

# Implementation and Funding Strategy

## **Project Phasing**

Improvements to Gerald Richards Park and Pleasantview Park will most likely occur in phases based on available funding. The compatibility of the uses planned at Gerald Richards and Pleasantview Parks allow for many possible options for project phasing. The timing and scope of the phasing will not only be determined by the amount of future funding available, but also by the field needs of local sports organizations. In the absence of being able to accurately predict when funding may occur, the following list suggests the order of importance for the implementation strategy and park improvements.

Phasing for each park can occur independently or concurrently based on the compatibility of uses proposed. One of the major benefits is that these are both active recreation facilities located in close proximity allowing activities to be shifted from one park to the other while construction is occurring. To minimize disturbances to sports field users, it is recommended that Pleasantview phases “A”, “B”, and “C” or Gerald Richards Phase “C” be completed before Gerald Richards Phases “A” or “B”. This phasing option should be considered for the following Reasons:

- Existing facilities at Gerald Richards Park are heavily used by local sports organizations and contain a majority of the Township’s active recreation facilities. The existing fields cannot afford to be taken off-line without supplying alternate field locations;
- Additional fields should be completed first at Pleasantview or on Coventry Christian School property (with a use agreement) to

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

provide overflow athletic facilities for fields taken out of service during construction Gerald Richards;

- The gentle topography and absence of existing natural features at Pleasantview Park make it substantially less expensive to develop. Typically, it is more feasible to construct less expensive phases first;
- Gerald Richards requires extensive grading and earthwork over the majority of the site to correct drainage and create more useable field area;
- Public consensus wanted to see baseball, softball, and little league uses at Pleasantview. Facilities for these uses should be provided since plans for Gerald Richards call for the elimination of 2 baseball fields that are currently in high demand;
- Pleasantview Park will provide a recreational facility to serve local residents where one does not currently exist.

### **Estimate of Probable Development Costs**

A detailed estimate of probable development costs are based on the proposed improvements shown on the master plan. Unit cost figures were established based on construction costs for similar projects and reflect prevailing wage rates that are required for public construction jobs. A detailed cost estimate spreadsheet is included in the appendix of this report with a summary of the site costs per phase outlined on the next page.

### **Phased Capitol Program**

The phases shown in this plan will assist the Township in making decisions on how to move forward with the implementation of Gerald Richards Park and Pleasantview Park. It is suggested that during the first 3 years the Township apply for additional funding, complete all surveying, construction documentation and obtain permit approvals for Pleasantview Park. This strategy allows for construction to proceed as soon as funding becomes available.

**ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE DEVELOPMENT COSTS (Summary)**

Note: Costs in parenthesis do not include optional items.

<b>S H O R T  T E R M</b>	<b>(1-4 YEARS)</b>	<b>PLEASANTVIEW PHASE "A"</b>	<b>\$1,325,523</b>	<b>(\$828,000)</b>
		35 Car Parking Lot and Entry Driveway 1,700 L.F. of Trails Pavilion with Storage Facilities 2 Little League / Softball Fields Dog Park Landscaping / Buffering		
		<b>GERALD RICHARDS PHASE "C":</b>	<b>\$480,518</b>	<b>(\$389,518)</b>
		Little League / Softball Field Soccer Field 1,500 L.F. of Trails Basketball Court Community Gardens Playground		
		<b>PLEASANTVIEW PHASE "C"</b>	<b>\$1,571,618</b>	<b>(\$1,183,118)</b>
		55 Car Parking Lot and Entry Driveway 1,200 L.F. of Trails Clubhouse / Snack Bar / Meeting Rooms Adult Baseball Field Little League / Softball Field Playground Basketball Court 2 Tennis Courts Landscaping / Buffering		
<b>M I D  T E R M</b>	<b>(5-9 YEARS)</b>	<b>PLEASANTVIEW PHASE "B"</b>	<b>\$1,562,925</b>	<b>(\$700,950)</b>
		85 Parking Spaces and Driveway 350 L.F. of Trails Multi-Use Artificial Turf Field Roller Hockey Rink Landscaping / Buffering		
		<b>PLEASANTVIEW PHASE "D"</b>	<b>\$790,772</b>	<b>(\$693,272)</b>
		Complete and Formalize Driveway Entrances Complete Parking Lot—25 Spaces Pavilion with Storage Facilities 1,200 L.F. of Trails 2 Little League / Softball Fields		
<b>L O N G  T E R M</b>	<b>(10+ YEARS)</b>	<b>GERALD RICHARDS PHASE "A"</b>	<b>\$2,372,270</b>	<b>(\$2,153,020)</b>
		80 Car and 26 Car Parking Lot Driveway Improvements 4,300 L.F. of Trails Playground 4 Soccer Fields 2 Basketball Courts 2 Tennis Courts Clubhouse / Snack Bar / Meeting Rooms 2 Pavilions with Storage Facilities Landscaping / Buffering		
		<b>GERALD RICHARDS PHASE "B"</b>	<b>\$2,291,046</b>	<b>(\$1,606,546)</b>
		200 Car Parking Lot 4,300 L.F. of Trails Pavilion with Storage Facilities 4 Soccer Fields Little League / Softball Field Landscaping / Buffering		
		<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$13,035,841</b>	
		<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>(\$10,195,616)</b>	

