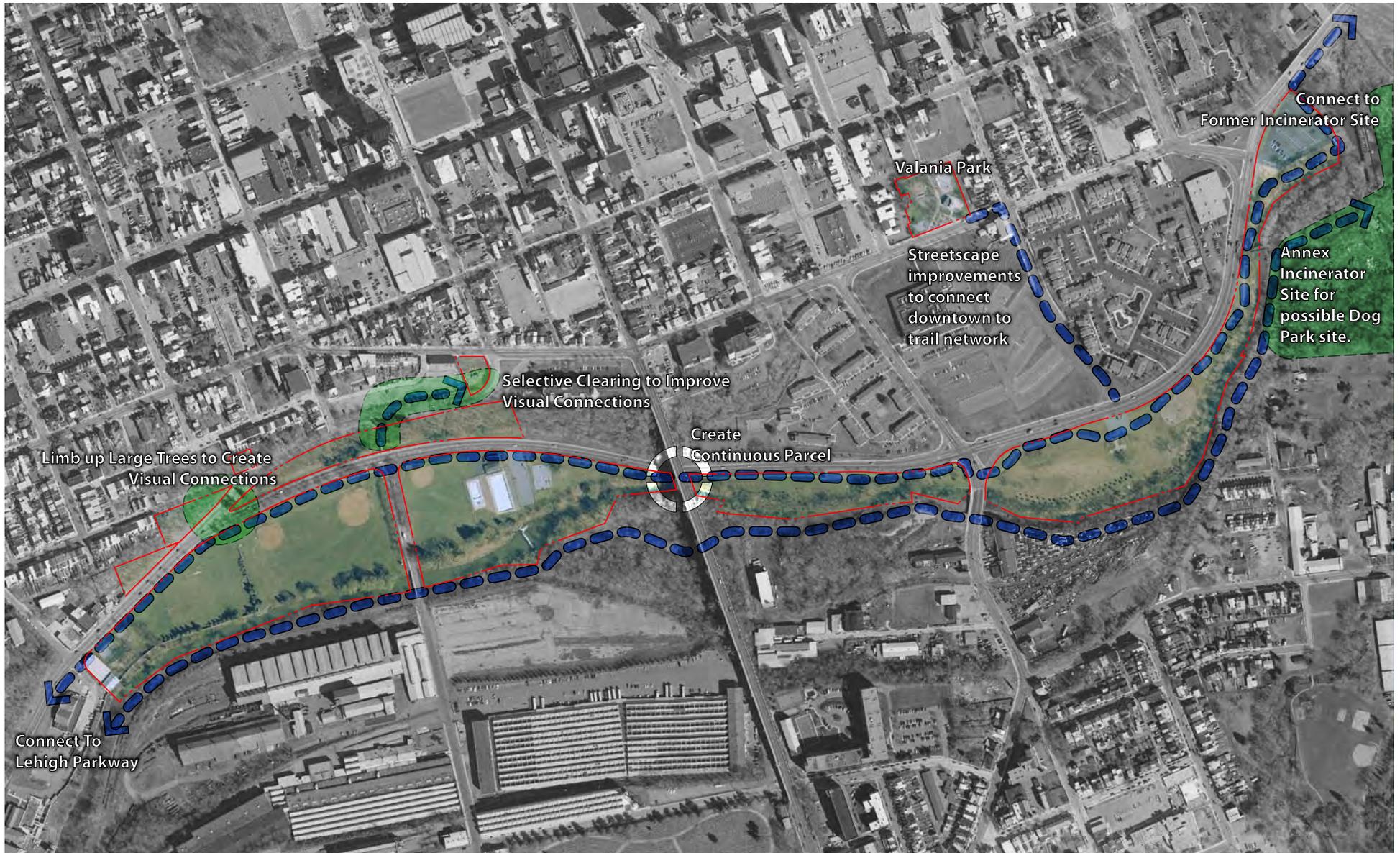
The pool facility in its current state needs upgrading (see Pool Facilities Assessment – Appendix D).

Opportunities:

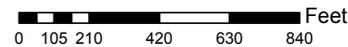
The former City Incinerator Site should be incorporated into the park, especially with a network of trails that extends Fountain Park further east and ultimately to Jordan Creek and the Lehigh River, along with the trail on the railroad right of way south of Little Lehigh Creek.

The edges of the park that do not have large canopy trees should be infill planted with new canopy trees and entrance areas, especially those that align with staircases, should be planted with understory trees and shrub vegetation to create stronger entry ways into the park.

The creation of a dog park facility on the former incinerator site should be explored.



Fountain Park



Franklin Park (01.89 Acres)

Features:

Franklin Park is classified as a mini/pocket park. It is located along Emmett Street between North Franklin Street and North 14th Street. This park serves the West Park neighborhood and is only two blocks from West Park. The site is flat and has both hardscaped areas and vegetated areas. The playground equipment has recently been installed and is in good condition. The fence around the perimeter presents a utilitarian feeling and is not visually appropriate for the historic context of the neighborhood. Raised landscape beds accommodate small trees and serve as a buffer between the playground and the hardscape surfaces. They are constructed of pressure treated wood and do not create the effect of a high-quality urban park. This park lacks lighting.

This park contains:

- 1 Playground
- Pavilion
- Sidewalk
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

The existing chain-link fencing is unattractive and overly limits access to the park.

The edge treatments between the playground surface area don't control the spread of surface material, creating an unkempt look for the park.

The pressure treated timbers are unattractive and create a suburban residential feeling for the park.

Opportunities:

The Park could become a strong "identity forming" place for the Franklin area of the West Park Neighborhood of the city - a mini town-square

The pressure-treated timber beds could be removed and larger trees with broader canopies could be planted in tree pits. This would still delineate the space and it would reduce maintenance and simplify the look of the park, while maintaining vegetation and providing shade.

This park should have a stronger design association with West Park, which is only two blocks away. Through the incorporation of similar design elements, such as lighting, fencing, signing, banners, etc. The park could become a stronger asset within the neighborhood.



View from Russell Street

Hanover Acres Playlot

(00.73 Acres)

Features:

Hanover Acres Playlot is a pocket park located within the Hanover Acres housing development that consists of two separate sites. One area consists of a grass area located between several of the multi-unit housing units within the development. This space has no assigned uses with the exception of incomplete swing equipment.

The second area consists of a small ballfield located behind several other multi-family units within the development.

This park contains:

- Swing Set Structure (no swings)
- Ballfield/Grass Area

Issues/Constraints:

This park currently provides little in terms of assets to the community although it is well integrated into the residential neighborhood. The site's elevation is in an area that is located well above the downtown.

The location of the ballfield isolates it from the streets within the neighborhood, making access and safety patrolling more difficult.

Opportunities:

This residential development is programmed for rehabilitation. As part of that overall project, park and recreation improvements should be designated for the park.

The smaller grass area is located adjacent to a neighborhood street and has excellent visibility. This area should be treated as a passive recreation area with the addition of large canopy trees around the perimeter and a tot lot.

The ballfield should receive turf upgrading. The opportunity to create a perimeter trail that could also provide special vehicular access by police should be explored. Limited, but strategic clearing of large trees at the top of the slope, down to the river, should be explored to create areas with vistas to the downtown.



View from North Dauphin Street

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Howard Keck Juniata Playlot

(00.07 Acres)

Features:

Howard Keck Juniata Playlot is a pocket park on the corner of Keck Street, South Howard Street and West Juniata Street. It services an area that extends west to South Hoe Street, east to Hazel Street, north to Cumberland Street and south to West Tioga Street. The park has a newer playground and it is in good condition.

This park contains:

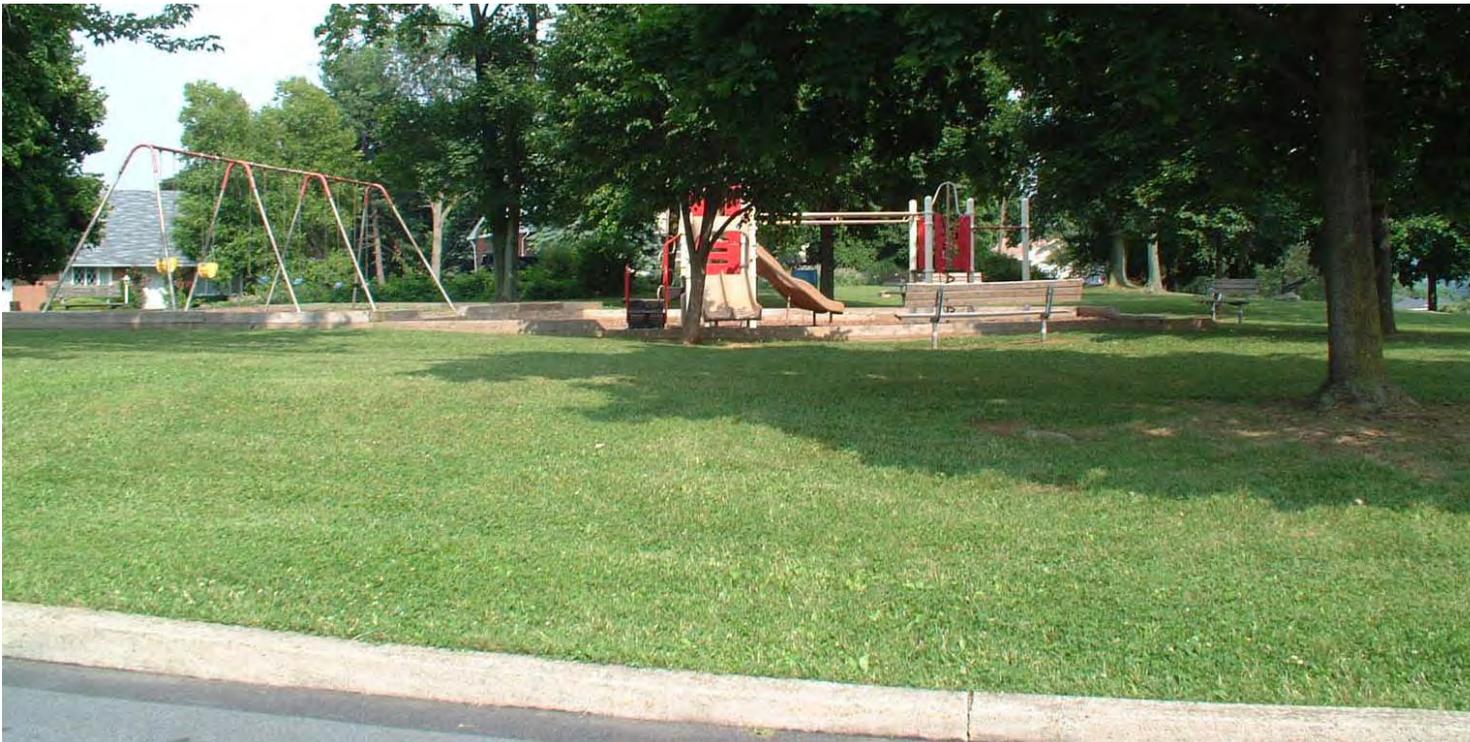
- Benches
- Trash Receptacle
- Playground

Issues/Constraints:

There are no apparent issues with this park. No community issues were raised.

Opportunities:

The park serves its audience well as it exists today.



View from Keck Street

Irving Street Park

(09.47 Acres)

Features:

Irving Street Park is classified as a community park and serves the East Allentown neighborhood. It is located across East Washington Street from Dieruff High School. The service area for Irving Street Park extends to Union Boulevard to the north, Hanover Avenue to the south, North Gilmore Street to the west and North Meade Street to the east. The turf and fields are in very good condition. The physical connections to the streetscape and surrounding neighborhoods are exemplary.



View from E. Washington Street into shared softball and soccer field

This park contains:

- 1 Little League Baseball Field
- 1 Softball Field (shared)
- 1 Soccer Field (shared)
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 2 Basketball Courts
- Lighting
- 1 Playground
- 1 Pool
- 4 Tennis Courts
- Concession Stand
- Pavilion
- Sidewalk
- Restroom
- Benches
- Bleachers
- Trash Receptacles

Issues/Constraints:

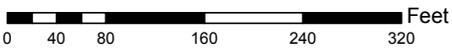
This park fulfills a major portion of the active recreation needs in the East Allentown neighborhood of the City. The site is heavily programmed with facilities to serve the community and also the adjacent high school.

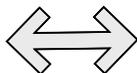
Opportunities:

This park is well maintained and represents a maximum utilization of the site.



Irving Street Park



Formal Access Points 

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Ithaca Playlot

(03.07 Acres)

Features:

Ithaca Playlot is a pocket park. It contains passive open space and a limited amount of active recreation. The park serves the Alton Park neighborhood and is situated in the southeast corner of the City. Its service area extends to Mountain Lane to the north and Fernor Street to the west. The property has steep slopes and is wooded. There is a level area along the northwest edge where the current facilities are located.

This park contains:

- 1 Basketball Court
- 1 Playground
- Partial Fencing
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles
- Passive Open Space

Issues/Constraints:

The improvements identified in the City's 1993 Recreation and Open Space Plan appear to have been implemented, including adding a basketball court and improving the playground.

This park is located near the large South Mountain Reservoir Park, yet is not directly connected.

Opportunities:

A trail connection should be created which links this park with the South Mountain Reservoir Park at least as far north as I-78 and if possible underneath I-78 where the roadway crosses Trout Creek. A linkage to the south into Emmaus should be studied.



View from Ithaca Street

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Jordan Meadows

(11.32 Acres)

Features:

Jordan Meadows is classified as a neighborhood park and is one of the newest parks in the system, having been constructed in the late 1990s. The park is bound by Jordan Creek to the west and American Parkway to the east. The park serves the Waterfront and North Allentown neighborhoods. The park has pedestrian access issues from adjacent residential areas, especially across American Parkway, to the 1st and 6th Wards, along the waterfront. The park has a roller hockey rink and handball courts that are in excellent condition. It has a practice field with lighting. The Tilghman Street Bridge bisects the park into two areas and creates a physical and visual barrier.

A separate parcel located at 4th and Gordon Streets, across Jordan Creek, is also considered part of this park. This lot is currently utilized by Central Catholic School for basketball.



View of adjacent abandoned railroad



View from Gordon Street

This park contains:

- 1 Roller Hockey Rink
- 1 Practice Field (football)
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles
- Passive Open Space

Issues/Constraints:

The biggest issue with this park is the ability of residents, and especially children, to access and exit it safely. The park essentially has one access point, located off of Gordon Street. In several of the public and focus group meetings the issues of speeding traffic and safe pedestrian crossings across American Parkway were raised. Many parents stated that they don't allow their children to go to this park because it is unsafe to access without adult supervision.

With only one entrance and its long, thin shape, the park has the feeling of being a "dead end." Since the park is almost entirely fenced along its perimeter, this can create the feeling of being trapped.

Opportunities:

Improved at-grade pedestrian crossings along American Parkway and Gordon Street should be considered.

This park should be extended to the north and the south. Ideally, either as a park or at least as a trail, the park should extend along Jordan Creek to Jordan Park. To the south, the land along the former railroad right-of-way should be obtained to create a park or trail connection to the Little Lehigh River and/or the Lehigh River. These connections would directly connect this park to a much larger park network, in most cases without having to cross major roadways.

The separate lot at 4th and Gordon Streets should be signed appropriately so it is incorporated into the overall park network.



Jordan Meadows

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Jordan Park

(52.34 Acres)

Features:

Jordan Park is classified as a community/regional park. The park occupies the floodplain and riparian area of Jordan Creek. The creek divides the park. The park is close to the northern gateway into Allentown via 7th Street/MacArthur Road and serves the North Allentown neighborhood as well as South Whitehall and Whitehall Townships. The service area for this park extends well beyond the City of Allentown and the park lies on the boundary line with the adjacent township. The park is scenic and bucolic while supporting passive and active recreation events for all age groups.

This park contains:

- 1 Baseball Field (lighted)
- 2 Softball Fields (lighted)
- 1 Football Field (lighted) (shared)
- 2 Volleyball Courts (1 sand)
- 4 Handball/Racquetball Courts
- 1 Practice Field (shared)
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 6 Tennis Courts (clay) (3 lighted)



View of Jordan Creek near crossing dam

- 1 Playground
- 1 Swimming Pool
- Concession Stand
- 2 Pavilions
- 9 Picnic Tables
- Reserved Picnic Groves
- 2 Barbeque Pits/Grills
- Restrooms
- Lighting
- Benches
- Measured Trail/Path
- Trash Receptacles
- Passive Open Space
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

Jordan Park is used by a group larger than Allentown residents. The City is maintaining a park that could be serving a large percentage of non-city residents.

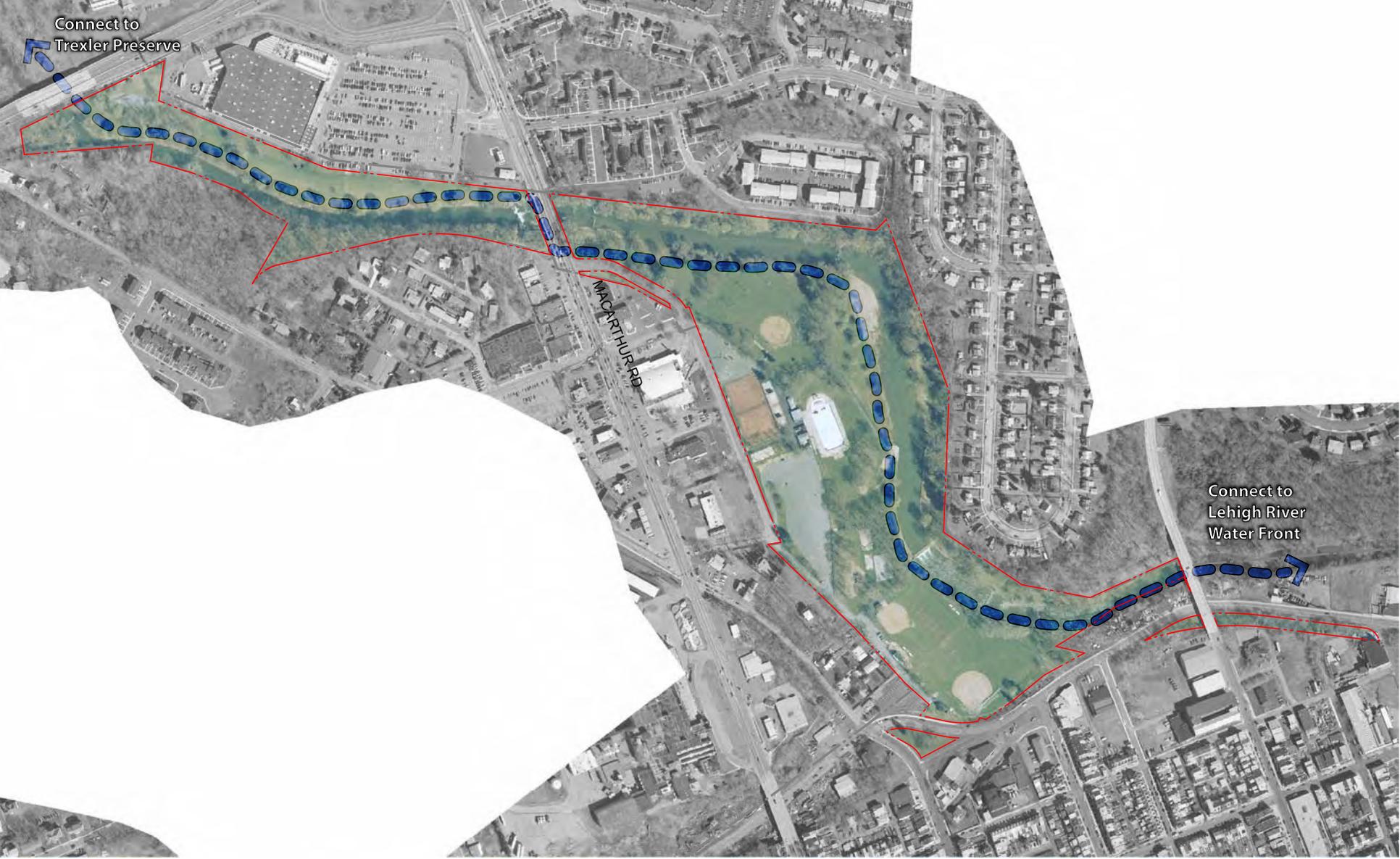
The toe of the creek's edge is defined by a masonry bulkhead. Vegetated areas that allow for and are designed to accommodate natural flood inundation should be explored for stream bank stabilization, erosion protection and enhanced flood control.

The pool facility in its current state needs upgrading (see Pool Facilities Assessment – Appendix D).

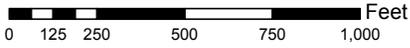
Opportunities:

The Jordan Creek as a whole could serve as the foundation for a regional trail network that connects the park to the Trexler Game Preserve to the north and the Lehigh River waterfront to the south.

The playing fields in the park are used for specific activities at varying times throughout the year. Each field should be shared when available for another activity when seasons do not overlap.



