

5.0 Park-Specific Recommendations

The nine parks comprising the Allegheny County parks system are special landscapes that contain a diversity of natural and cultural resources while offering a range of activities and programs to the public. Based upon the analysis of existing conditions and assessment of future needs summarized in Chapter 2.0 and the policy framework presented in Chapter 3.0, this chapter identifies specific action recommendations for each park. The proposed actions apply the system-wide recommendations in Chapter 4.0 regarding facilities, programs, infrastructure, and resources at the park level. Comprehensive in nature, they are designed to provide guidance for the long-term management and development of each park. For the purposes of developing a capital improvements program, a more focused list of priority projects for each park has been developed for implementation over a five to ten-year timeframe, along with order-of-magnitude cost estimates for the improvements. This information is presented in Section 6.2 and Appendix B.

For planning purposes, the park-specific recommendations are organized according to distinct geographic subareas within each park. These subareas were defined by analyzing existing use patterns in the parks against the existing resource base. Each subarea has been assigned a name and a code that is indicated on the Conceptual Master Plan maps included in this chapter. (For example, the “Park Gateway” zone in North Park is shown as “NP1.”) Certain of the recommendations apply at the level of the park as a whole rather than the smaller subareas. These recommendations are included at the end of the discussions of each of the parks.

5.1 NORTH PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan maps for North Park (Figure 5-1 to 5-3), the following 12 subareas have been identified within North Park:

- NP1: Park Gateway
- NP2: North Park Lake and Trail
- NP3: Central Groves and Shelters
- NP4: Golf Course and Horse Show Ring
- NP5: Irwin Run Open Space Reserve

- NP6: Marshall Lake and Ice Rink
- NP7: North Park Lodge
- NP8: Latodami Open Space Reserve
- NP9: Soccer Complex
- NP10: North Park Swimming Pool and South Ridge
- NP11: Rocky Dell Open Space Reserve
- NP12: Hemlocks Natural Area

The recommendations for each subarea are presented in Section 5.1.1 to 5.1.12 below.

5.1.1 Park Gateway (NP1)

This subarea lies at the southernmost entrance to the park, where Babcock Boulevard enters the park from the south. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters, the Boy Scout Cabin, West Ridge Drive and the Allegheny County Police and Fire Training Facility.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.*** These facilities include:
 - Parking areas at Ninebark, Willows, Sesqui and Grant shelters
 - Ingomar Shelter
 - Juniata ballfield
 - Maintenance Buildings
 - Police Horse Barn

B. Natural Resources

- ***Restore North Park Arboretum.*** This feature was once located near the intersection of Babcock Boulevard and Ingomar/Wildwood Roads. Through partnerships with volunteer groups or with the Penn State Cooperative Extension, this area should be restored to represent the native vegetative species found in the region.

C. Park Design

- ***Develop plans for gateway enhancements*** (landscaping, signage, etc.) at the intersections of Babcock Boulevard with Hemlock Drive/West Ridge Road and Ingomar Road/Wildwood Road.

5.1.2 North Park Lake and Trail (NP2)

This subarea is the central focus of the park and includes the area around North Park Lake and the Boathouse, which serve as the signature features of North Park. Included in this subarea are the majority of the park's groves and shelters, the tennis and platform tennis facility, the Rose Barn, and the multi-use trail that loops around North Park Lake.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.*** These facilities include:
 - Pavement at the 80th Division Monument
 - Hickories and Orchard Lawn Shelter
 - Rose Barn
 - North Park Boathouse
- ***Increase use of North Park Boathouse.*** A variety of rental/vendor opportunities should be considered to promote activity and generate income. Options include concessions and flexible space for special events (e.g., parties, weddings, etc.) and bicycle rentals.
- ***Remove picnic shelter and asphalt cul-de-sac*** on the Ingomar Road side of the main stem of Pine Creek near the Kummer Road intersection. This shelter is in the floodplain of the stream and directly on the stream bank.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs consistent with the recreational programming policy recommended in Section 4.3.1.*** Specific opportunities in this subarea include increasing lessons and tournaments at the tennis and platform tennis complex and offering canoeing/kayaking lessons at the North Park Boathouse.