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

### **Accessibility**

Proposed trails and other facilities should be designed in compliance with the ADA accessibility guidelines for outdoor recreation areas where applicable. These guidelines may be found at the following website: <http://www.access-board.gov/outdoor/>

Reference Sources:

*Guide For Development of Bicycle Facilities*, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 1999;

*Trails for the Twenty-First Century: Planning, Design, and Management Manual for Multi-Use Trails*, Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC), 1993.

*Statewide Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, Bicycling & Walking in Pennsylvania – A Contract for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Bicycle Guidelines*, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

### **Regulatory Requirements**

A number of permit requirements will apply to this project. These must be addressed during design and project development.

#### **NPDES - Erosion and Sedimentation Control**

Construction of the project will involve the disturbance of more than one acre of earth and an NPDES Stormwater Permit for Construction Activities will be required. As part of the NPDES permitting process, the proposed stormwater management areas will be reviewed to determine that the 2-year storm event is infiltrated into the ground. In some cases local conservation districts will waive NPDES requirements for trail projects that disturb slightly more than 1 acre of land. All project phases must comply with the stipulations of PA Code Chapter 102, Erosion and Sediment Control and are reviewed and approved by the local Conservation District prior to the start of any earthmoving project.

#### **Land Development**

Park and trail design is usually not specifically addressed in municipal ordinances. The Township will have to decide which, if any, provisions from local requirements will be applied to this project.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

#### **PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program**

The PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) provides funding for communities and nonprofit organizations to acquire, plan and implement open space, conservation and recreation resources, including trails. DCNR accepts grant application periods annually—usually in April. A new addition to this funding round is that projects will receive additional consideration for using “green” technology or practices. The next C2P2 funding cycle is in April 2010. State funds can be used for discrete projects or as a match to federal funds. DCNR requires a 50–50 match (cash or in kind services) to its grant awards for trail development projects. More information on this program can be found at the DCNR website: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/indexgrantsinstruct.aspx>

#### **PA DEP Growing Greener II**

The Growing Greener Program is an environmental grant program established under the Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act. Funds are distributed among four state agencies: the Department of Agriculture to administer farmland preservation projects; the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park renovations and improvements; the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for water and sewer system upgrades; and the Department of Environmental Protection for watershed restoration and protection, abandoned mine reclamation; and abandoned oil and gas well plugging projects. GROWING GREENER FUNDS ARE EXPECTED TO BE SOMEWHAT REDUCED IN FISCAL YEAR 2011.

Grants are available to a variety of eligible applicants, including counties, municipalities, county conservation districts, watershed organizations, and other organizations involved in the restoration and protection of Pennsylvania’s environment. These grants will support local projects to clean up “non-point” sources of pollution throughout Pennsylvania.

Growing Greener projects applicable to Gerald Richards Park and Pleasantview Park would include DEP-funded local watershed

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

protection and restoration projects, such as riparian buffer planting and stream bank restoration. It may also be possible to coordinate Growing Greener grants with other grants for trail construction. More information on this program can be found at the PA DEP website:

<http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/growinggreener/site/default.asp>

### **DCED Community Revitalization Funds**

The Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Community Revitalization Fund is a state program that supports local initiatives that improve the stability of communities and enhance local economies. This agency has an open application period throughout the year, but applications should be submitted as early as possible in the fiscal year after June 30. The grant program covers a wide range of eligible uses including acquisition of land, buildings, and right-of-ways; trail, civic, and recreation projects; programs and developments that build capacity of the local community and relevant local organizations to better serve the needs of the community, and other reasonable and necessary expenses related to community-based activities. Active support of the district's state senator and / or state representative is critical in a successful grant application. HOWEVER, THIS PROGRAM HAS ALMOST NO FUNDING ALLOCATED FOR RECREATION ASSOCIATED PROJECTS. More information on this program can be found at the DCED website: <http://www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/funding-and-program-finder/funding-detail/index.aspx?proglid=228>

### **Recreational Trails Program**

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides federal funds under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU is the successor to the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Funds are allocated to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the FHWA funded by the federal fuel tax. In Pennsylvania, the RTP is administered by the PA DNCR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation in consultation with the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board, which is composed of both motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail users.