Jordan Park



Keck Park (37.87 Acres)

Features:

Keck Park is classified as a community park. The park is located on a high bluff, along an interior bend of the Lehigh River. Due to its tucked-away location it primarily serves a portion of the overall Keck neighborhood. Special user groups, however, probably come from a much larger portion of the City. The basketball courts, tennis courts and handball courts are in good condition. The pedestrian trail surface is in good condition, yet the exercise stations are in disrepair and vegetation along the trail edge needs to be better maintained. The baseball fields are in fair condition and are in need of turf improvements.

This park contains:

- 3 Little League Baseball Fields
- 2 Handball Courts
- 1 Practice Field (shared)
- 1 Basketball Court

- 1 Playground
- 2 Tennis Courts
- Concession Stand
- 1 Pavilion
- 3 Picnic Tables
- Restrooms
- Lighting
- Benches
- Trail/Path
- Trash Receptacles
- Passive Open Space
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

The park is somewhat isolated, since its location is in the rear of the local neighborhood and it is cut-off from the Lehigh River, below, due to the Norfolk Southern railroad right-of-way. In addition there are steep slopes in the rear of the park that make accessibility challenging. The inclusion of geological formations in the center of the park, however, provides visual interests and divides the park into separate distinct areas.

Opportunities:

The development of a new trail network that links this park to the East Side Reservoir, Canal Park and possibly the State Hospital site and beyond, parallel to and slightly above River Drive, to Bethlehem should be explored.

A point of prospect or scenic overlooks to the Lehigh River Valley should be developed. This may require some sensitive clearing and management of vegetation to afford a generous viewshed. Interest in keeping the exercise stations should be determined. If there is little public interest they should be removed.

The conversion of the 90' baseball field located on the easternmost portion of the park to a regulation soccer field should be considered.



View into playground from East Mosser Street



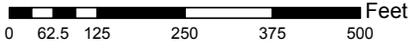
Connect to Canal Park Via Hamilton Street Bridge

Connect to East Side Reservoir

Possible Soccer Field

Limb up Large Trees to Create Visual Connections to Existing Prospects

Keck Park



Kimmett's Lock (05.18 Acres)

Lehigh Canal Park (29.56 Acres)

Sterner Island (14.09 Acres)

Features:

These three areas are classified as natural resource areas. The southern portion of the area is isolated between the Lehigh River and the railroad which provides minimal access. The canal and lock are part of the historic and cultural fabric of Allentown. The existing road is in good condition but the signs leading visitors into the canal area are small and easily missed.

These areas contain:

- 1 Pavilion
- 9 Picnic Tables
- 1 Barbeque Grill/Pit
- Restrooms
- Lighting
- Benches
- Trail/Path
- Trash Receptacles
- Passive Open Space
- Parking



Northern view along canal

Issues/Constraints:

The isolated nature of this park is both its major asset and a significant constraint. Access to the park is challenging. The access roads, especially to Canal Park and Sterner Island, traverse areas that are still industrial in nature. Added to this, the active rail line in Canal Park creates a major barrier between the adjacent residential neighborhoods and the park and the river.

There are portions between the parks which have very steep slopes, especially below North Bradford Street.

The current signing that trailblazes the circuitous route to the parks is small, of various designs/types and is in poor condition.

Opportunities:

These three parks should be combined together into one big park with the name "Lehigh Canal Park." This will help to form a stronger identity for the park.

A trail connection or special streetscaping along East Walnut Street should be considered to create a more pronounced entrance to Canal Park and link the river with the East Side Reservoir Park.

The City should work with the National Park Service and the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor to develop opportunities to interpret the historic and cultural importance of the riverfront area.

Scenic overlooks of the Lehigh River watershed, Waterfront and Downtown neighborhoods should be developed, especially on the bluff across from Lehigh Landing. This site, located high on a bluff above Hanover Acres, could also be promoted as a special site for a commercial restaurant, etc. Vehicular access to this area would need to be improved.

A new bicycle/pedestrian trail bridge should be developed to cross the Lehigh River and connect South Albert Street to the Auburn Street area. This would connect the main trail along the river to the trail network that would be created up the Little Lehigh River and the Jordan Creek. This connection would greatly enhance the accessibility of Lehigh Canal Park and help address the barrier issues of continuing the trail along the east side of the Lehigh River, north of Hamilton Street.



Lehigh Canal Park

Little Lehigh Parkway

(375.18 Acres)

Features:

This park is classified as a natural resource area with some active recreation facilities. The assembled parcels are dominated by the low-lying riparian areas associated with the Little Lehigh River. The park is a destination point for residents from all over the Lehigh Valley Region. The Park Drive bridge is currently being repaired and this restricts access to the full reaches of the park. The long linear nature of this park and the associated trail network, creates the opportunity for long journeys through the park and it is popular with joggers, hikers and bicyclists.

These areas contain:

- River Access
- Passive Open Space
- Frisbee Golf Course (Seasonal)
- 33 Picnic Tables
- 1 Barbeque Grill/Pit

- Benches
- Trails/Paths
- Restrooms
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking
- Trout Hatchery
- “Lights in the Parkway” (Seasonal Event)

Issues/Constraints:

Much of the southern portion of the park is completely surrounded by development (primarily residential) which is located outside of the City. Therefore non-City residents are a major user group of the park.

The park is crossed by I-78 in the southern portion.

The Allentown airport and adjacent industrial area limits access and creates a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile wide buffer to the east.

Due to the significant amounts of newly developed lands upstream, and outside the City, the Little Lehigh River is experiencing increased negative impacts from flooding and sedimentation loading. These impacts are requiring additional maintenance demands on the City for this and other parks.

Opportunities:

This park is the center piece of the City’s existing trail network. It also represents the opportunity to be a vital link to a much larger trail network that could extend down-stream to Fountain Park and ultimately the waterfront and the Lehigh River. To the south, the trail could extend into the surrounding municipalities, hence creating a regional multi-municipal trail network.



Main Entrance

Lumber & Benton Playlot

(00.74 Acres)

Features:

This park is classified as a mini/pocket park. This park serves the Roosevelt Park/South Mountain neighborhoods. Specifically, the service area extends to Hamilton Park School and West Emaus Avenue. The playground equipment is newer and is in good condition.

These areas contain:

- 1 Playground
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles
- Earth Berm

Issues/Constraints:

The park's location is on a triangular parcel of land within two separate housing complexes. As a result there are visibility issues into the park. The raised earthen mound helps create a design feature that elevates the site. This is good for safety but decreases visibility.

Opportunities:

Increasing visibility by adding a vertical element such as a pavilion facility, could promote higher utilization of this park.



View from parking area behind multifamily housing on Delaware Street

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Old Allentown Cemetery

(04.06 Acres)

Features:

Old Allentown Cemetery is a historic cemetery that is the focus of community pride in the Downtown and nearby West Park neighborhoods. A portion of the site has large deciduous trees that offer shade relief and refuge to nearby residents and workers. The Friends of Old Allentown Cemetery is an active community group in place to aid in the maintenance of the park.

This cemetery/park contains:

- Partial Perimeter Fencing
- Historic Headstones, Markers and Monuments
- Excellent Proximity to Core Downtown Businesses
- Benches and Walkways

Issues/Constraints:

Due to the age and character of the immediate residential neighborhood many of the residents view the cemetery as an extension of their respective properties.

There are issues of vandalism and littering.

Opportunities:

Old Allentown Cemetery is prized by residents. Funding through grant programs specifically focused on historic cemeteries and historic landscapes should be explored to help document historic resources and to conserve the existing historic fabric, including the gravestones, the fencing and possibly the plantings.



View from Turner Street

Old Fairgrounds Playground

(01.06 Acres)

Features:

Old Fairgrounds Playground is a unique mini/pocket park located on North 5th Street between Liberty Street and Gordon Street. It serves the core area of the North Allentown neighborhood. Allen Street, North Mohr Street, Chew Street and North Church Street are the service area boundaries. The park was recently constructed and has new equipment and facilities, including a spray park. The park is highly used and is located within one of Allentown's densest neighborhoods. There is parking adjacent to the park which was provided to ease some of the parking demands in this dense neighborhood.

This park contains:

- Playground
- Spray Park (seasonal)
- Perimeter Fencing
- Parking
- Benches
- Lighting
- Trash Receptacles

Issues/Constraints:

Maintenance, especially regarding the various surface materials, will be a challenge to keep in good condition.

It is important that as this park ages, that the vegetation, as originally conceived, is allowed to mature, especially the large canopy trees between the parking and the park.

Opportunities:

Due to the fact that this park is new, it should be monitored to determine which design elements are working and those that could be removed or replaced. Otherwise, this park is a positive addition to the neighborhood.



View into Old Fairgrounds Playground from the parking area

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Patriots Park

(05.54 Acres)

Features:

Patriots Park is a unique neighborhood park located along St. John Street, which serves the Parkway neighborhood. Harrison Street, North Jefferson Street and Lehigh Street are the service area boundaries. The ball field, bleachers, tennis courts, playground and parking are all in good condition. This park is used by local churches and schools as well as the surrounding residents.

This park contains:

- 1 Baseball Field
- 2 Volleyball Courts
- 2 Basketball Court
- Playground
- Concession Stand
- Pavilion
- Benches
- Restroom
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

There are no significant issues that have been identified with this park.

Opportunities:

Patriots Park could be better linked, both functionally and aesthetically, to Bicentennial Park, through unified lighting, fencing, benches, signing, etc.



View into Patriots Park from St. John Street

Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park)

(25.98 Acres)

Features:

Percy Ruhe Park is a recreational complex located along the northern side of Oxford Street which serves the Alton Park neighborhood. The park serves the area between the City's southern boundary, I-78 and Lehigh Street. There are ball fields and parking and landforms which create natural bleachers. All are in good condition. This park is used by both Allentown residents and members of the nearby municipalities, such as Salisbury.

This park contains:

- 4 Baseball Field
- 1 Volleyball Courts
- 1 Basketball Courts
- 2 Handball Courts
- 3 Tennis Courts
- Playground
- Concession Stand
- Pavilion
- Benches
- Lighting
- Restroom
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

This park is designed to primarily serve as an active recreation facility. As a result the park has large expenses of open lawn.

Opportunities:

The park could use additional vegetation, especially large canopy trees along the perimeter and possibly adjacent to some of the playing fields. Canopy trees would provide additional shade and improve the aesthetics of the parks, yet keep clear sight lines through the park for safety and maintenance.

The western-most baseball field could be shared or converted into soccer field.

There is an opportunity to connect this park with Salisbury Drive Playlor, across Salisbury Drive and to the north with the Lehigh Parkway, via a trail along Salisbury Drive.



Sculpture along parking area adjacent to Oxford Drive

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Roosevelt Park

(06.86 Acres)

Features:

Roosevelt Park is a neighborhood park located along the northern edge of South Woodward Street. It serves the Roosevelt Park/South Mountain neighborhoods. Auburn Street, South 4th Street, South Albert Street and Brownstone Street are the service area boundaries. The ball fields, tennis courts, playground and parking are all in good condition.

This park contains:

- 2 Baseball Fields
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 2 Basketball Court
- Playground
- Roller Hockey
- Concession Stand
- Pavilion
- Benches
- Restroom
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

This park is in good condition and no significant issues were identified. It appears that many of the facilities, including the ballfield fencing and backstops, etc. have been upgraded, per the recommendations of the City's 1993 Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Opportunities:

No additional opportunities could be identified.



View into Roosevelt Park from St. John Street

South Mountain Reservoir Park

(166.43 Acres)

Features:

South Mountain Reservoir Park is a natural resource area that serves not only the Roosevelt Park/South Mountain neighborhoods of Allentown, but also Salisbury, Emmaus, Upper Milford and Lower Macungie. The area has approximately six picnic tables, two pavilions and a small walking trail network that are all in good condition. Although not perceivable from the ground, almost half of the land included in this park is located on the south side of I-78, which bisects the park. As its name implies the site also serves as a reservoir for the water supply within the city. The site is primarily wooded, but there are a few open lawn areas located near the main entrance and over the cap area of the reservoir facility. The topography is generally sloped with steep sloped areas (>10%) occurring frequently.

This park contains:

- 1 Volleyball Court
- 2 Pavilions
- Walking Trails
- Benches
- Restrooms
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

Considering the large size of this site, this park is under utilized, especially when considering that nearly half of the 166 acres is located south of I-78. This highway serves as a major barrier to creating one cohesive park.

Opportunities:

A trail network should be studied to create more trail options throughout the park, including a possible mountain biking course. A connection between the two halves of the park should be explored, possibly via the Trout Creek stream corri-

dor. A connection to Salisbury Township, possibly via a power line easement, should be studied. Additional connections to the Ithaca Playlot, Walden Creek Playlot, Salisbury Drive Playlot, Percy Ruhe Park and beyond, including south, into Emmaus should be explored.

The existing lawn area to the south of the main access roadway should be studied for the creation of a practice soccer field. This would require grading and terracing to accommodate such a facility within the existing topography. The introduction of some minimal organized sports, into an otherwise passive park, will likely enhance the use of the park and broaden its appeal.



View along main drive approaching main reservoir.

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

South Street Playlot

(01.20 Acres)

Features:

South Street Playlot is a pocket park located at the intersection of Mosser Street and South Street which serves the West End neighborhood. Fairview Street and College Drive in Allentown, as well as portions of Salisbury Township are the service boundaries. The playground and lawn areas are in good condition. This park is used by the immediate surrounding residents.

This park contains:

- Playground
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles

Issues/Constraints:

This park is isolated from other parks and open spaces and is physically located on the City's boundary; as a result a significant amount of the park's service area is located within neighborhoods that are part of Salisbury Township.

Opportunities:

A study should be done to determine shared resource capabilities with Salisbury Township. At a minimum, this may just be a joint "Friends of" group to participate in the support of the park via organizing events, participating in clean-up days, etc.

A trail connection between this park and adjacent facilities in Salisbury Township should be explored.



View into South Street Playlot from Mosser Street

Stevens Park (00.88 Acres)

Features:

Stevens Park is a unique mini/pocket park located at the intersection of Tilghman Street and 6th Street. It serves the core areas of the North Allentown and Downtown. Seventh Street, Pratt Street, 5th Street and Washington Street are the service area boundaries. The site is flat with a drainage area at the southern corner lined with large sized rip-rap stone. Most of the park is paved except for the playground. The park is highly used and is located within one of Allentown's densest neighborhoods.

This park contains:

- Covered Pavilion
- Half Basketball Court
- 3 Play Lots
- Benches
- Perimeter Fencing

Issues/Constraints:

Due to the density of residential development surrounding the park and the lack of other immediate open space, children, teenagers, and young adults flock to Stevens Park. In recent years there have been numerous issues related to youth activi-

ties (both positive and negative) within the park, especially by adjacent residents. The City has tried to balance the need for active recreation, such as full-court basketball with the desire by other age groups to have a more passive park. As a result of issues of violence and conflicts between various age groups, the full basketball court was reduced to a half court. This has reduced the amount of large groups of older youths hanging-out in the park and has lowered the overall target age group for this park.

The park closes at dusk and there is limited lighting in and around the park.

The chain-link fence surrounding the park is in poor condition. It also limits access to a few controlled points. The eastern edge is bordered by a retaining wall, also in poor condition, that is located outside the fence. The wall and the fence together create an awkward area that is neither part of the park nor part of the sidewalk.

There are a few trees and no lawn or turf. Asphalt and concrete cover a majority of the site while mulch covers the remaining playground surface. The rip-rap stone treatment for stormwater management in the southeast corner of the park has an "engineered" quality and doesn't appear to be appropriate for an urban park in this context.



View from Tilghman Street

Opportunities:

Stevens Park is both revered and disliked by the community, depending on the interest group. It is clear, however, that this park is needed in the community. With the range of feelings for the park and the conflicts between user and age groups, a method of tapping into the desire to improve the park physically as well as make it safer, needs to be accomplished. Although there is a broad recommendation to create separate “Friends of” groups for many of the parks, this recommendation specifically applies to this park. The Stevens Park Safe Neighborhoods Association exists and a formal group purely focused on the care of the park should be established. A highly organized group for this park could dramatically help ease the decision making process for the City; with regards to what improvements or changes should be made, and it would also likely help to reduce crime and vandalism. This group should also be tasked with creating stronger partnerships with community organizations, such as the nearby Boys and Girls Club, and the City Police Department to dramatically increase programmed activities within the park.

More trees should be added to the park. This could be limited to adding street trees along the curb line surrounding the park and in a few strategic locations within the park. Plantings which block views into the park should be discouraged.

Additional programming, especially in conjunction with the nearby Teen Center would help aid in monitoring activities in the park and promote proper usage and safety.

Trexler Memorial Park

(134.39 Acres)

Features:

Trexler Memorial Park is a regional community park located along the western edge of Cedar Creek Boulevard. Locally it serves the West End neighborhood of the City, but attracts visitors from a much larger area including South Whitehall Township and well beyond the City's other boundaries. This park is the showcase park in the City's system and all of the pathways, lawns, streambank/riparian areas, vegetation and physical structures are in excellent condition. This park sets the standard for what a bucolic and scenic park should look like.

This park contains:

- Passive Open Space
- Arboretum
- Pond
- Spring House
- Memorial/Overlook
- Benches
- Restroom
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

This park has a substantial amount of lawn area and other maintenance intensive design features. Reducing maintenance demands while meeting the public perception of how this park should be maintained is a major issue.

Due to a catastrophic accident involving a cyclist, the park now regulates cycling, limiting it to alternating days. This approach seems to be problematic at best and very confusing for the public.

There are stringent regulations on how people can use the park, specifically related to the lawn areas and picnicking. These regulations are much more stringent than in the other parks in the system and they seem to be at odds with the overall mis-

sion of the park system. As City staff is reduced, enforcement of these regulations is going to become more challenging.

Cedar Crest Boulevard is an extremely heavily trafficked roadway, which creates a barrier to safe access to the park. The intersection of Broadway and Cedar Crest Boulevard lacks sufficient facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely navigate between Trexler Park and Cedar Beach Park. This intersection is especially problematic since it is located on a structure over Cedar Creek.

In the 1990s a streambank restoration project was undertaken within Trexler Park. This soft-engineering project, which requires less intensive maintenance of the streambank edge, as a result of allowing aquatic vegetation to grow to a more mature state, can be perceived as being un-maintained. The park lacks signing or educational/interpretative elements to convey this important information to the public. This project should be considered as a pilot for the enormous amount of streambanks and riparian corridors located within other parks in the City.

Opportunities:

A trail connection should be created to Cedar Beach Park and also to Haines Mill Park which is located nearby but outside of the City's limits.

A complete evaluation of all of the regulations related to this park, and all of the City's parks should be performed.

A parallel series of paths should be explored to accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians. In many urban parks, for example Fairmont Park's Kelly Drive in Philadelphia, there is a soft path for pedestrians and hard path for cyclists. This eliminates many of the conflict issues between walkers and fast bicyclists.

Comprehensive environmental education/interpretative signing program should be developed for this and other parks.



Trexler Memorial Park

5 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Trout Creek Park

(79.23 Acres)

Features:

Trout Creek Park is both a neighborhood park and a natural resource area. It is located primarily along the Norfolk Southern railroad line and Mack Boulevard. This park is located at the boundary of the Parkway and Roosevelt Park/South Mountain neighborhoods. The physical barrier of the Norfolk Southern railroad divides the park into a north and south sections. The park parallels a small stream and can be described as a linear park with various facilities or “outdoor rooms.”

This park contains:

- 2 Baseball Fields
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 2 Playgrounds
- Concession Stand
- Trails/Paths
- Pavilion
- Passive Open Space
- Benches
- Restroom
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking

Issues/Constraints:

The baseball field in the northern section is in need of improvements.

The northern section is low-lying and appears to have drainage issues which make it difficult to grow quality turf for ball fields.

The railroad overpass divides the park into two sections and due to its narrow width, it may be difficult to create a trail connection underneath the railroad.

The southern section of the park lacks amenities and is limited to a series of open lawn areas.

Opportunities:

A trail should be created which links all of the parcels in the southern section of the park, from the Mountainville Memorial Little League fields, west to Mack Boulevard and then north, underneath the railroad, though the northern section of the park and ultimately north to the former City Incinerator Site, the Little Lehigh River and ultimately the Lehigh River.

The stream edge should be restored with various bio-engineering techniques and invasive plant material should be removed to reduce erosion and stabilize the toe of the stream.



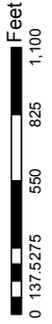
Trail entrance to ball field



Trout Creek riparian area



Consider Connecting
Parcels



Trout Creek Park

Daddona Park (Union Terrace)

(30.35 Acres)

Features:

Union Terrace is classified as both a neighborhood park and a natural resource protection area. The park is located along Cedar Creek and has a mix of passive and active facilities, including a beautiful terraced lawn amphitheater and playing fields. This park serves the West End and West Park neighborhoods as well as adjacent Salisbury Township. The southern parcels consists of a heavily wooded riparian.

This park contains:

- Amphitheater
- 1 Baseball Field
- Small Lake
- 3 Play Lots
- 1 Picnic Grove
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking



The Amphitheater at Union Terrace

Issues/Constraints:

Although the amphitheater is a wonderful place, it has practical limitations for performances. The lack of proper utilities and other support facilities, such as a band shell or storage, limits the size and frequency of possible performances.

The baseball field is also currently used for soccer and field hockey.

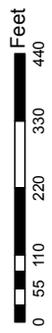
Opportunities:

A feasibility study of how the amphitheater could be improved or redesigned should be undertaken to better utilize this hidden resource within the park system.

The small parking area at the intersection of Walnut Street and South St. Elmo Street should be realigned to create a better automobile drop-off area or an accessible parking area. This area currently looks worn and eroded and needs improvements.

A new connection between this park and nearby Cedar Beach Park should be studied. The parks are less than 250 feet apart. It appears that two adjacent parcels could be configured to connect both parks. The Little Lehigh Parkway is less than a quarter mile away to the south. Acquiring the site to the south of the park and across Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard would complete a continuous trail connection between Trexler Park, Cedar Beach Park, Dadonna Park, and the Little Lehigh Parkway and beyond.

An agreement should be developed with the Allentown School District regarding their fields. The adjacent Union Terrace Elementary School property could be reconstructed to accommodate a soccer field and the existing and adjacent baseball field within the park could be improved. This would add a new soccer field to the City's supply and provide a better mix of active recreation facilities in this park.



Daddona Park (Union Terrace)

Valania Park (05.54 Acres)

Features:

Valania Park is a neighborhood park located at the intersection of Union Street and South William Street which serves the City's Downtown neighborhood. Maple Street, South College Street and Lawrence Court are the primary service area boundaries for this park. The basketball court, volley ball court and playground equipment are all in good condition. Valania Park is situated near businesses, churches, multi-family dwellings and single family houses.



View into Valania Park

This park contains:

- 1 Basketball Court
- 1 Volleyball Court
- Playground
- Pavilion
- Benches
- Lighting
- Trash Receptacles

Issues/Constraints:

Union Street and several of the adjacent streets have high traffic volumes and vehicular speeds which can impede pedestrian accessibility to this park, especially during peak periods.

Visibility in the park is impeded in some locations, especially after dark.

Opportunities:

The intersections of N. 5th and 6th Streets with Union Street should be studied for improved cross walks. Traffic calming techniques should be explored for the roadways adjacent to the park.

New architectural quality fixtures such as benches and waste containers should be considered.

The park should be studied for new architectural lighting.

A trail connection should be studied.

A possible trail connection or improved sidewalk between this park and Fountain Park should be explored.

Valania Park is less than a quarter mile from Fountain Park.

Walden Terrace Play Lot

(01.16 Acres)

Features:

Walden Terrace is a mini/pocket park located along South Carbon Street which serves the Roosevelt Park/South Mountain neighborhoods. Emaus Avenue, South Fountain Street and the South Mountain Reservoir Park are the service area boundaries. The basketball court, volleyball court, playground and pavilion are all in good condition. This park is used primarily by the surrounding residents.

This park contains:

- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Basketball Court
- Playground
- Concession Stand
- Pavilion
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles

Issues/Constraints:

No issues or constraints were identified with this playlot.

Opportunities:

This park is less than a quarter mile from South Mountain Reservoir Park. A trail connection should be studied.



View into Walden Terrace Playlot

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West Park (06.44 Acres)

Features:

West Park is a unique community/regional park centrally located in the West Park neighborhood along Linden Street. Scott Street, North Mercer Street, Walnut Street and North St. George Street are the service area boundaries. The park is slightly crowned with a band shell and seating for concerts at the western edge. The park is a traditional Victorian park with symmetry and balance in the plan and program. It is one of the original showcase parks in the City's park system. The park should be considered a historic landscape and all improvements should be evaluated against the original design intent of the park. The park is very well maintained.

This park contains:

- Band Shell with seating area
- Arboretum
- Walking Paths
- Perimeter Sidewalks
- Benches
- Flower Garden
- Ornamental Fountain



Views into West Park



Issues/Constraints:

With its ornamental plantings and traditional design elements, such as the band stand, West Park is a maintenance intensive park.

The surrounding neighborhood residents are extremely possessive and protective of West Park.

Since the park is not fenced, the park is a 24-hour park, yet lighting is limited in the park.

Opportunities:

A historic inventory and documentation study should be undertaken to determine the original design intent of the park, how much of what exists today is original and a set of design guidelines which balances historic intent with modern demands should be developed.

A lighting plan for the park should be considered. The park should adopt a historically-sensitive lighting fixture standard. (Plan diagram depicts possible light locations based on a traditional Victorian approach). Lighting would improve safety, likely reduce vandalism and extend the daily use of the park.

The positive community benefits of West Park should be extended into the adjacent community by implementing streetscaping improvements along the surrounding streets, including historic light fixtures and large canopy street trees.



West Park





- Introduction
- Recreation Trends
- Survey Findings
- Forum Findings
- Program Analysis
- Recommendations

• Introduction

The Allentown Recreation Bureau is rooted in a long history of traditional recreation programs. The programs and services offered are programs that have been provided for more than fifty years. These programs serve thousands of people focused on sports, the outdoors, summer recreation and special events. While these are important programs, it is also important to keep pace with the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

The City is enriched by many community-based organizations that provide a wide variety of recreation-based services that somewhat merge with social services and human development. Without these providers, the City could not afford to deliver the significant services of these organizations.

Much has changed in society in the nearly 80-year history of the Bureau. Cell phones, ATM machines, personal computers, faxes, the Internet that we now use everyday were mere science fiction when the recreation services began in Allentown. The

6 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

population has changed radically and now is a diverse community representing a variety of cultures and languages. More women work today. More children are latchkey kids. With more single heads of households and dual income families, people are busy, busy, busy. Not only have program interests changed but the factors related to recreation programming have changed as well. Consequently, people want convenience, better information, easier ways to get involved, shorter programs, more flexibility, and more options.

• Recreation Trends

As part of the assessment of Allentown's programs and services, it is important to look at trends elsewhere. Consideration of such trends will enable Allentown to plan for trends that have not yet emerged here as well as ideas for opportunities and methods of delivering services the community might desire.

From businesses booming in commercial recreation to the cutting edge recreation operations in the public sector, understanding the public's underlying motivation for recreation will keep businesses profitable and the municipalities responsive to community needs. The following point illustrates how important outdoor recreation is in America: the American Recreation Coalition reports that sales of outdoor recreation apparel and gear have reached \$80 billion annually.

Fun, fitness, and family are the three F's of recreation. This is evident in recreation trends and spending patterns. The concept applies in particular to Allentown, a family-oriented community. Important recreation trends, based upon the most current information available, include the following:

- Nearly half of all Americans say they spend time together outdoors at least once a month. Recreation is important to families with young children.

- Customers are demanding quality service: They want to be "hassle-free."
- People want information and education about recreation opportunities.
- In 1994, seven out of ten Americans participated in outdoor recreation at least once annually. By 2000, participation had increased to eight out of ten.
- Today, two thirds of all Americans recreated outdoors monthly while in 1994 only half did.
- In 1971, fewer than one out of 27 girls participated in high school sports. By 2004 that figure increased to more than one out of three.
- Sports are played year round instead of only in a single season such as spring baseball and fall soccer.
- Today's seniors with extensive free time, unprecedented good health and solid retirement plans, are indulging in active lifestyles that are well beyond rocking chairs, front porches, and bingo. There is a mismatch between what retirees are looking for and what society provides.
- Generation X'ers have launched the development of new activities such as in-line skating and snowboarding.

Challenges of the Times

Despite these changes demonstrating increasing participation in recreation, new sports and activities, and a broadening of the participation base from younger males to both males and females of all ages, there is a conundrum regarding recreation. The conundrum is that obesity and the lack of physical activity in the United States is at an all-time high.¹ The United States Surgeon General issued a report in 1996 that physical

¹U.S. Center for Disease Control. (1999). CDC's Guidelines for School and Community Programs Promoting Lifelong Physical Activity. <[Http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/phactag.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/phactag.htm)>.

²Surgeon General. (1996). Physical Activity and Health. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Public Health Service, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. <[Http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/npai.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/npai.htm)>.

³Fox, Maggie. (1999). Obesity costs U.S. \$238 Billion A Year – Survey. Reuters: Science Headlines. <[Http://daily news.yahoo.com/h/nm/19990916/sc/hralth_obesity_2.html](http://daily news.yahoo.com/h/nm/19990916/sc/hralth_obesity_2.html)>.

inactivity among Americans is the number one public health issue.² Obesity costs the United States \$238 billion annually in expenses associated with diseases such as diabetes stroke and heart disease not including the cost of treating the obesity itself.³ In Allentown, Alliance Hall is dedicated to working on fitness and nutrition to try to combat this problem. In fact, two staff nutritionists served as members of the advisory committee for this plan.

The Center for Disease Control has stated that public park and recreation departments have a primary role in addressing this issue. They can provide attractive and safe places for people to walk, hike, bike, and enjoy other active pursuits.

Another challenge facing both private enterprise and all arenas of public recreation is that the rapid demand for facilities is outpacing availability and the resources to develop and manage new ones. Combined with rapid development in the metropolitan areas of Pennsylvania, the available open space is dwindling and land costs are escalating. There is an ever-present danger that recreation opportunities for the public in the future may succumb to a large demand and/or tight budget constraints.

It will become increasingly important to find creative ways of bringing recreation opportunities and facilitating healthy active lifestyles of the citizens in the future.

Local Recreation Trends and Issues

Based upon key person interviews, forums with community groups and service providers, work sessions with city officials, the community survey, and visits to the parks, the following trends are apparent in Allentown:

- People want more programs and services.
- Recreation opportunities year round, including indoor recreation, are important.
- The socio-economic conditions and interviews indicate that many people in the community can't afford to pay for recreation activities.
- The City's youth appear to be an underserved group. While there are about 600 in the summer playground program, there are over 16,000 children in the school system. Even adding in the services provided by other organizations does not approximate the youth population.
- Gangs are emerging and absorbing children and youth.
- People travel out of Allentown to play soccer.
- Sports field need to be improved and more sports fields are needed.
- Unions limit the ability of the City to tap community resources for facility improvements.
- Transportation needs to be available for recreation.
- Programs are traditional: sports, summer playground and swimming pools, concerts in the summer, and special events like the Championship Banquet.
- The City focuses on youth and sports.
- While many organizations provide recreation based services, the organizations are fragmented but do have an informal communication network that enables them to stay in touch for even the most defined issues such as one particular child. This is notable and important.
- Hours of operation are not conducive for recreation. Parks are closed early when people want to play and hang out later (11:00 – Midnight).
- Participation in traditional programs such as the playground program has been decreasing over the past several decades.
- There are no environmental education programs available in the City.

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- It's hard for people to find out about recreation opportunities.
- Facilities and programs are focused on traditional sports when more people want to be involved in action sports such as skateboarding, rock climbing and so on.
- Fitness programming should be emphasized.
- The School District's *Lights On* program has been a big hit for decades and is very important to the City.
- It is important that the City diversify programs and respond to the changing demographics, as there are underserved groups such as adolescent Latino females.
- People are concerned about safety in the parks.
- The closure of pools and the decrease of the summer concert series from over 60 to 24 hits the most vulnerable population groups: the elderly and children.

• Survey Findings Related to Programs and Services

The City conducted a community wide random survey of households and a newsletter survey distributed to every household in the City recreation newsletter. The findings related to recreation opportunities include the following:

Community Survey Findings

Activities with the highest response on participation

- 66% Outdoor recreation
- 60% Special Events
- 57% Exercise and Fitness
- 44% Performing Arts

Activities that people would like to participate in but don't

- 57% said they would like to participate in Studio Arts (crafts, painting, pottery). This was more than three times the next closest response of 16 percent for exercise and fitness and swimming.

Participation in recreation programs offered by any organization in the City

- 31% Music Programs. Overall, the response was low on participation in recreation programs with fewer than one out of five participating.

Awareness of recreation opportunities in Allentown

- Approximately one in two said they knew about some opportunities.
- One in four said they did not know about recreation opportunities and would like to know more
- Only 6% said they don't know about recreation opportunities and are not interested in them.
- Approximately one in ten said they knew about most of the opportunities.

Level of service to client groups

- Overall approximately one in three said that the level of service for recreation programs was "About Right".
- The highest rating regarding the right level of service, went to adults and families.
- The lowest rating regarding the right level of service, went to people with disabilities.
- A similar percentage rated overall availability of programs as about right at 36%, while 30 percent said they were not sure. Overall less than 1% said the level of service was "Too Much".

- The high percentage of respondents who reported not being sure enough to rate availability correlates with the finding that people want to know more about recreation opportunities.

Year round recreation

- 52% of the respondents thought that indoor teen centers are needed in Allentown.
- 47% thought more indoor pools are needed.
- 46% stated than more senior centers are needed.

Nature based recreation

Access to the Lehigh River is very important to the residents for recreation and conservation.

- 80% want walking and biking paths along the river.
- 83% favor preserving the riverfront.
- Scenic views of the river were important to 79% of the respondents.
- 73% stated that developing riverfront parks is important.
- 72% want environmental education programming and 73% want interpretation of the river's history and culture.
- 69% want access for fishing and boating access.
- 41% want to be able to swim in the river.

Future focus related to recreation

- 71% stated that building or improving neighborhood centers is a priority.
- 67% stated that expanding recreation programs and services is important

- Providing river front recreation was a priority to 63%, of the respondents.

Willingness to support additional city spending for identified recreation purposes

- 76% stated that they support additional city spending to maintain parks and recreation facilities. (9% No)
- 51% stated they support additional city spending for providing programs and services. (19% No)
- 44% support additional city spending for improving existing indoor recreation facilities. (28% No)
- 44% are willing to pay a fee to participate in programs (30% were not and 12% were not sure)

Your turn comments

- Approximately twenty people wrote in specific comments for recreation programs mostly dealing with the need for more youth services, more musical concerts with variety, the need to advertise recreation more.
- The Your Turn comments about parks clearly eclipsed comments about recreation. The overall tone of the survey returns conveyed the fact that people are more familiar with parks than with recreation in the City.

• Forum Findings Related to Recreation

Forums were held with teens, sports groups and service providers. Summary findings included the following:

- Once kids hit eighth grade, you lose them from recreation programs.
- Transients are a huge problem: hard to reach kids.
- Language barriers exist in city services.
- Need an adult presence and mentors for youth.

- Changing demographics are resulting in the need for changing services: more soccer, more dance and music programs.
- Perception of inequity of services in various neighborhoods in the City.

What the City Should Be Doing in Recreation

- Serve as the leader in fostering collaboration among the recreation service providers throughout the City. Organize an on-going process for authentic collaboration, not mere reporting of activities. Include faith-based institutions.
- Have a real presence in the city in all neighborhoods in the public, private and non-profit sectors.
- Preconceive the mission of the Recreation Board and consider making it a Park and Recreation Board.
- Address the “big hole” in recreation from September to May.
- Address the need for recreation in the inner city and the wards.
- Create a bigger vision than we have now.
- Provide assistance to other providers in the form of grants or technical support or transportation.
- Recreation center is needed in the wards.
- Provide year round recreation.
- Serve as a clearinghouse of information for private groups to pursue grants.
- Collect data on the benefits of recreation in Allentown to use to support services, budget requests and use in advertising to recruit businesses, residents and tourists.

- Examine hours of operating in light of citizen needs and adjust them accordingly.
- Involve user groups in all planning.
- Create an umbrella organization for sports. The leagues should still operate independently but should collaborate on sports in Allentown overall.

• Community Recreation Services in Allentown

Allentown Recreation Bureau

Allentown offers about 90 scheduled programs and events annually. Most of these programs are focused on sports and summer recreation including:

- Sports Leagues for baseball, basketball and softball. This includes A-Youth, the Allentown organization that provides league supports for youth in conjunction with the City Recreation Bureau.
- Summer Playground Program which serves about 600 participants.
- The summer concert series, which has been going on for the last 53 years. This year the concerts are decreasing from about 60 to 24 as a result of the budget freeze.
- The summer swimming pool program which will be decreased from five pools to four in 2005 as a result of the budget freeze.
- The Championship Dinner which had been offered in the 1990's but will not be held in 2005 again because of the budget freeze.
- Permitting, Rentals and Scheduling round out the services offered by the Recreation Department, This includes

field assignments, the rental of pavilions and parks, and issuing permits for facility use.

Special Events Coordinator

A special events coordinator plans all of the major special events. This individual is charged with securing the donations, partnerships and sponsorships to support these functions. This person operates independently from the Recreation Bureau.

Sports Fest

Sports Fest is a special event program focused on Olympic types of sports held in Allentown. Sports Fest was once part of the Recreation Bureau and spun off as a private non-profit organization recently. The Director of Sports Fest raises the funding and support for the program.

Other Recreation Service Providers

Allentown residents are fortunate in having a significant number of recreation services.

Lehigh county

Lehigh County has a part time recreation coordinator. The Coordinator is in charge is planning, developing and implementing recreation programs and services. The Coordinator has been instrumental in the development of county soccer fields in an outlying township through grant funding in part justified that the project will serve Allentown's inner city youth. The Coordinator has successfully obtained grant funding to support soccer programs and transportation for a challenging group to serve: female adolescent Latinos. She has also planned music and dance classes targeted at this inner city group. There is limit to what can be provided by a part time county coordinator.

Allentown school district

Allentown School District offers the "Lights On" program, which keeps school buildings open during non-school hours for recreational use of the buildings. This includes gyms for league play. The School District works collaboratively with all community organizations. The District is now working with the Police Department on gang intervention. The District is

also adding new sports programs at the middle school level to keep students involved in after-school activities.

"We just want to keep kids playing."

Ray O'Connell, Allentown School District

Organized youth sports

Allentown has several organizations that provide organized sports on a volunteer basis. The Recreation Bureau serves in the role of facilitator by providing facilities for the leagues. The Parks Bureau provides facility maintenance since the recreation maintenance staff was laid off. Over the past ten years, participation has increased, year-round play emerged, more females are playing, and players are involved at older and younger ages. This has resulted in the need for more facilities and additional maintenance requirements. The demand and need for sports facilities is so intense that several leagues have sought outside resources and raised funds to help with facility development or rehabilitation. With the uncertainty of city service, several leagues reported looking for leagues in other municipalities to be sure that their players can play in 2005. Sports Leagues include the following:

- Alliance Hall
- Elm Street Senior Citizen Center
- A-Youth
- LCYA (Lehigh County Youth Association)
- Mountainville Youth Association
- St. Frances CYO (Catholic Youth Organization)
- AA Blues Rugby
- Union Terrace Youth Group
- Lehigh Valley Latino Soccer
- NV Youth Soccer

Private Non-Profit Recreation Organizations

- YMCA
- JCC
- Boys & Girls Club
- Teen Center
- Allentown Art Museum
- West End Youth Center
- Casa Guadalupe
- Mosser Village Family Center
- Wildlands Conservancy
- Minsi Trails Boy Scout Council
- Great Valley Girl Scouts Council

PANA and Healthy Communities

The Pennsylvania Activities and Nutrition Advocates (PANA) and Healthy Communities are regional programs targeting healthy lifestyles among teens and youth. These programs are in their infancy in the Lehigh County Area. They offer potential for partnerships and perhaps funding in the future. Coordination with the efforts at Alliance Hall in the area of community fitness should be a priority for the City recreation Department.

• Program Analysis

Recreation programs and services are vital in a thriving urban community. There is a host of recreation providers all operating independently for the most part. Harnessing the collective resources of the various providers could pay off huge dividends in the City of Allentown for everything from political support to budget and staffing decisions.

Programming for Diverse Age Groups

City programs focus on youth for sports and summer recreation and on families and the senior citizens for the special events and concerts. Groups in need of service include youth after school especially children in grades four through six and middle schoolers, active senior adults, Latinos, and teens, especially female adolescent Latinos. Capturing the city's youth before they join gangs is particularly important.

Programming by Gender

Both males and females participate in the recreation programs. The City insures that recreation opportunities are available for both genders for the programs that the City offers. The challenge is to establish policies that support growth in participation by females such as in facility allocation and operation of sports leagues. It is important to avoid policies that allocate facilities based upon historical precedence that virtually eliminate access to facilities by new leagues or activities. This affects primarily females and players in emerging sports.

Program Structure

Program structure is defined by the type of activities offered by the City, which focus on sports, playground program, special events and summer pool program. Program structure in a balanced recreation department should include social, competitive, self directed, spectator, scheduled and non-scheduled. Programs and services should be provided for the arts, music, drama, dance, fitness and wellness, environmental, social and volunteerism. They should be offered with the intent of fostering lifelong leisure interests and active healthy lifestyles.

Program Fees and Revenue Philosophy

Allentown major programs are free of charge. This reflects the city's present fees and charges philosophy that the programs be free as a community service. In the future, Bureau should consider setting a revenue recovery target rate of 30 to 50 percent phased in over time. The Bureau would have to provide for those who cannot afford to pay which could be supported through a recreation foundation or other partnerships. The Department generates about \$85,000 in revenues from facility rentals and sports charges.

Program Schedule

Allentown offers programs primarily from April through August with sports being offered year round. There is a gap in service from September through March and even for parts of the summer for activities other than the pool and playgrounds.

Year-Round Recreation

One of the major limitations of the City's recreation program is the lack of indoor recreation facilities with a gym, pool, fitness center and activity rooms. School facilities are available during the Lights On program and perhaps more could be done with the use of school facilities should a program management plan be developed. While the schools are important sources of indoor facilities, there are inherent limitations. Many groups are competing for the same facilities. The school programs have top priority for schedules. Scheduling is not always reliable because non-school groups get bumped from time-to-time for school programs.