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

Match requirements for Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants are 80% grant money, up to a maximum of \$100,000, and 20% project applicant money. “Soft match” (credit for donations of funds, materials, services, or new right-of-way) is permitted from any project sponsor, whether a private organization or public agency.

Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments and private organizations. Funding may be used for the development of urban trail linkages near homes and work-places; maintenance of existing recreational trails; development of trail-side and trail-head facilities; provision of features that facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities; acquisition of easements for trails, or for trail corridors identified in a state trail plan; acquisition of fee simple title to property from a willing seller; and construction of new trails on state, county, municipal, or private lands. More information on this program can be found at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/>

### **Transportation Enhancements (SAFETEA-LU)**

THERE IS DISCUSSION IN WASHINGTON THAT THE TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS BILL MAY NOT BE REAUTHORIZED UNTIL AFTER THE NEXT ELECTION. The bill may allocate billions nationwide over six years and includes funding for recreational trails and parks. In Pennsylvania, the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) administers several SAFETEA-LU bicycle and pedestrian related programs.

Typically, a non-federal match is required to be 20% of the grant award. A strategy preferred by PennDOT is to require the local partner to prepare construction documents and obtain necessary environmental clearances, property control documents and utility relocations plans as the local match for these “pre-construction” tasks - so that the project is ready for construction using the TE funding. The costs to prepare these documents can be the non-federal match to the TEA-21 funds, and does not necessarily need to be exactly 20% if all needed documentation can be completed for less. More information about this program can be found at the following link: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/summary.htm>

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

### **Environmental Education**

The Pennsylvania Environmental Education Grants Program awards funding to schools, nonprofit groups and county conservation districts to develop new or expand current environmental education programming. Administered through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, the funds are used for projects ranging from creative, hands-on lessons for students and teacher training programs to ecological education for community residents. Educational resources, including exhibits, educational signage, and demonstration projects, also qualify for funding.

The US Environmental Protection Agency is another potential source of funding for environmental education programs. The US EPA awards grants of \$50,000 or less through its regional offices, and grants up to \$100,000 through its Washington, DC headquarters.

Grant programs that require matching funds present an opportunity for the Township to engage in targeted fundraising efforts and to partner with other organizations.

Foundations and institutions represent another potential source of funding for education-related site improvements and programming. Grants are available to support student field trips, provide teacher training in science, and provide other educational opportunities. Education tied to research can increase the pool of potential funds. The science community and research institutions are the logical starting points for soliciting foundation funds.

### **Legislative Funding**

State and federal elected officials can often include items into legislation for worthy projects in their districts. A conversation between county and municipal officials and legislators is the way to begin this process. This type of funding should be targeted toward capital improvement projects.

### **Lower Pottsgrove Township**

Some grant programs allow “in-kind” services in place of cash to count as a local match. It is strongly suggested that the Township immediately begin to keep a detailed inventory of municipal staff and/or official time spent on Gerald Richards Park and Pleasantview Park.

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

Occasionally, grantors may allow time spent to date to count as part of the in-kind match for funds. This record will also demonstrate a continuing commitment on the part of the municipality to the successful implementation of the master plan. The Township may in some cases choose to invest municipal funds in specific aspects of the Greenway development as “leverage” to secure funding from other partners.

### **Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation**

The Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation (PAHWF) provides grants, programs and educational resources to the TriCounty community to enhance the health and wellness of area residents. Since their inception in 2003, over \$11 million dollars has been awarded to over 100 organizations whose programs and services help promote healthy living.

However, due to the current economic downturn and the current volatility of the market, the PAHWF has reduced their amount of grant awards. As stated on their website, under current conditions funding for the following is very unlikely:

- New programs
- Capital support
- Nonprofits that have not received PAHWF funding in the past

Opportunities for grants awards still exist for projects that meet the following priorities:

- Reduce behavioral risks
- Increase access to medical services and support the operational costs for Pottstown’s new health center, Community Health & Dental Care Inc.
- Enhance informal and formal supports
- Improve physical and social environment

More information for this program can be found at the following link:

## 4. Implementation and Funding Strategy

<http://www.pottstownfoundation.org/pages/update-on-foundation-funding.htm>

### **Private Foundations**

There are corporations and foundations that support public works such as trail development. The competition for these funds is brisk, but the opportunities should be researched. Funding is often to non-profit organizations.

### **Schools**

Local schools may also be of assistance in several ways. The student body might get involved with clubs, fundraising events, and park cleanup days. The faculty could incorporate the park into various curricula with students helping to develop and possibly maintain the trail as part of a classroom assignment or after school club. While the amounts of funds raised may be relatively small, this process builds constituents and support that is critical to the long-term success of the Park.