While gyms for organized sports are needed, other indoor facilities to serve people of all ages, interests, and abilities are needed. Drop-in activity space, fitness facilities, gyms, pools, and community meeting rooms are usually spaces that enable people to participate in an active healthy lifestyle year round at all ages throughout the lifetime.

Program Planning

Great recreation programming does not just happen: it requires expertise, training, creativity, and a willingness to take risks. Recreation programs must meet client needs for socialization, enrichment, creativity, adventure, and physical and emotional well-being.

The Recreation Bureau should develop a program management plan. The goal of this plan should be to set forth a strategy for providing a variety of balanced recreation programs and services on a three-season schedule. The schedule would include fall, winter/spring and summer roughly corresponding with Allentown's nine-month schools. Provisions for Allentown's year round school holidays should also be included in the program management plan.

Program Registration and Scheduling

Program registration and scheduling should be computerized. Hand scheduling registrations and facility schedules is too labor intensive. It is also more effective for decision-making and management purposes to have such information in an electronic database.

Having this type of information available on a longitudinal basis can be the foundation for effective decision-making. For example, when used in conjunction with a program management plan, the data on numbers, participation trends, facility use, public comments and so on can point out where and when changes are needed in programs. The obvious program where tracking information and then using it to make decisions would be the playground program.

Program Promotion

A formalized marketing and promotional program should be developed for Allentown's recreation services and parks. A City this size warrants having a full-time marketing director for Recreation and Parks.

Self-Directed Programs

People want to be able to use facilities such as trails, bike paths, fitness facilities, scenic areas, and have access to natural areas for their own self-directed recreation. The survey shows that these are among the most preferred activities. The role of the Bureau is to provide the facilities and to make people aware of them. By developing these facilities and then advertising them along with how people can use them, the Bureau can facilitate public recreation on an on-scheduled, self-directed basis.

Information Broker

Rather than providing all organized and scheduled programs and activities directly, the Bureau can become an "Information Broker". That is, the Bureau can provide information to citizens about activities, facilities, and services with the area. The Bureau's Web site could become a valuable method of providing information to the community if it is managed in a timely fashion. Bringing partners into this scenario might even be a potential revenue source through advertising.

• Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Develop a programming mission statement.

Broaden the services beyond the current focus of sports, summer recreation and youth to include year round recreation in a variety of activity categories. .

2. Organize Allentown Recreation Consortium.

Recruit leaders from other community recreation/social service agencies to become members of the consortium. Hold a retreat with the members to establish a mission, roles and goals. Schedule regular meetings to work on the development and implementation of a work plan. Make the work plan reasonable and achievable targeting small success that can be used to show the benefit and results of collaboration.

3. Organize an umbrella organization of sports organizations.

The umbrella organization would also be represented in Allentown Recreation Consortium. The sports groups would work collaboratively on citywide sports topics while managing their own organizations independently

4. Use the budget freeze to take a step back to assess recreation program staffing needs.

Move from sports oriented staff to a broader based staff supported by computerized scheduling and tracking of routine repetitive information. Increasing efficiency through automation frees up staff time to work on important public recreation opportunities. Staffing decisions should be based upon the program mission statement, Allentown Recreation Consortium work plan and the goal of providing year round broad based recreation opportunities based upon the needs of the community determined through ongoing needs assessment.

5. Phase in expansion of program areas.

Include/expand riverfront recreation, environmental education, fitness and wellness, the arts, and special events. This

is in part dependent upon riverfront development for recreation. Expansion needs to happen over time, strategically as provisions for additional partnerships and staff time are established.

6. Revamp the Summer Playground Program.

Hold a series of focus groups with parents, participants and non-participating parents and youth to get their input on how to improve the summer playground program. Conduct weekly evaluations in 2005 to get public input about the playgrounds. Determine program preferences, staffing issues, time of program and locations.

7. Begin a summer and holiday day camp program.

This would be a higher level of programming at a commensurate cost. Organize the participants according to age in groups with a two-year age range maximum. This should be a revenue generator.

8. Develop an orchestrated marketing program.

Having a full-time Public Relations Specialist affords the Department with an invaluable opportunity: a mechanism for establishing an institutionalized public needs assessment system. This includes on-going needs assessment and public opinion polling in addition to advertising and promotion. Each program should have a participant and instructor evaluation. Focus groups for non-participants should be held to determine gaps in service. Focus groups with identified client groups should be early in the year for planning the programs, especially the summer youth programs. Invite parents and participants to determine changes they would like to see in the future. Consider inviting non-participants to determine if there is a latent market for programs and what people are interested in.

9. Obtain software for program registration, tracking, and decision-making.

Use the names and program registration for targeted marketing. Provide start-up and ongoing training for staff for software use. Network the computers to provide access from various locations.

10. Develop annual goals and objectives for recreation programs and services.

Evaluate achievements prior to budget discussions. Develop strategies for meeting changing needs and opportunities for the next fiscal year. Formalize this in a written document.

11. Develop an annual report of accomplishments.

Distribute this report widely among the public, city government, county government, partnership organizations and community groups.





- Introduction
- Assessment
- Organization
- Operations Analysis
- Recommendations

• Introduction

City parks and recreation departments manage a vast array of complex and challenging functions. Every day, they have a myriad of tasks and projects to handle: Prepare the swimming pools. Run a program. Maintain a ballfield. Manage the budget. Respond to a citizen's request. Their scope of work could range from helping a Boy Scout earn a badge to orchestrating a community event with thousands of people and hundreds of details to constructing park facilities.

Administrators need a diverse set of skills and techniques to manage these complex systems in the ever-changing and demanding world of public parks and recreation. Successful systems are rooted in effective management. While it is important to do things right, it is even more important to do the right things.

The Bureau of Parks and the Recreation Bureau operate in a responsive manner to pressing daily tasks and unplanned demands ranging from requests for immediate attention or re-

7 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

sponding to major events such as clean-up after severe flooding. The fact that both bureaus are time pressed, they focus on daily operations by necessity.

This planning process has enabled the City to take a step back to look at important issues on the broad horizon of the next ten years and beyond. It is a goal of this assessment to build into the recommendations, a method for enabling the City to function both efficiently in daily routine operations as well as effectively over a ten year time frame to achieve major goals. Daily, short term yearly administration and long term planning and management are all essential to successful parks and recreation systems.

• Assessment

The purpose of the management assessment was to work with the City of Allentown in taking a fresh look at operations and management. The goal was to determine how best to position city parks and recreation planning, operation, management and service delivery to achieve parks and recreation goals. The assessment addressed organizational structure, staffing, employee development, public involvement, maintenance, and information management.

The planning team worked directly with managers and staff of the Parks Bureau, the Recreation Bureau, Planning Bureau, Community and Economic Development Department, Public Works Department and the Plan Advisory Committee in work sessions. The goal was to use the findings to make recommendations to support Allentown's quest to become a premier urban parks and recreation system.

• Organization

The timeline of the evolution of Allentown's parks and recreation organization is shown in Figure 1.

1920	Parks Department
1970	Parks & Recreation Department
1985	Parks Bureau & Recreation Bureau (under Community & Economic Development Department)
2005	Parks Bureau (under Public Works Department)
2005	Recreation Bureau (under Community & Economic Development Department)

Figure 1. Evolution of Allentown Parks & Recreation Organization

Current Structure

For over 25 years, Allentown's parks and recreation system has operated with separate parks and recreation bureaus. Most recently, in 2005, the Parks Bureau was further separated from recreation with its transfer from Community & Economic Development into the Public Works Department. The current organizational structure is shown in Figure 2

City of Allentown Parks and Recreation Bureau Organizational Chart (existing)

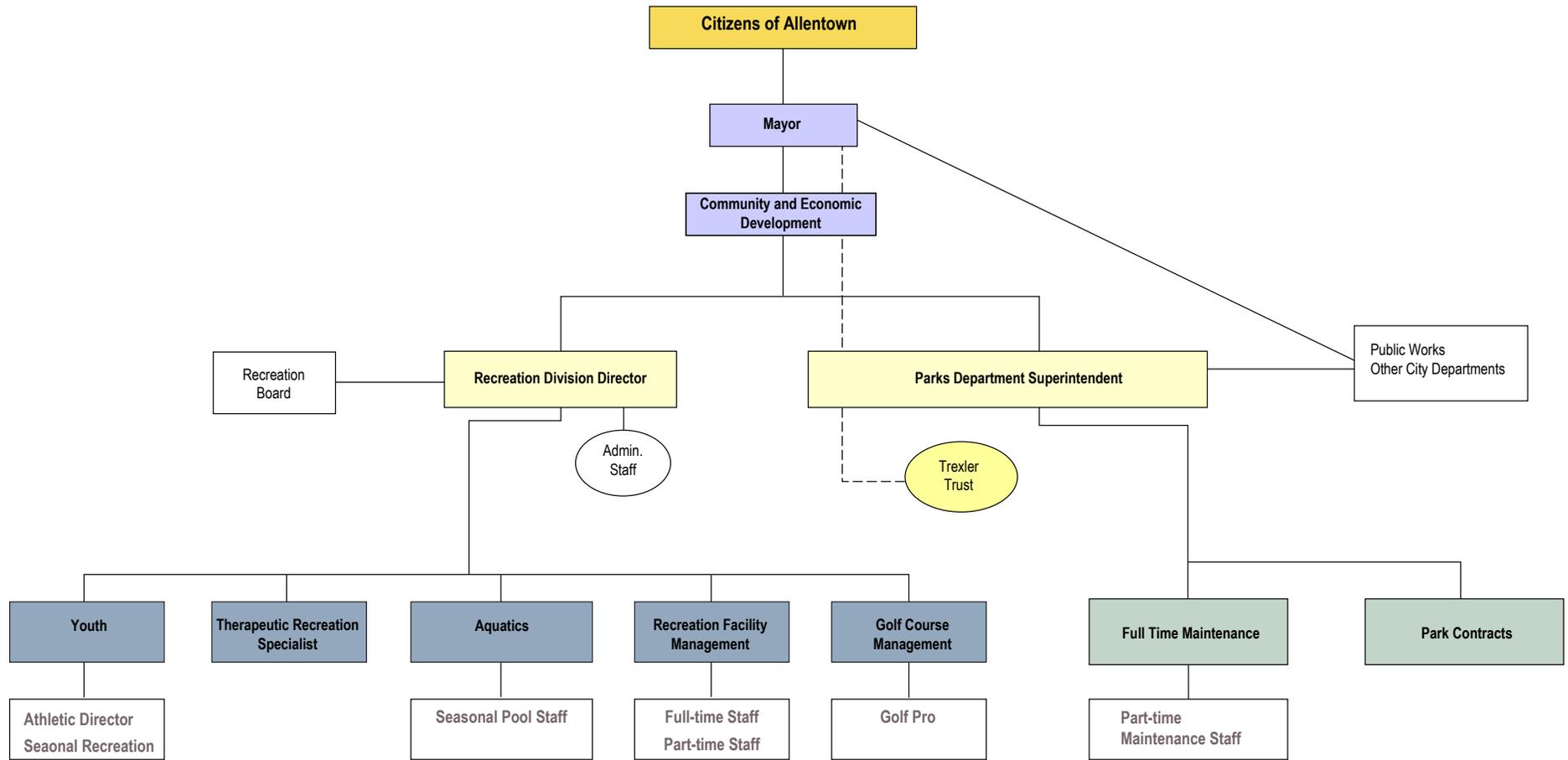


Figure 2. Existing Organization Chart as it pertains to Parks and Recreation

Trends

1987: 470 Employees

1991: 389 Employees

2005: 60 budgeted full time employees; 51 actual full time employees. 21 seasonal and part time employees

Figure 3. Staffing Trends

Since 1987, city parks and recreation staffing has decreased by 419 employees. Of the 60 full time employees in 2005, the City had budgeted for 10 workers but cut eight (8) of them. Of the 51 actual positions employed in Parks in 2005, the Trexler Trust, the Watershed and the Golf Course supported 49 positions while the City funded two positions.

Table 7.1 Allentown Bureau of Parks Staffing Comparisons by Funding Source 1993 & 2005								
Position	1993				2005			
	City	Trexler	Watershed	Golf Course	City	Trexler	Watershed	Golf Course
FULL TIME								
Superintendent		1		1		1		1
Supervisors	3		1			2	1	
Clerk	1					1		
Foremen	2		1		2 (10 in budget)	2 (3 budgeted)	1	
Maintenance Workers	18	1	17	1		17	17	1
Mechanics	3			1				1
Equipment Operators	4		4			1	1	
Arborists	3		1			2	2	
Tradesmen			1					
Greens Keeper				1				1
Custodian								
TOTAL	34	2	25	4	2 (10 in budget)	23 (24 in budget)	22	4
	65				60 in budget – 51 actual positions			
PART TIME								
Maintenance Workers	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	
Custodians				1				
SEASONAL								
Maintenance Workers	4		8	3	2	3	6	7
TOTAL	5	2	10	5	3	4	7	7
TOTAL Full Time & Part Time Positions	87 Actual Positions (65 FT & 22 PT)				72 actual positions (51 FT & 21 PT)			

Table 7.1. Bureau of Parks Staffing Comparisons

Impacts

As a result of the budget cuts and freezes, staffing levels decreased. The staff decreases have led to the threat of swimming pool closures, cancellation of the 50 year old summer concert series, cancellation of special events such as the Halloween Parade and the Banquet of Champions, shortened sports programs, elimination of recreation staff maintenance and diminished capacity for park maintenance.

In 2005, corporate sponsors stepped up to sponsor to open three of the city's five swimming pools and to sponsor half of the normal number of summer concerts.

Parks Bureau

The Parks Bureau is responsible for the maintenance of 36 parks covering over 1400 acres. This includes five swimming pools, 34 ballfields, 53 game courts, more than 6 miles of trails, golf course maintenance and improvements, 24 playgrounds, urban forestry, care of conservation areas and special facilities such as the Rose Garden, construction jobs, special events such as the Lights in the Parkway and providing support for Recreation Bureau programs, events and projects.

City Parks Bureau employees are members of the AFL-CIO Service Employees International Union Local 395. The union agreement sets forth the jobs that union employees will perform in the parks and recreation facilities. Table 7.1 represents a comparison of the Parks Bureau staffing in 1993 and 2005. Maintenance is the single largest recurring expenditure in park and recreation operations. Over the lifetime of a park, about 75 percent of its cost is in maintenance while only about 25 percent is in acquisition, development, design, and construction¹.

Recreation Bureau

The Recreation Bureau is responsible for the planning, implementation and evaluation of recreation, programs, services, special events, and opportunities. The Director is responsible for recreation personnel and staffing, recreation facility maintenance, oversight of the golf course contract, financial management of the Bureau, and coordinating with the Parks Bu-

¹ Lay, Francis. (1978). Management of Grounds and Site Maintenance Operations. Manual of Site Management, Environmental Design Press. p.4.

reau and other city departments where appropriate. Much of the Director’s work is focused on traditional municipal recreation programs including sports leagues, summer playground program, swimming pool management and operation, and special events.

Until the 2005 budget freeze, the Recreation Bureau provided maintenance of recreation facilities such as sports fields, pavilion rentals and custodial care and other such functions related to the support of recreational use of city facilities. With the budget freeze, the Bureau lost its maintenance crew and has to rely on support from the Parks Bureau which also lost a significant number of maintenance positions. The Bureau also lost the Athletic Director, Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, swimming pool and playground staff due to the budget freeze.

Table 7.2 represents staffing comparisons for the recreation Bureau between 1992 and 2005.

Table 7.2 Allentown Recreation Bureau Staffing Comparisons for 1993 and 2005		
Position	1993	2005
FULL TIME		
Superintendent	1	1
Assistance Director	1	(1)
Athletic Director	1	1
Therapeutic Recreation Specialist	1	(1)
Clerks	2	1
Maintenance Workers	3	(3)
Total	9	
PART TIME		
Starter Monitors	11	
Total	11	
SEASONAL		
Aquatics Staff	65	
Sports	154	
Playgrounds	46	
Instructors	5	
Maintenance	5	
Office	2	
Total	277	
TOTAL	297	

Table 7.2. Bureau of Recreation Staffing Comparisons

Related Parks & Recreation Positions

The Public Works Director is now in charge of the Parks Bureau. The Public Works Department assists Parks with special projects. The Parks Bureau assists Public Works with snow plowing and removal. The Director of Community and Economic Development oversees the Recreation Bureau. The Special Events Coordinator within the Community & Economic Development Department is responsible for special events such as the summer concert series and the Halloween Parade. The Coordinator is responsible for securing sponsorships for these special events.

Recreation Board

The Allentown Recreation Board is a citizen advisory group appointed by the City for city recreation services. The Board meets monthly to go over items suggested by the Recreation Superintendent. Although there is no Parks Board, the Parks Superintendent attends the monthly Recreation Board meetings to coordinate projects and operations.

Consideration should be given to creating a new Allentown Parks and Recreation Board. This board would provide an all-encompassing citizen support group for all aspects of municipal parks and recreation. The Board should include broad representation of the citizenry of Allentown according to demographics, neighborhoods, wide ranging interest including sports, the arts, culture, business, tourism, elected officials, conservation, public relations, and so on. The Board could have sub-committees to deal with special initiatives and projects. This would expand the expertise available to parks and recreation.

Volunteerism

The prime example of volunteerism in Allentown is the sports leagues. A-Youth provides community volunteer support for youth sports leagues and works closely with the Recreation Bureau’s Director and Athletic Director. Citizens who run the sports leagues volunteer thousands of hours of time running the programs year round. In return the City provides fields and game courts as well as administrative support from the Recreation Bureau staff.

One of the biggest challenges facing the City regarding volunteerism is the unionization of employees. Volunteers who are willing to assist with facility maintenance for sports fields are unable to do so because this would violate the collective bargaining agreement. Other municipalities that faced similar obstacles to increased volunteerism have worked with their unions to define a baseline of city operations. Over and above what the municipality is required to do could be accomplished by volunteers.

Urban park systems elsewhere have literally dozens if not hundreds of community organizations that serve as volunteer organizations to support municipal parks and recreation in everything from maintenance to fund-raising and creating public awareness about park and recreation issues and opportunities.

Other Service Providers

Allentown is most fortunate in having a variety of recreation providers in the public, quasi-public and private sectors. These include the YMCA, JCC, Boys/Girls Club, the Salvation Army, Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts, CYO, the Allentown School District, Senior Citizens centers and the Area Agency on Aging, the Wildlands Conservancy, Mosser Village and many others.

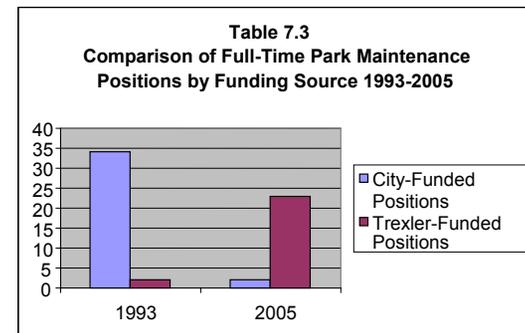
There is a wonderful informal network among service providers that focuses on excellent public service. This ranges from big picture issues such as mobilizing summer recreation planning in light of city budget freezes all the way down to concern for individual children in need of help.

The wealth and diversity of service providers in the City could be harnessed to maximize the efforts and resources of all. Assuming the responsibility for bringing all of these providers to the table to work towards common goals is an appropriate role for the City. The synergy of these groups acting in concert would have tremendous benefits for the community, from helping Allentown's neediest citizens all the way up to tapping the tourism market.

• Operations Analysis

The following findings are based upon the planning team's work sessions with staff, extensive field work, input from the Advisory Committee and a review of procedures and records. At present, the staff does the best they can with the resources available and the limitations imposed by city operating procedures. They also operate within a climate of fear about job loss, further cutbacks, and being expected to do more work with less time and fewer resources.

- Between 1993 and 2005, the level of maintenance support virtually switched from the City to the Trexler Trust. In 1993, the City funded 34 full time maintenance positions while the Trexler Trust funded two. By 2005, the reverse funding scenario was in place: the Trexler Trust funded 23 positions while the City funded two positions. The trend has been decreasing park staff since 1981 with the City decreasing its park maintenance budget and staff while the Trexler Trust increases its operational support to retain the park staff.



- Public Impact of Management and Staffing Losses – As a result of the cutbacks, the City can no longer deliver quality public services. This has resulted in the proposed closure of four of the five swimming pools, decreased sports seasons, loss of facility maintenance capacity, decreased summer concert series. Those affected by these lost services are primarily the youngest and oldest members of the community, those most in need.

- Parks and Recreation Management: Fragmented – Operations are distributed among several city departments and bureaus. Re-organizing and streamlining operations would enable the City to operate more efficiently and effectively. Pooling resources and talent for the common cause of parks and recreation would ultimately result in improved public service, higher quality maintenance of city parks and recreation facilities, and a better quality of life that will strengthen the city's economic development.
- Management Methods: Combination of Day-to-Day and Crisis – Operations are focused on day-to-day operations. Many tasks are in response to a crisis or a directive rather than conducted on a routine scheduled basis. This is a more costly way to operate than through a planned, directed, and controlled system. Systems need to be put into place to plan, direct, control and evaluate operations. To support this, a computerized software system is needed. There is simply too much data for it to be managed and useable as real time information. Consideration should be given to developing a planned maintenance management system that would incorporate the use of PDA's (small electronic personal data assistants) to track and document work in the field in real time. This would enable more effective allocation of resources, which is especially important in times of retrenchment.
- Capacity Building: Urgent – Building a new department rooted in professionalism, expertise, accountability, on-going needs assessment and modern workload cost tracking and decision-making systems will result in better public service and value for the investment. The parks and recreation system operates in a similar fashion as it did decades ago in terms of programs, services, workload/cost tracking and information management. These systems need to be modernized with state of the art planning and management systems.
- Parks and Recreation: Tourism and Economic Development Tool– Allentown has the potential to be a destination community in the regional tourism market. The facilities that the City has are magnificent and worthy of tourism. Recreation opportunities already bring in thousands of peoples for things like the concerts and Sports Fest. More special events would generate more visitation. Research shows that the decision of someone to move to an area is often based upon their first contact with the locale through a recreation experience. Tourism is the second most important industry of Pennsylvania, next only to agriculture. The City's assets need to be packaged as a whole to promote Allentown as a destination, to attract and retain businesses, and to emphasize the importance of the parks, recreation and trails to its quality of life.
- Quality of Life – The parks, recreation facilities, historic sites and trails are chief factors in the standard of living. Without the continued investment of city and private funding, parks and recreation facilities and trails cannot be cared for at a level commensurate with their value to the system.
- Expertise –Additional expertise is needed to implement system wide activities including programming, fundraising, planning, partnership development, volunteerism, advertising and promotion, and collection of information about the benefits of parks, trails and historic sites.
- Policies – Lack of policies on reporting of workload, visitation, partnerships and sponsorships inhibit the development of private support.
- Tradition – The City and other community recreation providers continue to operate on a long-standing tradition of independent activities and decisions. A new vision is needed towards which all public and private recreation-related organizations can work together collaboratively for the good of Allentown, the Lehigh Valley, its people and its resources.
- Funding – Funding is crucial to support planning, programs and services, conservation, education and outreach and operations. Since 1935, Allentown has been fortunate

in having entitlement to funds provided annually from the Trexler Trust. The downside of this magnanimous situation is that the City has relied on the Trust instead of forging other partnerships, collaborative relationships, and methods of generating additional non-tax money.

• Recommendations

The following ten strategic management characteristics could guide Allentown's parks and recreation system. The recommendations below are based on moving management from a focus on daily demands to positioning for longer term achievements.

- Change-oriented, dynamic
- Mission-oriented
- Vision of future guides actions
- Proactive
- Action-oriented, even in face of ambiguity
- Focused on customer service
- Operates with creativity and innovation
- Fluid, dynamic processes
- Emphasis is on options and high quality
- Focus on effectiveness

1. Merge the Parks Bureau and the Recreation Bureau.

Create the Allentown Parks, Recreation, and Trails Department (APRTD). House them within a people-oriented department such as Community and Economic Development. The planning, design, development, management and service delivery should be rooted in on-going needs assessment balanced with natural resource protection. Since employees are the organization's greatest asset and they have been through serious down-sizing, it will be crucial for the City to address the ramifications of the downsizing upon morale. Figure 4 represents the proposed organization of the APRTD.

- Foster a climate in which employees understand their importance and impact on APRTD.
- Create a competency-based system for hiring parks and recreation managers and employees.

- Establish an effective system to monitor and measure the effectiveness of what APRTD does.
- Build APRTD as a premiere organization in which employees achieve professional growth, personal satisfaction, and fulfilling life experiences rooted in a career of public service, conservation and recreation.
- Create a five year organizational and employee development program to be supported with a designated percent of the operating budget of APRTD.

2. Hire the Parks & Recreation Director.

Position Description: Serves in the chief leadership role for APRTD. Responsible for the operation and management of Allentown's 2,000 acre park and system. Focus is medium and long range planning, empowerment of division managers to oversee operations and short term planning and implementation, project development, and partnerships for parks, recreation, trails, natural resource management and education, and visitors' services. Responsible for strategic communication within Allentown city government as well as with outside organization for the purposes of establishing the parks and recreation system as a key organization in the Lehigh Valley.

Competencies

1. Vision – Ability to articulate the APRTD Vision for the Future and inspire others both within and outside of the APRTD to work collaboratively towards achieving the vision of APRTD.
2. Savvy – The confidence, “know-how”, and savoir-faire needed to advance the vision, mission and goals of APRTD both within and outside of APRTD.
3. Strategic Thinking – Capacity to work in the time frame of three to five years, ten years and twenty years hence rather than in the day to day routine.
4. Strategic Management – Facility to delegate functions by empowering the management team to do their jobs.
5. External Awareness – Knowledgeable and insightful about APRTD and its relationship to opportunities and challenges Lehigh Valley.
6. Collaborative Spirit – Capability to inspire and move people and organizations to collaborate in common goals

City of Allentown Parks, Recreation, and Trails Department Organizational Chart (proposed)

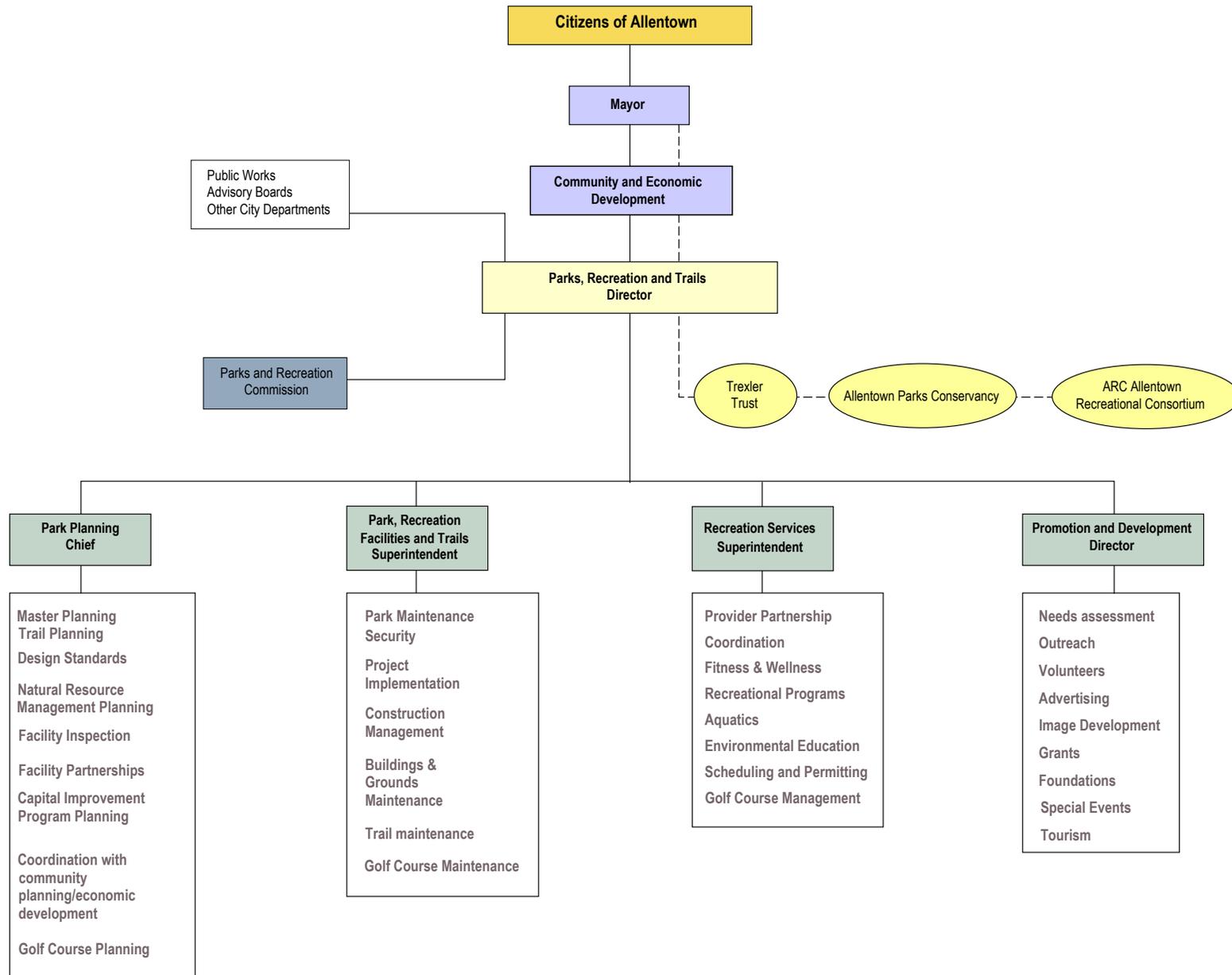


Figure 4. Proposed Organization Chart as it pertains to Parks and Recreation

7 Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

SABER Facilities Management Software - Trademark Gannett Fleming Inc.

MSJ Number: 013-BOM-001
 Facility: PLANT WIDE BUILDING & GROUNDS
 Category: INTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL FEATURE
 Name: IDENTIFICATION AND DIRECTIONAL SIGN

Manufacturer: ACME SIGN
 Model #: ST08001
 Location: MAIN CLINIC
 Boom: CL101
 Design #: SPEC101C12

System: SIGNAGE
 Sub-System: ID & DIRECTIONAL
 Assembly: 24X48 INTERIOR TYPE B
 Area Served: MAIN CLINIC
 Used With: 002ACM001

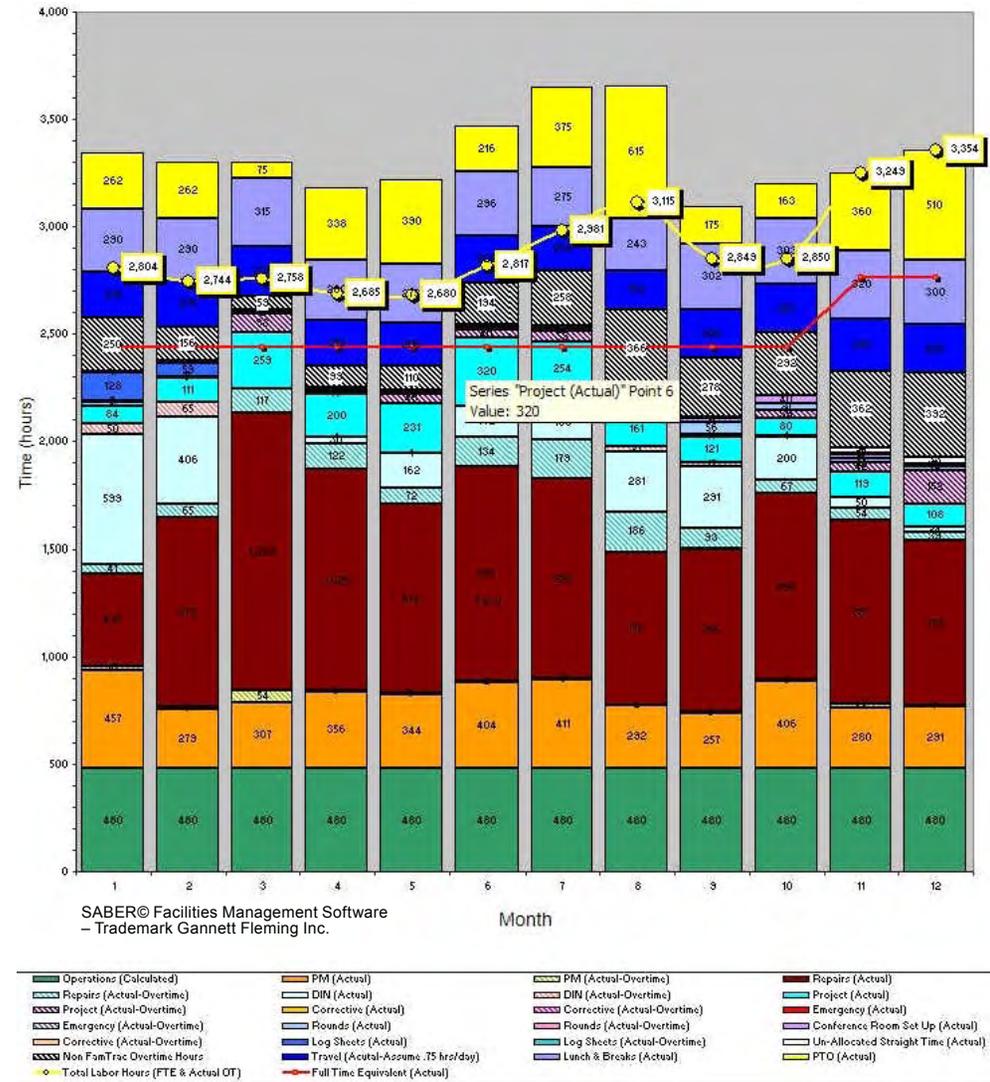
Installed: 09/17/04
 Account: 7402
 PM Criticality: 5

Special PM Instructions: Inspect semi-annually for damage and graffiti

Comments: NONE

Buttons: Undo, Save

Formalized computerized maintenance procedures and standardized work order allocations ensure that routine tasks, whether daily, weekly monthly, etc., are accomplished and tracked.



Computerized management systems allow for quick assessments of manpower deployment on a daily, weekly and annual basis – allowing for true assessment of the “real costs” of park maintenance.

and the achievement of the APRTD Vision and Mission.

7. Entrepreneurship – Drive and creativity to take APRTD to next level from “good to great”, a model of stewardship and public service in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Education and Experience

Master’s Degree preferred. Bachelor’s degree in parks and recreation management or a related field, CPRP certification, seven to ten years experience managing an urban or regional parks and recreation system of over 1,500 acres, over 100 employees, and an annual operating budget of over \$1 million. Demonstrated experience in partnership development, conflict resolution, innovation, and long range strategic planning and implementation.

3. Organize the Allentown Park Alliance.

The Alliance would be a private non-profit organization to serve as a city parks and recreation support group and “watch dog”. They would undertake advocacy, awareness building, partnership development, fundraising, and other mechanisms to insure a thriving, vibrant parks and recreation system. The Alliance could be set up and spun off from the Trexler Trust. Consideration should be given to staffing this organization on a part-time basis perhaps in conjunction with an organization such as the Wildlands Conservancy, which is already skilled in all of these areas and could bring their expertise to city parks.

4. Design and implement Allentown Recreation Consortium.

Allentown Recreation Consortium would be a partnership of recreation service providers in the Allentown area who would work together long term in collaborative service planning and delivery. The first year of Allentown Recreation Consortium would be dedicated to developing the operating plan, goals, actions and specific time frame with designated responsible parties. The key to success is specifying actions, schedule and who will be responsible.

5. Develop a formalized maintenance management system.

Include components for planning, directing, controlling and evaluating operations. Create a method for workload/cost tracking in order to create cost centers for facilities and functions. Due to the complexity of maintenance of activities and the need to track manpower expenditures, a facilities management software package should be developed for the manpower and maintenance deployment and tracking. This information should be used to allocate resources, support budget requests and set fees and charges to support greater cost recovery of special use facilities. Develop maintenance impact statements for all capital improvement projects to insure that the resources are available to take care of it – or else do not undertake the improvement.

5. Develop a program management plan.

This should be based on needs assessments, three season schedule, identified program areas (music, art, drama, dance, fitness and wellness, self-improvement, community building/special events and volunteerism), convenience and responsiveness to the public, tourism. Include a mix of scheduled programs and self-directed recreation opportunities that people could enjoy at their own discretion. Include promotion and advertising as a facet of the plan. Include collaboration with the Lehigh Valley Visitors Bureau on tourism initiatives.

6. Develop Master Site Plans for all parks as a management tool.

Retain professional landscape architects and planners skilled in creating great public spaces. Incorporate citizen participation as an essential element of the planning process. Include maintenance staff in all phases of design.

7. Develop policies and procedures that position parks and recreation managers to operate in a highly professional and consistent manner over the long term.

By establishing a defined set of core values, the City will empower management and staff to operate in a manner to convey the best public service possible.

8. Create and “brand” Allentown Parks and Recreation as a premier urban park system.

This would convey that Allentown is a vibrant, lively community with plenty of things to do and experience everyday! Establishing an image of professionalism is crucial in every aspect of operations. Image is important is making the case for why parks and recreation is worth investing in. Everything from a meticulous condition of departmental headquarters to publications, appearance of vehicles, forms, signage, how the phones are answered, the web site, customer service – all contribute to defining the image of the system. It is not possible to overstate how important this is.





- Introduction
- Financial Perspective
- Bureau Budgets
- Capital Improvement Program

- Introduction

The year 2005 presented a unique set of challenges to the Parks Bureau and the Recreation Bureau. Having experienced downward trends in staffing over the past 25 years, the Bureaus were hit with a severe budget freeze resulting of about fifty percent due to city financial woes. Whether this is a one-time blip or an indication of future conditions, only time will tell.

Note: Because of the budget freeze, 2005 numbers were not worked out. City staff is developing these for inclusion in the chapter.

• Financial Perspective

The City of Allentown has four major funding sources for operating parks and recreation. These include:

- Allentown city tax support
- Watershed funding
- Trexler Trust
- Allentown Municipal Golf Course

In addition to these four sources, the City also generates revenues through limited fees and charges and corporate sponsorships. The City has operated with a philosophy that its parks and recreation opportunities would be offered at low to no cost to the citizens.

The Trexler Trust has provided the City with an on-going source of financial support that is most uncommon. It has enabled the City to operate within a “free services” philosophy for nearly 100 years. However, the impact of budget actions in 2005 spurred an examination of the city’s reliance on the Trust, its own unstable municipal funding for parks and recreation, and the limited generation of outside funding sources and support.

Capital Opportunities

Several initiatives are underway that will support important capital development projects in Allentown. Lehigh County’s Green Futures program will fund about a half million dollars annually to Allentown for open space and park related projects over the next ten years for a total of \$10 million. A second initiative is the project under the leadership of the United Way to develop and operate an indoor recreation center in the sixth ward. The City will provide the land while the United Fund will lead the way in designing, constructing and operating the future recreation center

Tables 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 present the Allentown budget for the Parks and Recreation Bureaus and the Office of Promotions and Special Events for 2001 through 2005. Table 8.4 presents the total budgets for the City’s parks, recreation and special events for 2001 through 2005.

• Bureau Budgets

In fiscal year 2005, the City experienced financial difficulties. As a result the budgets of the Parks Bureau, the Recreation Bureau, and the Office of Promotions and Special Events were frozen. This budget freeze cut the Recreation budget by half and the Parks Bureau by 13 percent. The 13 percent freeze in the Parks Bureau is somewhat misleading because the Parks budget is heavily supported by the Trexler Trust and the Watershed funding. The actual freeze in city funding for the Parks Bureau is 52 percent. The budget for the Office of Promotions and Special Events was eliminated.

Approximately \$240,000 in 2003, 2004, and 2005 was appropriated to community arts organizations such as the Allentown Art Museum, band, theater, dance and other arts organizations. Grants ranged from \$2,451 to \$31,187 annually. This was eliminated in 2005.

Revenue Sources

Allentown has four revenues sources for Parks, Recreation and Promotions, Special Events and Cultural Affairs:

City General Fund - provides operating funds for 26 percent of the Parks budget, 84 percent of the Recreation budget and 100 percent of Special Events. Special Events uses the city funding to leverage sponsorships and partnerships for city special events such as the concert series, parade and so on.

Watershed Funds – are generated from city water fees from the residents and businesses. The watershed funds support the Little Lehigh Watershed with a portion going to grounds maintenance of the watershed and the fish hatchery.

Harry C. Trexler Trust – Harry C. Trexler and his wife Mary bequeathed their estate to Lehigh County charities in a fund known as the Harry C. Trexler Trust. Under the provisions of Mr. Trexler’s will, one-half of the annual revenues are distributed to Lehigh Valley charities, one quarter is returned to the principal and one-quarter is paid to the City of Allentown for the maintenance, improvement and extension of municipal parks. The amounts vary annually based on the market value

Table 8.1 Parks Bureau Operating Budget 2001 - 2005						
Item	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	2005 Frozen
City General Fund						
Ground Maintenance	1,395,006	1,552,072	1,691,915	1,611,720	1,111,243	499,699
Pool Maintenance	73,496	69,655	80,509	82,782	77,562	77,562
Special Events	2,207	1,685	2,462	4,786	4,512	203
Total	1,470,709	1,623,412	1,774,886	1,699,288	1,193,317	577,464
Watershed						
Grounds Maintenance	1,063,030	1,032,975	1,105,294	1,242,654	1,241,958	1,241,958
Fish Hatchery	53,215	55,225	56,542	64,158	70,104	70,104
Total	1,116,245	1,088,200	1,161,836	1,306,812	1,312,062	1,312,062
Trexler						
Trexler Park	433,771	401,566	502,662	489,495	1,423,989	1,423,989
Golf Course						
Municipal Golf Course	435,907	539,368	572,729	538,247	741,490	741,490
TOTAL	3,456,632	3,652,546	4,012,113	4,033,842	4,670,858	4,064,005

Table 8.2 Recreation Bureau Operating Budget 2001 - 2005						
Item	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	2005 Frozen
Therapeutic Recreation	102,376	62,361	78,031	78,666	69,132	13,466
Sports	416,692	538,576	544,407	535,406	548,459	375,747
Special Activities	13,948	13,149	13,058	23,068	22,234	3,907
Recreation Maintenance	137,287	143,002	163,406	153,083	157,341	39,661
Sports Fest	92,152	97,917	90,486	92,578	86,667	0
Swimming Pool Operations	181,906	203,232	211,265	155,686	159,582	70,000
Total	944,361	1,058,237	1,100,653	1,038,487	1,043,415	502,781

Table 8.3 Office of Promotions, Special Events and Cultural Affairs 2001-2005						
Item	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	2005 Frozen
Personnel	62,239	61,865	67,553	66,289	67,400	14,347
Services & Charges	9,935	25,108	254,490	250,722	233,017	0
Materials & Supplies	319	454	641	49	235	0
Sundry	0	0	0	61,770	0	0
Total	72,493	87,427	322,784	378,831	300,652	14,347

Table 8.4 Recreation, Parks and Office of Promotions, Special Events and Cultural Affairs Budget Total 2001-2005						
Item	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	2005 Frozen
Parks*	3,456,632	3,652,546	4,012,113	4,033,842	4,670,858	4,064,005
Recreation	944,361	1,058,237	1,100,653	1,029,533	1,043,415	502,781
Special Promotions	72,493	87,427	322,784	378,831	300,652	14,347
Total	4,473,486	4,798,210	5,435,550	5,442,206	6,014,925	4,581,133
Total without Golf Course	4,037,579	4,258,842	4,862,821	4,903,959	5,273,435	3,839,643
Total without Golf Course & Trexler Trust	2,442,888	2,608,842	3,497,821	3,086,043	3,726,435	2,292,643

\$30,677,971

Since 1990, the Harry C. Trexler Trust has contributed \$30,677,971 to the Allentown Parks System.

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of the fund which is about \$100,000,000. The annual amount has been about \$1,500,000 over the last ten years.

Non-tax Revenues from sports fees, golf course fees, facility rentals, and sponsorships. The Recreation Bureau raises about \$170,000 annually in fees from the swimming pools and recreation programs. The Golf Course raises about \$900,000 annually in golf course revenues. This amount offsets operating costs and yielded a profit of mixed amounts depending upon the year ranging from \$5,460 to \$104,681 over the last four years. The Office of Special Events also generates sponsorships for special and cultural events. Table 8.5 presents the revenues from the swimming pools and recreation programs for 2001 to 2005. (Note: The value of sponsorships should be added to city parks & recreation revenue sources.)

Table 8.5					
Recreation Bureaus Revenues					
2001-2005					
Item	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Budgeted
Swimming Pools	95,365	112,886	95,909	87,898	83,414
Recreation	68,502	87,465	71,219	75,211	86,806
Total	163,867	200,351	167,128	163,109	172,225

Allentown Golf Course

The Allentown Municipal Golf Course operates as an enterprise fund. The Recreation Bureau oversees the contract for golf course management. The Parks Bureau maintains the golf course. Table 8.6 presents the golf course budget and revenues. It is important to note that the budget for golf course maintenance is shown in both Table 8.6 and Table 8.1. The reason for this reporting is to show that the Parks Bureau is responsible for golf course maintenance and draws from this budget and that the golf course revenues cover the cost of golf course maintenance.

Table 8.6					
Allentown Municipal Golf Course Budget and Revenues					
2001-2005					
Item	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Actual	2005 Budgeted
Revenues	773,673	971,334	844,144	890,134	1,004,634
Budget					
Personnel	133,369	216,113	199,340	247,368	303,888
Services & Charges	151,736	185,190	157,609	184,974	188,254
Materials & Supplies	87,220	102,283	63,773	74,889	87,575
Capital Outlays	88,725	110,013	88,627	171,751	40,000
Sundry	206,146	85,458	272,271	193,000	395,271
Total	163,867	200,351	167,128	163,109	1,014,988

Financing Analysis

Budget Crisis

Allentown, like other cities in the older northeastern states, has a stagnant tax base making municipal budgeting a challenge. The City faced a severe financial crisis in 2005 that resulted in drastic budget cuts in parks, recreation and special events. The impact of the cuts was as follows:

- Four of the five city pools would not open.
- Sports programs would be shortened by two weeks.
- The sixty year old summer concert series would be cancelled.
- The summer playground program would be shortened or consolidated.

- Recreation maintenance staff would be eliminated.
- Parks maintenance staff would be cut in half.
- The therapeutic recreation program would be eliminated.
- The championship dinner for sports teams would be eliminated.
- 28 positions would be eliminated.

In response to these cuts, corporate sponsors stepped up to the plate and funded four of the five pools and half of the summer concert series.

Trexler Trust

Since 1935, the Harry C. Trexler Trust has been supporting a significant portion of the maintenance, improvement and extension of Allentown's parks. This is a notable and uncommon contribution to a public park system anywhere in the United States. The benefit of the trust has created a two-edged sword in Allentown: the proceeds from the Trust serve the park system and the people of Allentown well. The flip side is that the Trust has enabled the City to operate without aggressively seeking revenues from other sources.

Non-Tax Revenue Sources

The Allentown Municipal Golf course generates about \$13,000 in proceeds annually after all capital and operating expenses. While assessment of the golf course and its operations was beyond the scope of this plan, this plan recommends that a study of the Golf Course be undertaken to determine how to improve the golf course physical plant and operations to increase revenues.

Programs

Program fees yield about 4.5% of the operating budget. Program revenues as a percentage of the budget have been decreasing over the past five years from a high of 7.7 percent as shown in Table 7. The revenues generated are from two primary sources: the swimming pools and sports leagues and sports programs.

The city fee and charge philosophy has been on low cost to free programs. Trends elsewhere in public recreation are towards cost recovery on programs and services and free use of parks. The exception for parks is the trend towards charging

field use fees for sports leagues that require a higher level of maintenance for athletic fields. Parks and recreation departments typically generate about percent of their operating budget through user fees. Cost recovery of 50% is not uncommon. Three points for consideration in Allentown include:

1. The Recreation Bureau could generate additional revenues through expanded programs and services. This would offset some of the cost of additional recreation staff who would provide expanded programs and services for the people of Allentown as well as tourists.
2. The City could consider a revenue policy that would encourage cost recovery on programs and services. Proceeds should go back into higher levels of maintenance and expanded programs and services.
3. Fair and equitable access to programs and services by people who cannot afford to pay should be provided. This is especially true for the young and the elderly. Policies on assuring fair access could be established. This would include the formation of scholarship funds by corporate or non-profit sponsors to pay for those who cannot afford it.
4. A reasonable goal would be to increase revenues by 6 percent a year over the next ten years.

Budget Comparisons

Benchmarking the Parks, Recreation and Special Events budgets and revenues helps to illuminate the current position of the City. Table 8.7 presents comparisons based on per capita expenditures, ratio of the parks and recreation budget to the city operating budget and percentage of cost recovery by parks and recreation.

- The City's per capita investment of \$21.50 is less than the statewide average of \$22.26 in 2005. This comparison is for all municipal systems including rural systems with few facilities.
- When the Trexler Trust funds are considered, the per capita investment increases to \$42.97.

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Table 8.7
Budget Comparisons
2001-2005

Item	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005 Budgeted	2005 Revised
Per Capita City & Trexler Trust Investment in Parks, Recreation, & Special Promotions (without the Golf Course)	41.95	45.00	50.97	51.04	56.41	42.97
Per Capita City Investment in Parks, Recreation, & Special Promotions (without the Golf Course or Trexler grant)	22.90	24.47	32.80	28.94	34.95	21.50
Ratio of Parks, Recreation & Special Promotions to City operating budget					7.9%	5.7%
% of City Parks, Recreation, and Special Promotions supported by non-tax revenues without the Trexler Trust and the Golf Course	6.7%	7.7%	4.8%	4.4%	4.6%	7.5%

- The ratio of Park, Recreation and Special Events to the City operating budget is 5.7 percent in 2005. This is actually a favorable percentage. Research by the National Park Service on municipal investment in urban parks systems that are viewed as an asset by the private sector have at least five percent of the municipal operating budget.
- Comparisons with other premier urban park systems provide a useful benchmark. While cities vary in size and characteristics, they have overcome the challenges of urban economics, a diversifying population and renown for their park systems. Table 8.8 presents comparison from other cities regarding staffing levels and per capita investment in parks and recreation.

Table 8.8
Budget Comparisons
2001-2005

City	Population	Full Time Park & Recreation Employees	Employees Per 1,000 Residents	Per Capita Budget for Parks & recreation
Washington DC	571,000	1420	1.7	\$191
Seattle	570,000	960	1.7	245
Minneapolis	376,000	600	1.6	176
Denver	560,000	787	1.4	N/A
Cincinnati	324,000	355	1.1	175
Atlanta	425,000	296	.7	
Baltimore	639,000	435	.7	N/A
Portland	537,000	366	.7	91
Philadelphia	1,492,000	698	.5	48
Allentown	106,632	38	2.8	\$42.97 with Trexler \$; \$21.50 without Trexler \$.

• Implications and Recommendations

1. City Investment

The City invests in Parks, Recreation and Special Events at a level of about 5.7 percent. This marks a decrease of 2.2 percent of the overall city budget showing that these departments took a disproportionately higher hit in the fiscal crisis of 2005.

2. 2005 Budget Cut Impacts

The budget freeze targeted primarily the swimming pools, the summer concert series, therapeutic recreation, and recreation facility maintenance. The citizens who use these programs are children, the elderly, and citizens with special needs. The cuts applied to those citizens in the city without a vocal organized group to speak on their behalf.

3. Maintenance Cuts.

Cuts in maintenance will have an effect for years to come. Repairs done on an emergency basis cost seven times as much than those done on a regularly scheduled routine maintenance program. Deferred maintenance of parks and recreation facilities results in the need for full scale rehabilitation and construction down the road. In addition to the ramifications of deferred maintenance in terms of future capital costs, the lack of maintenance contributes to a poor city image through dirty, unsafe and unattractive facilities. Increased vandalism usually follows. Fully 28 positions were lost. Clean, safe and attractive facilities are essential for the residents and even more so for tourism that generates a substantial economic impact in the Lehigh Valley.

4. Get Beyond Historical Budgeting Patterns.

The budget is rooted in decades of traditional funding approaches. Because of this the same programs are supported year after year even through the demographics are changing in the community. In the future, the budget should be developed in terms of working towards the vision, goals and the core val-

ues of this plan. The development of formalized maintenance management and program management plans should guide the development of the budget more so than just funding traditional endeavors of the past. Some traditions are important to keep in the future such as the swimming pools and concerts. But in the beginning of the 21st century, it is time for Allentown to look at funding in terms of allocating resources to the most important activities, services, and client groups to insure that Allentown is a vibrant, livable community for people today, their children and their children's children.

5. Per Capita Investment.

The per capita investment in terms of city funds should increase to be more on par with the finest urban park systems in the United States. Allentown has an unparalleled park system and its recreation system should come up to match the park system. The parks and recreation budget is an investment not a cost. Parks and recreation increases property values, attracts and retains businesses, prevents crime and anti-social behavior, and stimulates economic development.

6. Trexler Trust Role.

The reliance on the Trexler Trust, especially in light of the 2005 budget scenario, is too great. The Trexler Trust should not supplant the basic level of support by the City of Allentown.

7. Financing Tool Information Management System.

This plan recommends the development of an information management system for parks, recreation and special events. This is important from a financing perspective. This system will essentially be a workload cost tracking system that will show where financial and human resources are spent. This system will provide greater staffing efficiency through automated scheduling, reservations, and reporting. It will show where money is spent and how staff spends their time. It can show cost centers by facility, by program, by client group, by area of the city, by task, by event and so on. Such a system will enable

the Parks, Recreation and Special Events operations to have reports in real time. This will:

- Improve accountability.
- Provide good information to make more informed decisions
- Offer timely information for programming and maintenance decisions.
- Serve as a record of departmental actions to use in litigation defense.
- Help elected and appointed officials as well as managers to understand the true nature of the achievements of parks and recreation as well as the needs.
- Create an information base on which to base planning for the next fiscal year as well as planning over the next five to seven years. For example, attendance and participation numbers in programs can guide program planning decisions in a much more informed way. Numbers, combined with participant evaluations, can help to show what programs and services should be sustained, which should be revised and which ones should be eliminated to be replaced by new programs and services.

8. Future Revenue Management System.

Allentown should consider the development of a four part formalized revenue management system. This would set forth the city's philosophy on its baseline investment, role of the Trexler Trust, expectations on revenue recovery, the pursuit of other funding partners, policies on fees and charges, and provisions for fair and equitable service to all citizens regardless of ability to pay. The four revenue parts should include:

1. Compulsory Resources – taxes, dedication of land ordinances.
 2. Earned Income – fees and charges, rentals, sales, permits.
 3. Contractual Receipts – leases, facility rentals, concessions
 4. Financial Assistance – grants, gifts, bequests, fundraising, friends groups.
- Capital improvement Program

• Capital Improvement Program

The purpose of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is to develop a blueprint for capital expenditures based on the recommendations outlined in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan. In the same manner that the Master Plan is a blueprint for parks and recreation development over the next several years, the CIP is the blueprint of capital needs to complete projects that are necessary to achieve the defined Master Plan Vision. The CIP is based on the five year planning horizon from 2006-2010. The CIP provides a framework for budgeting major capital allocations by city, state, non-profit and/or through other sources, and a combination thereof, over the next five to ten years. Projects identified in the CIP include, but are not limited to, acquisition of new land, the planning, design and construction of new facilities, special training and maintenance tools, and the procurement of special one-time, outside consultants to prepare items such as marketing and promotional materials.

The CIP highlights approximately \$14 million in capital investments over the next ten years, over and above the expenditures needed to maintain the system at the level it exists today. A comprehensive, long-range strategy for capital programming is needed beyond what is included in this Master Plan. A thorough evaluation of long term financial commitments, combined with the proposed departmental re-organization recommendations and available outside funding sources, should be carefully addressed to provide the City with greatest opportunity to leverage available resources to achieve all of the projects identified herein.



Financing and Capital Improvement Program Chapter 8

Table 8.9 - Five Year Capital Improvement Program 2006 - 2010

Item	Project Description	Possible Funding Sources	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	PROJECT TOTAL
Major/System-wide Projects								
1	Waterfront Master Plan	DCNR, TT	\$0	\$175,000	\$125,000	\$0	\$0	\$300,000
2	Trail Master Plan	DCNR	\$80,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$80,000
3	Downtown Public Spaces Plan	DCNR, TT	\$0	\$0	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$100,000
4	Schools Pilot Program (Trexler/Sheridan)	GO	\$150,000	\$0	\$175,000	\$0	\$200,000	\$525,000
5	Soccer Complex Study and Construction	DCNR	\$0	\$30,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$930,000
6	Skate Park Feasibility Study and Construction	DCNR	\$0	\$25,000	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$525,000
7	Pool Upgrades	GO, TT	\$135,000	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$290,000	\$420,000	\$1,805,000
8	Indoor Recreation Center Feasibility Study/Summit/Weed and Seed (City Portion of Non-Profit Effort)	GO	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
9	Aquisition of New Parcels (North Allentown, West Park and Downtown Neighborhoods, etc.)	DCNR, GO, TT	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$750,000
10	Facilities/Staffing Software Management System and Training	GO, TT	\$35,000	\$25,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$50,000	\$120,000
11	Comprehensive Signing System	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$150,000
12	Parks System Marketing Plan and Information Design Templates	GO, TT	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$190,000
Park Specific Improvements								
13	Fellowship East Park (Fencing, Landscaping)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000
14	Nice 13 (Site Grading and Landscaping)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$150,000
15	Barber's Quarry Branch Trail Construction	TT, LC, WSF	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$250,000
16	Cedar Beach/Parkway Improvements (Master Plan, Parking, Roadway Improvements, Riparian Plantings)	GO, TT, LC	\$440,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$440,000
17	East Side Reservoir (Master Plan, Playground, Landscaping)	GO, TT, LC	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
18	Incinerator Site (Master Plan, Site improvements, Landscaping)	DCNR, GO, TT	\$0	\$60,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$200,000	\$1,060,000
19	Incinerator Site (Auburn Cross) Trail Construction	TT, LC, WSF	\$390,000	\$200,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$690,000
20	Franklin Park (Master Plan, Landscaping/Canopy Trees, Fencing, Lighting)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$28,000	\$65,000	\$93,000
21	General Field Renovations	GO, TT	\$100,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$200,000
22	General Park Improvements (Fencing, Guiderail, Curbs, Sidewalks, Plantings, Walls)	GO, TT, WSF	\$125,000	\$110,000	\$95,000	\$115,000	\$80,000	\$525,000
23	General Drainage Improvements	GO, TT	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$105,000
24	General Parking Lot Improvements	GO, TT	\$65,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$210,000
25	General Restroom Improvements	GO, TT	\$0	\$55,000	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$165,000
26	Jordan Meadows (At Grade Crossing Improvements)	GO, PENNDOT	\$0	\$45,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$45,000
27	Keck/Roosevelt Park Improvements(New Soccer Fields, Walking Path, Trail Connections, Overlook of River)	GO, TT	\$350,000	\$430,000	\$450,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,230,000
28	Canal Park Tow Path Trail Upgrade	GO, TT, LC	\$500,000	\$150,000	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$800,000
29	Lumber & Benton Playlot (Master Plan, Site Improvements, Landscaping)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000	\$30,000
30	Old Allentown Cemetery (Historic Resources and Cultural Landscape Plan)	DCNR, GO, TT	\$0	\$25,000	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$275,000
31	Patroits Park (Lighting, Landscaping, Fencing)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$80,000	\$80,000
32	Percey Rue Park (Landscaping/Canopy Trees, Conversion of Field to Soccer Field)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$175,000
33	Playground Safety Program	GO, TT	\$50,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$210,000
34	South Mountain Reservoir (Master Plan, Trail/Walking Paths, Practice Soccer Field)	DCNR, GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$65,000	\$350,000	\$350,000	\$765,000
35	Stevens Park (Master Plan, Landscaping, Fencing)	GO, TT	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$75,000
36	Trexler Park (Trail Connection to Cedar Beach, Parallel Gravel Walking Path)	GO, TT, LC	\$0	\$65,000	\$275,000	\$0	\$0	\$340,000
37	Trout Creek Park (Trail Connections, Stream Restoration, Landscaping)	GO, TT, LC	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$35,000	\$125,000	\$160,000
38	Daddona Park (Union Terrace) (Amphitheater Improvements, Trail Connection to Cedar Beach and Little Lehigh River, Soccer field)	GO, TT, LC, WSF	\$0	\$60,000	\$175,000	\$175,000	\$0	\$410,000
39	Valania Park (Master Plan - Could be Part of Downtown Plan - Lighting, Benches, Landscaping)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$60,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$660,000
40	West Park (Historic Resources Study, Lighting Plan)	GO, TT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$35,000	\$100,000	\$135,000
	Total		\$2,985,000	\$2,250,000	\$3,945,000	\$2,398,000	\$2,375,000	\$13,953,000
(GO) General Obligation Bonds, (TT) Trexler Trust, (LC) Lehigh County Green Futures Fund, (WSF) Water/Sewer Fund								

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act

AFL-CIO - American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations

APRTD - Allentown Parks, and Recreation, and Trails Department (Proposed)

BMP - Best Management Practices

CDBG - Community Development Block Grant

CIP - Capital Improvement Program

CMAQ - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Act

CPRP - Certified Parks & Recreation Professional

CYO - Catholic Youth Organization

DCED - Department of Community and Economic Development

DCNR - Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DEP - Department of Environmental Protection

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency

FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHWA - Federal Highway Administration

FLRA - Federal Land Reuse Authority

JCC - Jewish Community Center

MPC - Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code

NFIP - National Flood Insurance Program

NRCS - Natural Resource Conservation Service

NRPA - National Recreation and Park Association

NSPI - National Spa and Pool Institute

Master Plan - The Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

PANA - Pennsylvania Activities and Nutrition Advocates

PADGS - Pennsylvania Department of General Services

PBPM - Public Bathing Place Manual

PENNDOT - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

PNDI - Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory

PRPS - Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society

RTC - Rails to Trails Conservancy

TEA-21 - Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century

(the) City - Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania

ULI - Urban Land Institute

YMCA - Young Men's Christian Association

- **Public Involvement**

A number of community involvement techniques were used to disseminate project progress and engage the public in discussions about the City's parks and recreation system, the planning process, as well as in development and revision the Master Plan and its specific recommendations.

Study Advisory Committee (SAC)

A Study Advisory Committee (SAC) was organized by the City to provide continuous review and input to the planning process. The SAC met regularly – generally every other month – with the planning team to discuss draft reports and confirm conclusions. The SAC also previewed various other public involvement events, giving input as to how the community could best be engaged.

Project Website

A website devoted to the comprehensive planning effort was designed to make project information available to the general public. The website provided information of the overall planning process and the project schedule and press releases for upcoming project events, and included the draft plan, as well as maps of the City's parks and recreation resources.

Community Information Stations

The planning team recognized early that not all of the City's residents would have easy access to the Internet, so several poster-style exhibits were designed to carry project information into the local neighborhoods.

Key Person Interviews and Focus Groups

Numerous personal interviews were held with individuals that played a key specific role in some area directly related to parks and/or recreation within the City. In addition, several focus group meetings, targeted towards a specific topic area or audience were held such with sports providers and a CASA, targeting special issues in the 1st and 6th Wards.

Fairs and Festivals

The planning team participated in the Harry's Day events held in October of 2004. Representatives from the planning team gave presentation several park sites throughout the City. Members of the planning team were also available to answer questions about the project and many informal conversation were held with City residents and park users.

Public Open House Sessions

The representatives from the City and the planning team hosted three public meetings to provide residents of the City and park and recreation users the opportunity to inform the planning process. The first two meetings included breakout sessions focused around specific special interest topic areas. The final meeting consisted of a presentation of the conclusions and draft recommendations of the Master Plan document.

Community Survey

A community survey was utilized to gather public input on the priority of various planning initiatives once they were developed. Individual question results from the survey are provided here as a reference. The analysis of survey results are provided in Chapter 6 of this Master Plan.

B Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

• Community Survey

What do you think about Parks and Recreation in Allentown?

Your opinion counts here. Your feedback will help our city provide the kinds of parks, recreation facilities and programs citizens in our community want. Please answer all of the questions. It will only take a few minutes. Then return the survey in the enclosed addressed and stamped envelope. Thanks!

1. The following is a list of recreation activities. % response.

	Yes	No	Would like to but don't
a. Outdoor recreation	66	17	7
b. Exercise and fitness	57	18	16
c. Swimming and other pool activities	28	41	16
d. Special events (concerts, holiday events)	60	15	15
e. Performing Arts (music, arts, drama, dance)	44	30	14
f. Studio Arts (crafts, painting, pottery)	05	24	57
g. Self-improvement/Education	34	34	15
h. Trips	39	32	14
i. League sports (e.g. baseball, soccer, etc.)	24	51	09
j. Non-league sports (e.g. golf, tennis, etc.)	25	51	09
k. Other _____	13	24	06

2. Did you or members of your household participate in recreation programs offered by any organization in the City in the last year? % response.

	Yes	No	Would like to but don't
a. Arts	18	65	8
b. Crafts	13	69	7
c. Dance	09	72	6
d. Drama	09	73	5
e. Environmental Activities	16	63	8
f. Music	31	52	8
g. Organized Sports (soccer, softball etc.)	16	63	8
h. Social Activities	19	62	5
i. Volunteering	22	59	7
j. Other:	09	42	3

3. How much do you know about recreation opportunities offered in Allentown? % response.

- a. **16%** I know about most of the recreation opportunities available in Allentown.
- b. **51%** I know about some of the opportunities.
- c. **24%** I don't know about recreation opportunities and would like to know more.
- d. **6%** I don't know about recreation opportunities and am not interested in them.

4. How would you rate the availability of recreation opportunities in Allentown for the following groups? % response.

	<i>Not Enough</i>	<i>About Right</i>	<i>Too Much</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>
a. Pre-schoolers	24	26	-	38
b. Elementary students	23	34	-	35
c. Middle school students	21	35	0.6	31
e. High School students	23	34	2	30
f. Adults	20	44	2	23
g. Young adults	21	35	2	29
h. Retired adults	26	33	1	30
i. Families	21	38	0.6	28
j. People with disabilities	29	19	-	40
k. Overall availability of programs	18	36	1	30

5. How often do you or members of your household use Allentown's parks? % response.

- a. **38%** Weekly
 - b. **13%** Monthly
 - c. **29%** Seasonally
- TOTAL: 80%**

- d. **4%** Never, not interested
 - e. **11%** Never, but still think the parks are important to have
 - f. **2%** Don't know where they are
- TOTAL: 20%**

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6. Please give us your impression of Allentown's parks? % response.

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>E&G</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>F&P</i>	<i>No Impression</i>
a. Cleanliness	21	45	66	15	7	4	11	3
b. Attractiveness	27	39	66	17	5	3	8	4
c. Safety	8	44	52	20	10	6	16	5
d. Location	22	40	62	14	7	5	12	4
e. Types of facilities available	13	32	45	22	10	8	18	7

7. What do you think about the availability of the following outdoor recreation facilities? % response.

		<i>Not Enough</i>	<i>Just Right</i>	<i>Too Many</i>
a.	68% Walking paths	38	51	2
b.	27% Bike paths	44	36	4
c.	6% Mountain bike area	34	34	4
d.	50% Natural areas	32	50	2
e.	25% Picnic pavilions	38	45	2
f.	29% Playgrounds	36	47	2
g.	15% Sports fields	25	56	4
h.	4% Tennis courts	21	56	4
i.	9% Basketball courts	18	59	5
j.	0.6% Roller hockey courts	29	41	3
k.	4% Skateboard park	39	32	5
l.	3% Inline skating paths	39	33	4
m.	16% Outdoor pools	26	54	3
n.	7% Ice Rinks	40	36	2
o.	23% Off-Leash Dog Parks	41	25	9
q.	12% Other _____	10	13	3

8. Please go back to Question 7 and circle the three facilities that are most important to you.

9. How important are the following items regarding the Lehigh River to you or members of your household? % response.

	<i>Very Imp.</i>	<i>Imp.</i>	<i>VI & I</i>	<i>Not Imp.</i>	<i>Don't want it</i>	<i>NI & DWI</i>
a. Preserving the riverfront	56	27	83	8	3	11
b. Public access (fishing, boating etc.)	29	40	69	21	2	23
c. Environmental education programs	31	46	72	10	2	12
d. Interpretation of river's history & culture	21	52	73	15	3	18
e. Scenic viewing areas	41	38	79	12	2	14
f. Developing riverfront parks	41	32	73	13	7	20
g. Walking and biking paths along the river	45	35	80	10	3	13
h. Swimming	15	26	41	37	13	50
i. Other:	07	07	14	07	3	10

10. What do you think about the availability of the following indoor recreation facilities in the City of Allentown for the citizens? % response.

	<i>Need More</i>	<i>Just Right</i>	<i>Too Many</i>
a. 26% Gymnasiums	35	44	3
b. 37% Indoor pools	47	31	3
c. 52% Fitness/exercise centers	32	47	4
d. 28% Activity rooms	33	41	3
e. 12% Meeting rooms	22	51	4
f. 32% Teen areas	52	25	3
g. 46% Senior adult areas	44	32	3
h. 6% Other _____	08	12	1

11. Please go back to Question 10 and circle the three facilities that are most important to you.

B Allentown Parks and Recreation Master Plan

12. Where do you think Allentown should focus parks and recreation in the future? % response.

	<i>High Priority</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>HP & P</i>	<i>Low Priority</i>	<i>Not Necessary</i>	<i>LP & NN</i>
a. Expanding recreation programs & services	26	41	67	14	7	21
b. Fixing up existing parks	51	36	87	4	2	6
c. Developing new parks	19	24	43	31	16	47
d. Creating trails and connections	32	30	62	24	4	28
e. Building a citywide indoor recr. center	20	24	44	28	16	44
f. Protecting natural resources	60	24	84	05	2	7
g. Building/improving neighbor. recr.centers	30	41	71	14	4	18
h. Providing riverfront recreation	23	38	63	22	8	30

13. Would you support the City of Allentown spending additional funds for the following? % response.

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>
a. Improving existing outdoor recreation facilities	67	13	11
b. Improving existing indoor recreation facilities	44	28	19
c. Developing trails	46	29	15
d. Developing new parks	29	41	19
e. Maintaining parks & recreation facilities	76	09	08
f. Providing programs and services	51	19	22

14. The City of Allentown spends \$45 per person on parks and recreation from public and private funds. Would you be willing to pay an additional amount to support parks and recreation in Allentown? % response.

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>
a. Another \$12 per person	40	34	14
b. Another \$18 per person	21	49	13
c. Another \$24 per person	8	60	13
d. Another \$36 per person	3	65	13
e. A fee to participate in programs	44	30	12
f. Other: _____	4	14	12

15. If we could do one thing to improve parks and recreation in Allentown, what do you think that should be? Please clearly write in your response below.

16. Who lives in your household? % response.

- a. 13% Preschoolers
- b. 15% Elementary students
- c. 9% Middle school students
- d. 12% High school students
- e. 17% College students
- f. 39% No children
- g. 42% Retired adults
- h. 16% People with disabilities

17. As the person completing this survey, please tell us your age group and gender. % response.

- a. 2% 18-24 years
- b. 44% 25-49 years
- c. 26% 50-64 years
- d. 24% 65 yrs. & Older
- e. 38% Male
- f. 57% Female



- Introduction
- Fountain Park Pool
- Cedar Beach Pool
- Mack Pool
- Irving Pool
- Jordan Pool
- Additional Features

• Introduction

The purpose of this Evaluation is to address the five (5) existing swimming pools owned and operated by the City of Allentown, outline problems and deficiencies that currently exist with each facility, and make recommendations and prepare estimates of construction costs to correct the problems and deficiencies. Recommendations will be made for updating and improving the pools in accordance with the latest Public Bathing Place Manual (PBPM) published by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, as well as other Swimming Pool Industry Standards published by the National Spa and Pool Institute (NSPI), National Recreation and Park Association – Aquatic Division (NRPA), and Federal Government ANSI Standards.

The PBPM, as well as other Standards referenced above for the design and construction of swimming pools, has been revised and amended since these pools were constructed. Some

of the recommendations to update the pools address areas where liability issues are involved.

Also addressed will be additional features and recommendations for not only correcting deficiencies with the pools but also enhancing each pool to encourage additional use, thereby resulting in increased user load and income to help offset operation and maintenance of the pools.

• Fountain Park Pool

Fountain Park Pool consists of three (3) separate pools -- Main Pool, Intermediate Pool and Wading Pool.

1. Main Pool

Main Pool Structure

- A. The Main Pool is rectangular in shape, comprises a surface area of approximately 9,150 square feet, perimeter of approximately 420 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 370,000 gallons.
- B. The pool is constructed of poured concrete walls and floor with a concrete trough perimeter recirculation gutter formed by a cantilever deck.
- C. The pool ranges in depth from approximately 3' in the shallow end to approximately 6'-11" deep at the deep end. Therefore, this pool is basically an all-shallow pool. Presently the pool is leaking considerably.
- D. This pool is operated as a free pool; therefore, no users fees are charged for use of the pool.

The following is a general outline of deficiencies:

1. The floor of the pool has numerous cracks throughout that are certainly attributing to the leaking.
2. There are several expansion joints across the floor of the pool and a continuous expansion joint at the intersection of the wall and floor that need to be reconstructed and are

most likely contributing to a considerable water loss of the pool.

3. Presently the pool is being painted with touch-up work being done on a yearly basis. There are numerous areas where part of the original concrete floor is visible and no paint exists.
4. The formed rollout type scum gutter around the perimeter of the pool is basically exposed with no grating and is very outdated. In its present condition, it also can present a liability situation if somebody gets a foot, etc. trapped inside the gutter.

The following are recommendations for renovations and improvements to the Main Pool structure:

1. The entire pool structure should be completely sandblasted to remove all existing paint and expose the original concrete surface. It appears from visual observation that the walls are in fairly good condition; however, due to the numerous amount of cracking visible in the pool floor, consideration should be given to pouring a complete new minimum 6" concrete floor over the entire pool area. Since this pool is not used for any type of competitive swimming and off-deck diving is not permitted by the PBPM on all depths 5' and under, shallowing of the pool floor approximately 6" should not be a problem.
2. Remove all existing expansion joint material to the depth of the joint and reconstruct the joints utilizing a styrofoam backer rod and approximately 1" of rubber-type caulking at the top.
3. Consideration should be given to completely removing the top approximately 15" to 16" of the pool wall and constructing a new, more functional safer perimeter recirculation gutter. A continuous perimeter gutter of some type is required by the PBPM on a pool of this width.
4. There are two (2) options to consider for recoating the pool upon completion of sandblasting.
 - a) Repaint the entire interior of the pool utilizing a chlorinated rubber-base pool paint that is applied

in three (3) coats. However, this procedure will require, at minimum, every other year painting, and possibly yearly painting, thereby resulting in a continuous maintenance expense.

- b) The second option to consider is plastering the entire interior surface of the pool. Pool plaster consists of white cement, white sand and marble dust that is applied approximately 3/8" to 1/2" in thickness over the existing sandblasted concrete surface. Plaster provides a monolithic waterproofing over the entire pool shell that is white in color and eliminates the maintenance cost of repainting the pool.

When the pool surface is plastered, any racing lane lines, targets, and other markings required by the PBPM are installed in a non-skid ceramic tile, also eliminating yearly painting. A row of 6" wide frost-proof ceramic tile is installed around the entire perimeter of the pool. The primary purpose of the tile is so that the plaster surface is not exposed during operation, as well as winterization of the pool. The pool is winterized to the level of the tile.

With proper operation, maintenance and winterization procedures, the new plaster surface could last approximately fifteen (15) to twenty (20) years without requiring replaster or painting, thereby resulting in a considerable dollar and manpower savings over painting.

Main Pool Recirculation System

The recirculation system is all original from when the pool was constructed and consists of the gutter drains, filtered water return inlets, drains in the deep end of the pool and recirculation piping for each.

The following are recommendations for renovations and improvements to the Main Pool recirculation system:

- 1. Since the perimeter piping is original, as well as all of the fittings, complete replacement of all fittings and recirculation piping is recommended. Also, should the option be

implemented for a new pool floor, then completely new drains in the deep end of the pool should be installed.

Pool Deck Equipment

The pool deck equipment consists of the ladders and life-guard chairs.

There is a combination of ladders installed at this pool to include some new stainless steel and some original cast iron ladders. The original cast iron ladders should be replaced with new stainless steel ladders with cyclocac treads.

Main Pool Filtration and Chemical System

The filtration system consists of the original steel filter tanks, manifold piping, valves, recirculation pump, etc. The present system is a low-rate type sand system that utilizes three (3) large steel filter tanks for filtration. This type of system is no longer being installed due to the excessive cost of installation and operation.

The following are recommendations for renovations and improvements to the Main Pool filtration and chemical system:

- 1. The entire filtration system needs to be replaced to include removal of the three (3) steel filter tanks and installation of new rapid sand horizontal fiberglass tanks, all new polyvinyl chloride (PVC) face piping and CPVC valves and new properly sized recirculation pump. All new piping shall be PVC to eliminate future corrosion and replacement.
- 2. The present chemical system consists of a PPG type erosion system with a booster pump. Utilizing sodium hypochloride (or liquid chlorine) is recommended for outdoor pools as being more efficient. However, if the present system is functioning properly, it would not have to be replaced. One item that should be replaced is the chemical being induced prior to the filter tanks, thereby, the highest concentration of pool disinfection is passing through the recirculation pump and the filter tanks. This situation can lead to advanced corrosion of everything.
- 3. Chemicals should be induced into the pool filtered water return line prior to exiting the Filter Room.

4. The PBPM requires that a permanent pH correction system be installed, and presently there is no system in place. Therefore, either a muratic acid system or a carbon dioxide (Co2) system should be installed for permanent pH correction.
5. There is an automatic chemical control unit that presently exists from monitoring the pool water. This system should also be able to control pH when a permanent system is installed.

2. Intermediate Pool

Intermediate Pool Structure

- a) The Intermediate Pool comprises a surface area of approximately 1,950 square feet, a perimeter of approximately 220 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 37,000 gallons. The pool is also constructed of poured concrete similar to the Main Pool. It ranges in depth from 2'-0" to approximately 3'-0" at the deep end. There are two (2) sets of in-pool concrete steps with one (1) railing at each side of the shallow end.
- b) The same recommendations pertaining to the Main Pool would also apply to this pool for renovating the pool structure.
- c) The PBPM requires that pool steps be recessed outside the pool and does not permit in-pool steps. Also required are two (2) railings and only one (1) exists at each set of steps. Although the present steps would be grandfathered since they were constructed prior to the revised Bathing Place Codes, it is recommended that one (1) additional railing be installed so there are two (2) sets of railings to access the steps.

Intermediate Pool Recirculation System

The recirculation system also needs to be completely replaced as per the Main Pool since it is all original.

Intermediate Pool Filtration and Chemical System

The Intermediate Pool is presently filtered through the Main Pool filtration system. The PBPM requires a separate filtration system for each pool; however, Permits have been issued for filtering and chemically treating the Main Pool and Intermediate Pool in other facilities. Therefore, it is recommended that when the new filtration system is sized and installed for the Main Pool that it also includes the Intermediate Pool.

3. Wading Pool

- a) The Wading Pool comprises a surface area of approximately 900 square feet, a perimeter of approximately 120 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 8,415 gallons. The Wading Pool is also constructed of poured concrete; however, there is no perimeter recirculation gutter around the top.
- b) There are many visible signs of cracking in the pool floor; therefore, the same basic recommendations for the Main Pool and Intermediate Pool structures would also apply. However, pouring a new concrete floor over this structure could present a problem pertaining to the water depth; therefore, the existing floor should be removed and a new floor installed.
- c) A complete replacement of the perimeter recirculation system is recommended and two (2) anti-vortex drains be installed at the deep portion of the pool, as only one (1) drain exists which could lead to entrapment.
- d) The Wading Pool is also filtered through the Main Pool and Intermediate Pool filtration system. The current PBPM, as well other recommended Industry Standards, requires that Wading Pools be separately filtered and chemically treated. Therefore, a completely separate filter and chemical system should be installed on this pool.

4. Concrete Deck

In numerous areas the concrete deck is in fairly good condition and in some areas there is a considerable amount of cracking. A complete removal and replacement of all existing deck would be the most favorable and the most expensive. Another concern pertains to drainage of the deck where in many areas the expansion joints are currently being used for a drainage outlet instead of the deck drainage system. Only a portion of the concrete deck (approximately 3' to 4' wide) around the perimeter of each pool is required to be removed for replacement of the recirculation system and constructing a new gutter system on the Main Pool and Intermediate Pool if desired.

5. Handicap Accessibility

There is no handicap accessibility to the Main Pool or Intermediate Pool. Therefore, installation of a handicap lift or construction of a ramp access into the pools should be considered.

• Cedar Beach Pool

Main Pool Structure

1. Cedar Pool consists of only a Main Pool comprising a surface area of 14,905 square feet, a perimeter of approximately 595 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 441,637 gallons. The pool is constructed of a poured concrete shell with a perimeter rollout type gutter system similar to the Fountain Park Pool. Therefore, many of the recommendations pertaining to the Fountain Park Pool structure would also apply to this pool. However, there is a pipe chase approximately 5'-0" wide that exists around the entire perimeter of the pool; therefore, replacement of the gutter system would be considerably more expensive to undertake.
2. The perimeter piping was replaced around the pool approximately five (5) to seven (7) years ago with all PVC pipe; therefore, replacement is not necessary at this time.
3. A new filtration system was installed approximately three (3) years ago utilizing the horizontal fiberglass sand filter

tanks as recommended for the Fountain Park Pool facility. Therefore, no work is recommended at this time.

4. The pool is utilizing the same tablet-type erosion feeder as the Fountain Park facility; however, a muratic acid pH correction system is in place. However, the point of injection of the chlorine disinfection system should be revised as per the Fountain Park Pool.
5. A major concern pertaining to the structure pertains to the present one-meter diving stand and board that exists in the deep end of the pool. The depths and floor slopes in this area not only do not meet the requirements of the PBPM, but do not meet any other recommended Diving Standards for one-meter boards. A minimum depth of 12'-0" is required directly under the board, and this depth must be maintained for approximately 26' from the end of the pool to the toe (start) of the slope to the shallow end of the pool. The maximum slope allowed is 3'-0" horizontal to 1'-0" vertical; therefore, requiring an additional distance of approximately 21'-0" until connecting to the 5'-0" depth of the pool. Presently, there is only approximately 30'-0" of length from the back wall of the pool directly under the diving stand to the top of the slope or 5'-0" depth area of the pool. Therefore, it is approximately 17'-0" shy of the required length.

Also the PBPM requires a 12'-0" clear distance from the center of the board to the edge of the pool, other diving boards or opposite edge. Since the configuration of the deep end of the pool is on a radius, the 12'-0" clear side distance is also not realized.

The following are options for addressing this situation:

- a) Remove the present diving stand and board, and utilize this area for general swimming only.
- b) Remove the present diving stand and board, and shallow this area to a 7'-0" or 8'-0" maximum depth, thereby still allowing off-deck diving. The

current PBPM prohibits off-deck diving in all depths under 5'-0".

- c) Remove the walls and floor of the present deep area of the pool, and reconstruct this area to the required length and width to realize the minimum depths and maximum floor slopes.
6. Presently there are two (2) slides installed. One is a smaller approximately 4' height slide in the main area of the pool and the other is approximately a 7' high totally enclosed slide at the deep end of the pool. The 7' high slide is also in conflict with 12'-0" minimum side clearance from the centerline of the diving board; therefore, the Diving Area should not be utilized for both a slide entry area and diving at any given time.
7. The deck equipment to include lifeguard chairs and ladders are all up-to-date and appear to be in good condition. Therefore, there are no recommendations for removal and replacement at this time.
8. There is a continuous perimeter deck drainage system around the perimeter of the pool, and the perimeter decking appears to be in fairly good condition.
9. There is no handicap accessibility to this pool. Therefore, installation of a handicap lift or construction of a ramp access into the pool should be considered.

• Mack Pool

The Mack Pool facility also comprises three (3) separate pools -- Main Pool, Intermediate Pool and Wading Pool.

1. Main Pool

Main Pool Structure

- a) The Main Pool comprises a water surface of approximately 14,062 square feet, a perimeter of approximately 548 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 515,000 gallons.
- b) The pool is constructed of a poured concrete floor with steel walls.
- c) The pool is presently being painted.

Main Pool Recirculation System

- a) The perimeter recirculation system consists of steel skimmers (scuppers) located around the perimeter of the pool, filtered water return fittings and a drain in the deep area of the pool and approximately in the middle of the main area of the pool.

The following are recommendations for renovations and improvements to the Main Pool structure:

1. Since the pool is presently being painted, it is not known when the walls and floor were last sandblasted. A complete sandblasting is recommended to remove all existing paint down to the bare concrete on the floor and steel on the walls.
2. There are numerous expansion joints in the floor of the pool as well as at the intersection of the wall and floor that also can be addressed as per the Fountain Park Pool.
3. Another area of concern pertains to the construction of the deep end of the pool since a one (1) one-meter diving stand and board exists. Although the depth of the pool is shown to be approximately 12'-0" over the drain of the pool, the depth directly in under the diving board is only

5'-7" and then slopes to the 12'-0" depth at approximately at 6'-0" length. The toe (start) of the slope is 15' from the wall directly in under the board instead of 26'-0" as required. **Therefore, the options that apply to the Cedar Pool would also apply for this pool.**

2. Intermediate Pool

Intermediate Pool Structure

- a) The Intermediate Pool comprises an area of approximately 3,000 square feet, a perimeter of approximately 230 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 58,800 gallons. The pool is also constructed very similar to the Main Pool to include poured concrete floor and steel walls.
- b) The same recommendations made pertaining to the Main Pool structure would also apply to this structure.
- c) One (1) area of concern pertains to only one (1) drain existing in the deep end of the pool. Two (2) drains are required by the PBPM.

3. Wading Pool

- a) The Wading Pool comprises a surface area of approximately 1,256 square feet, a perimeter of approximately 125 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 6,300 gallons. The Wading Pool is also constructed of poured concrete; however, there is no perimeter recirculation gutter around the top.
- b) There are many visible signs of cracking in the pool floor; therefore, the same basic recommendations for the Main Pool and Intermediate Pool structures would also apply. However, pouring a new concrete floor over this structure could present a problem pertaining to the water depth; therefore, the existing floor should be removed and a new floor installed.
- c) A complete replacement of the perimeter recirculation system is recommended and two (2) anti-vortex drains be installed at the deep portion of the pool, as only one (1) drain exists which could lead to entrapment.

- d) Similar to the Fountain Park pool, all three (3) pools at this facility are filtered through the one (1) filtration and chemical system, which needs replaced. Therefore, the same recommendations pertaining to the Main Pool and Intermediate Pool would apply, as well as the separate filtration and chemical system for the Wading Pool.
- e) The same type of disinfection system is being utilized and there is no permanent pH correction system in place; therefore, this is recommended.

4. Handicap Accessibility

There is no handicap accessibility to the Main Pool or Intermediate Pool. Therefore, installation of a handicap lift or construction of a ramp access into the pools should be considered.

• Irving Pool

Main Pool Structure

1. The pool is rectangular in shape, comprises a surface area of 5,250 square feet, perimeter of approximately 390 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 212,245 gallons. The pool is constructed of poured concrete walls and floor with a poured gutter system as an integral part of the pool wall.
2. The pool ranges in depth from approximately 3'-0" in the shallow end to approximately 8'-0" deep at the opposite end of the pool, to a maximum depth of approximately 9'-0" at the drains.
3. Again, the same recommendations pertaining to structure work as recommended for the previous pools would also apply to this pool to include sandblasting, reconstruction of expansion joints, complete replacement of perimeter of recirculation piping, filtration and chemical system, etc.

Main Pool Recirculation System

1. All the perimeter recirculation piping and filtration/chemical system appear to be the original equipment. The

perimeter recirculation piping and filter tanks are constructed of cast iron piping and severely corroded.

2. There is a pipe chase around the entire perimeter of the pool to provide access for replacement of the perimeter recirculation piping.

Pool Deck Equipment

There is a diving stand and board in place at the deep end, although it does not appear to be a full one-meter height board. The depth and floor slope configuration of the deep end does not meet any requirements for even under one-meter diving stands and boards. Therefore, the options pertaining to the Fountain Park Pool and Cedar Pool would also apply to this pool.

There is a two-tube enclosed slide constructed adjacent to the Bathhouse at the deep end of the pool. This is a great location for this type of slide based on the water depths at the entry area.

The following are recommendations and improvements to the Main Pool:

1. Basically this pool needs a complete refurbishing of the pool structure, definitely the perimeter recirculation system and filtration system.
2. The chemical system is the same tablet-type erosion feeder utilized in the other pools; however, there is no permanent pH correction system in place. Therefore, the recommendation for a permanent pH correction system would also apply to this pool.
3. The perimeter concrete decking is also severely deteriorated and cracked in many areas. Therefore, complete removal and replacement with new deck drainage system is recommended.
4. There is no handicap accessibility into the pool; therefore, one (1) of the options pertaining to handicap accessibility offered for the other pools also pertains to this facility.

• Jordan Pool

Main Pool Structure

1. Jordan Pool consists of only a Main Pool comprising a surface area of 15,467 square feet, perimeter of approximately 518 lineal feet and a volume of approximately 465,078 gallons. The pool is constructed of a poured concrete shell with a perimeter rollout type gutter system similar to the Fountain Park Pool. Therefore, many of the recommendations pertaining to the Fountain Park Pool structure would also apply to this pool.
2. A major concern pertaining to the structure pertains to the present one-meter diving stand and board that exists in the deep end of the pool. The depths and floor slopes in this area not only do not meet the requirements of the PBPM but do not meet any other recommended Diving Standards for one-meter boards. A minimum depth of 12'-0" is required directly in under the board, and this depth must be maintained for approximately 26' from the end of the pool to the toe (start) of the slope to the shallow end of the pool. The maximum slope allowed is 3' horizontal to 1' vertical; therefore, requiring an additional distance of approximately 21' until connecting to the 5'-0" depth of the pool. Presently, there is only one (1) approximately 30' of length from the back wall of the pool directly in under the diving stand until the top of the slope or 5' depth area of the pool. There, it is approximately 17' shy on the required length.

Also, the PBPM requires a 12' clear distance from the center of the board to the edge of the pool, other diving boards or opposite edge. Since the configuration of the deep end of the pool is on a radius, this 12' clear side distance is also not realized.

The following are options for addressing this situation:

- a) Remove the present diving stand and board, and utilize this area for general swimming only.

- b) Remove the present diving stand and board, and shallow this area to a 7'-0" or 8'-0" maximum depth, thereby still allowing off-deck diving.
 - c) Remove the walls and floor of the present deep area of the pool, and reconstruct this area to the required length and width to realize the minimum depths and maximum floor slopes.
3. There is no handicap accessibility into the pool; therefore, one (1) of the options pertaining to handicap accessibility offered for the other pools also pertains to this facility.

Main Pool Recirculation System

- 1. There is a pipe chase approximately 5'-0" wide that exists in under the deck around the entire perimeter of the pool; therefore, replacement of the gutter system would be considerably more expensive to undertake.
- 2. The perimeter piping was replaced around the pool approximately five (5) to seven (7) years ago with all PVC pipe; therefore, replacement is not necessary at this time.

Main Pool Filtration System

- 1. A new filtration system was installed approximately three (3) years ago utilizing the horizontal fiberglass sand filter tanks as recommended for the Fountain Park Pool facility. Therefore, no work is recommended at this time.
- 2. The pool is utilizing the same tablet-type erosion feeder as the Fountain Park Pool; however, a muratic acid pH correction system is in place. However, the point of injection of the chlorine disinfection system should be revised as per the Fountain Park Pool.

Main Pool Deck Equipment

- 1. The deck equipment to include lifeguard chairs and ladders are all up-to-date and appear to be in good condition. Therefore, there are no recommendations for removal and replacement at this time.

- 2. Presently there are two (2) slides installed. One is a smaller approximately 4'-0" height slide in the main area of the pool and the other is approximately a 7'-0" high totally enclosed slide at the deep end of the pool. The 7'-0" high slide is also in conflict with 12'-0" minimum side clearance from the center line of the diving board; therefore, the Diving Area should not be utilized for both a slide entry area and diving at any given time.
- 3. Although a portable-type ramp access does currently exist, it does not meet handicap accessibility requirements for maximum allowable slope. Therefore, one (1) of the options pertaining to handicap accessibility outlined previously should also be addressed at this pool.
- 4. There is a continuous perimeter deck drainage system around the perimeter of the pool, and the perimeter decking appears to be in fairly good condition.

• Additional Features

During renovation of pool facilities, whether municipal-owned or private, incorporating some type of additional features or designs to encourage increased use of the facility are being considered and very important. Some of these features result in additional revenues being generated, which are utilized to offset the operational and maintenance costs of the pool. The following features are recommended for these pools:

- 1. Install larger-type commercial water slide in a depth of the pool of approximately 4'-0" to 5'-0" deep. These slides normally range in size from 12'-0" to 15'-0" in height to approximately 20'-0" to 22'-0" in height with varying lengths of the actual slide bedway. The size of the slide is normally determined based on the amount of mon-ey available. Smaller water slides have been installed in many municipal facilities with great results; however, the larger the slide the more attraction and more use is realized. Many insurance companies look at this type of slide

as less liability than diving facilities. A smaller enclosed tube drop-type slide could be installed at the present diving areas to provide a use if the diving board is removed. The drop-type slides require deeper water. Some of the pools have the smaller slides.

2. The installation of water playground equipment is very popular with extremely beneficial results. This may include the simple installation of a mushroom-type fountain to a more intensified installation of multiple types of equipment. Experience has found that additional use of the facility is phenomenal. The additional use generates greater revenues which is very beneficial to the overall operation and maintenance of the pool. This type of equipment can be installed in the shallow end of the Main Pool, Intermediate Pool and in the Wading Pool.
3. Many community pool facilities are installing pool heaters to ensure a constant water temperature in the pool. This is extremely beneficial during cooler wet summers, and in the beginning of the season. The desirable fuel source for pool heating is natural gas; however, propane gas can also be utilized. Electric is not recommended.

Maintaining a constant water temperature can have a tremendous impact in the use of the pool, especially for elderly persons. Experience has found that elderly people will utilize the pool more frequently if a constant water temperature of approximately 78 degrees F is maintained.

The estimated average cost for heating the pool is approximately \$1,800.00 to \$4,000.00 per year, depending on the size and desired water temperature that is maintained. A water temperature of not more than 78 degrees F is recommended. However, this cost can vary greatly especially during warmer summers that require less use of the pool heater to maintain the constant water temperature.

4. Many communities have opted to eliminate the Wading Pool during a major renovation project and construct some type of Zero-Entry Access/Special Purpose Use

Area to the Main Pool, thereby eliminating the operation and maintenance of the filtration and chemical systems for a separate pool. However, this option is not recommended for any of the pools that have Wading Pools. The Wading Pool should be renovated to provide a Zero-Depth access.

5. Lighting of swimming pools for nighttime use is extremely popular. The current PBPM recommends a minimum fifty (50) foot-candle level of lighting over the water surface of the pool. Utilizing in-pool lighting is not recommended due to the number of lights required and the excessive cost involved, as well as liability. Even if in-pool lighting is utilized, some outside or area lighting is still required.

Proper lighting can be accomplished by installing the appropriate number of poles approximately 35'-0" high with the appropriate number of 1500 watt metal halide light fixtures. The use of fiberglass poles is recommended.

Many communities promote reserving the pool especially beginning from 8:00 p.m. until possibly 10:00 p.m. for parties, special events, etc. which generates additional revenues; consequently, lighting becomes extremely important. Also, when pool heaters are installed, as well as water slides and other types of playground equipment, the use of these facilities can increase also into the later evening hours, thereby, providing a usable attraction for both young and old.

6. The installation of winterization covers is very popular not only for safety reasons, but also to eliminate yearly draining and cleaning of the pool. This results in a considerable yearly operational savings and increases the life-span of the pool surface whether the pool is painted or plastered. The pool should be properly winterized and the winterization cover installed immediately after the pool closes. This procedure allows the cover to be removed in the Spring, the filtration system started, and chemicals added without having to drain the pool for cleaning. Separate winteriza-

tion covers could be considered for the Main Pool, Intermediate Pool (where applicable) and Wading Pool.

All five (5) of the present pools are suitable to incorporate either all or some of these features into the renovation process.

ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS FOR PROPOSED RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

A. FOUNTAIN PARK POOL

Main Pool

1. Site Preparation and Sandblasting	\$ 27,500.00
2. Reconstruction of Expansion Joints	18,000.00
3. New Pool Floor	78,000.00
4. Ceramic Tile Work	32,400.00
5. Preparation and Plastering	61,000.00
6. New Ladders	6,000.00
7. New Filtration System	56,000.00
8. Chemical System Revisions	9,500.00
9. New Perimeter Piping	42,200.00
10. Deck Removal and Replacement for Piping	28,400.00
11. Handicap Lift	6,500.00

Sub-Total: \$ 365,500.00

Intermediate Pool

1. Similar Work as Outlined for Main Pool (except 6, 7 and 8)	\$ 84,750.00
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Sub-Total: \$ 84,750.00

Wading Pool

1. Similar Work as Outlined for Main Pool and Intermediate Pool	\$ 34,500.00
2. New Filtration and Chemical System	16,700.00

Sub-Total \$ 51,200.00

TOTAL – FOUNTAIN PARK POOL: \$501,450.00

Other Options

1. New Main Pool Gutter (ADD)	\$ 85,000.00
2. Total Deck Replacement (ADD)	\$ 111,000.00

B. CEDAR BEACH POOL

1. Site Preparation and Sandblasting	\$37,000.00
2. Reconstruction of Expansion Joints	23,000.00
3. Ceramic Tile Work	47,000.00
4. Preparation and Plastering	110,000.00
5. Chemical System Revisions	5,000.00
6. Handicap Lift	6,500.00

Sub-Total \$ 228,500.00

TOTAL – CEDAR BEACH POOL \$228,500.00

Other Options

7. Shallow Existing Dive Area (ADD)	41,700.00
8. Enlarge Existing Dive Area (ADD)	125,000.00

C. MACK POOL

Main Pool

1. Site Preparation and Sandblasting	\$37,000.00
2. Reconstruction of Expansion Joints	24,000.00
3. Patching Pool Floor	12,000.00
4. Preparation and Painting	56,000.00
5. New Filtration System	94,000.00
6. Chemical System Revisions	9,500.00
7. New Pool Vacuum System	12,600.00
8. Handicap Lift	6,500.00

Sub-Total \$ 251,600.00

Other Options

9. Shallow Dive Area (ADD)	37,600.00
10. Enlarge Dive Area (ADD)	97,400.00

*Includes Main Pool and Intermediate Pool

Intermediate Pool

1. Similar Work as Outlined for Main Pool (except 6 and 7)	77,000.00
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Sub-Total \$ 77,000.00

Wading Pool

1. Similar Work as Outlined for Main Pool and Intermediate Pool to Include New Drains \$31,000.00

2. New Filtration and Chemical System 18,600.00

Sub-Total \$49,600.00

TOTAL – MACK POOL \$378,200.00

D. IRVING POOL

1. Site Preparation and Sandblasting \$18,400.00

2. Reconstruction of Expansion Joints 14,700.00

3. Patching Pool Floor 6,500.00

4. Ceramic Tile Work 27,300.00

5. Preparation and Plastering 28,400.00

6. New Perimeter Piping 45,000.00

7. New Filtration System 58,900.00

8. Chemical System Revisions 9,500.00

9. Handicap Lift 6,500.00

Sub-Total \$ 215,200.00

TOTAL – IRVING POOL \$215,200.00

Other Options

10. Shallow Dive Area (ADD) \$ 39,400.00

11. Enlarge Dive Area (ADD) \$ 86,200.00

12. New Concrete Deck (ADD) \$ 94,000.00

E. JORDAN POOL

1. Site Preparation and Sandblasting	\$ 39,000.00
2. Reconstruction of Expansion Joints	28,000.00
3. Patching Pool Floor	14,600.00
4. Ceramic Tile Work	38,000.00
5. Preparation and Plastering	64,000.00
6. Handicap Lift	6,500.00
Sub-Total	\$ 190,100.00

TOTAL – JORDAN POOL \$190,100.00

Other Options

7. Shallow Dive Area (ADD)	\$ 41,700.00
8. Enlarge Dive Area (ADD)	102,000.00

F. ADDITIONAL FEATURES

1. *Pool Lighting (ADD) \$ 27,600.00 to \$ 59,700.0*
2. *Enclosed Tube-Type Drop Slide (ADD) \$ 11,500.00 to \$ 45,000.00*
3. *Larger Open Tube Slide (ADD) \$ 65,000.00 to \$ 110,000.00*
4. *Water Playground Equipment (ADD)*
5. *Main Pool \$ 25,000.00 to \$ 60,000.00*
6. *Intermediate/Wading Pool \$ 10,000.00 to \$ 25,000.00*
7. *Winterization Covers (ADD) \$ 16,240.00 to \$ 27,600.00*
8. *Zero-Entry to Wading Pool (ADD) \$ 12,500.00*
9. *Zero-Entry to Main Pool (ADD) \$ 62,500.00 to \$ 95,000.00*
10. *Pool Heater (ADD) \$ 16,500.00 to \$ 24,200.00*

The above estimates were compiled from similar competitive bid projects and reflect the use of Prevailing Wage Rates.

An approximately 10% to 12% construction contingency amount should be added to the total amount of the Scope of Work selected.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Upon review and evaluation of the pools, we were told that at least two (2) of the pools are free to City residents; therefore, no fees are charged. And in many of the five (5) pools, attendance is very low. We recommend that the City consider whether or not they need five (5) municipal swimming pools. A number of these pools, especially Mack Pool, Fountain Pool and Irving Pool are considerably large pools considering that each pool functions more as a neighborhood-type pool.

This office does not feel it would be more feasible to close all five (5) pools and build one (1) City wide pool at a central location. Even if the land is available, the estimated cost to construct a facility large enough to accommodate all City residents would cost in the area of 3.5 to 5 million dollars.

We recommend that the City select two (2) or three (3) of the best geographically-located pools from a utilization standpoint, and spend the money to renovate these pools to include not only necessary recommended improvements, but also some of the additional features to include the zero-depth access, water slides (or additional water slides), water play features, etc. and close the other two (2) or three (3) pools that are not the most desirable to renovate and enhance. Renovating two (2) or three (3) of the pools would be the best from a geographical standpoint as well as an overall cost standpoint, and still provide City residents a pool within a reasonable distance.

Since the pools are utilized over the summer months, it is extremely important that the renovation project(s) start as soon as the pool(s) close in September, thereby, allowing work to be completed in the Spring of the following year. Considerable additional costs are realized when trying to complete a major renovation project in the spring of the year, and also normal Memorial Day opening dates are not realized.



Pools

CITY OWNED

1. Fellowship East Lot
2. NICE 13 Play Lot
3. Salisbury Street Play Lot
4. Bicentennial Park
5. Buck Boyle Park (including Lehigh Landing)
6. Cedar Beach Park
7. East Side Reservoir
8. Fountain Park
9. Franklin Park
10. Hanover Acres Play Lot
11. Howard Keck Juniata Play Lot
12. Irving Street Park
13. Ithaca Play Lot
14. Jordan Meadows
15. Jordan Park
16. Keck Park
17. Kimmett's Lock
18. Lehigh Canal
19. Little Lehigh Parkway
20. Lumber & Benton Play Lot
21. Municipal Golf Course
22. Old Allentown Cemetery
23. Old Fairgrounds Playground
24. Patriots Park
25. Percy Ruhe Park (Alton Park)
26. Roosevelt Park
27. South Mountain Reservoir and Park
28. South Street Play Lot
29. Sterner Island
30. Stevens Park
31. Trexler Memorial Park
32. Trout Creek Park
33. Daddona Park (Union Terrace)
34. Valania Park
35. Walden Terrace Play Lot
36. West Park

SCHOOL OWNED

- A. Allen High School
- B. Central Elementary School
- C. Cleveland Elementary School
- D. Dieruff High School
- E. Dodd Elementary School
- F. Harrison-Morton Middle School
- G. Jackson Elementary School
- H. Jefferson Elementary School
- I. Lehigh Parkway Elementary School
- J. Lincoln Elementary School
- K. McKinley Elementary School
- L. Midway Manor Elementary School
- M. Mosser Elementary School
- N. Muhlenberg Elementary School
- O. Raub Middle School
- P. Ritter Elementary School
- Q. Roosevelt Elementary School
- R. Sheridan Elementary School
- S. Trexler Middle School
- T. Union Terrace
- U. Washington Elementary School
- V. Wilson Elementary School
- W. Hamilton Park Elementary School

Legend

- Pools
- Allentown Parks
- Schools