C. Natural Resources

- ***Discontinue mowing at the Kummer/Ingomar Road intersection between Ingomar Road and Lake Shore Drive.*** This area could be mowed annually, within 30 feet of the stream or at the natural topographic break. This practice should extend up Kummer Road toward the golf course, as well as along West Ridge Road, especially at the stream crossing at the Police Academy.
- ***Discontinue mowing of several fields along Pine Creek between Lake Shore Road and Ingomar Road.*** Annual mowing to create meadows should be considered for this area.
- ***Limit mowing in the tennis court area to those areas that have been “hardened”*** with rock ledges or walls.

D. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Maintain the historical integrity of the North Park Boathouse through adaptive reuse.*** Both the Lake and Boathouse are significant historic resources in North Park. In considering potential uses for the Boathouse per the recommendation in 5.1.2A above, careful attention should be paid to retaining the historic integrity of these features while updating their facilities. Educational/interpretive signage and programs focusing on the historic significance of these resources could be provided at the Boathouse.

E. Design

- ***Stabilize the shore of North Park Lake to provide access.*** Areas should be hardened with native rock ledges built along the edges of streams and lakes to provide easy, safe access to the water and at the same time prevent compaction and erosion. The planned dredging of North Lake would be an ideal time for the edges of the lake to be hardened and those areas that are not hardened, planted to reestablish natural vegetation.

5.1.3 Central Groves and Shelters (NP3)

This subarea is a relatively unused section of the park and includes land upslope from North Park lake to the west. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters and a variety of culturally-significant recreation buildings, including the Girl Scout Cabin, the Parish Hill Dance Hall, the Totem Pole, and the St. Paul’s Lutheran Church.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.*** These facilities include:
 - Hampton, Flanders, and Flagstaff Hill Shelters
 - Parish Hill Building
 - J.C. Stone Field
- ***Explore the feasibility of expanding the golf course by nine holes.*** This new golf facility could be designed as a Par 3, Teaching Center, etc. The historic church and barn in this area could be adaptively reused to serve as a small-scale clubhouse or maintenance facility.

B. Natural Resources

- ***Protect steep slopes from development.*** Coordinate with local municipalities to ensure any developments comply with a Steep Slope Ordinance. In general, slopes exceeding 15% should not be developed.

C. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Develop a study for the adaptive re-use of the Parish Hill Dance Hall, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, and Springhouse/Girl Scout Building.*** These buildings are currently used as rental facilities. An adaptive re-use study would suggest improvements that could accommodate a variety of potential rental uses.

5.1.4 Golf Course and Horse Show Ring (NP4)

This subarea includes the existing 18-hole golf course and the horse show area along the western boundary of the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in "poor" condition in the facility inventory,*** including the North Park Golf Clubhouse (roof and interior).
- ***Develop an off-leash area for dogs.*** This area should be located adjacent to the horse show ring with appropriate parking, fencing, and vegetative buffers to separate dogs from other park uses.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments*** at the golf course and horse show ring.

5.1.5 Irwin Run Open Space Reserve (NP5)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. Included in this area are numerous groves and shelters along the scenic North Ridge Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Maintain groves and shelters in this area.***

B. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Irwin Run Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

C. Trail System

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system. The closed road that

passes through the valley is the beginning of a high quality, multi-use trail. Parallel to North Ridge Road is a trail that was part of the original North Park development and could be the return portion of a loop. A connection between Irwin Road and the North Ridge Road trail should be made and informal paths exist that could be upgraded to create a usable loop.

5.1.6 Marshall Lake and Ice Rink (NP6)

This subarea sits at the northernmost access to the park at the intersection of Pearce Mill Road and Brown Road, with Marshall Lake at its center. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters, the ice skating rink, the existing park administration building, and the Pearce Farmhouse and Gristmill.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.*** These facilities include:
 - Bellevue and Vandergrift Shelters
 - Exterior lighting at the North Park Administration Building
- ***Relocate Park Office to North Park Boathouse.*** The central location and visual prominence of the Boathouse site would improve the access and “presence” of the park management to the public.
- ***Relocate the exercise trail to an upland location.*** This trail is currently located downstream from the Administration Building in the floodplain.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the ice rink.*** Form partnerships to sponsor ice hockey tournaments or ice skating competitions that might generate revenue. Consider year-round use of the facility by offering programs in the building.

C. Natural Resources

- ***Change the mowing frequency to an annual cut around Marshall Lake.*** This will help control the growing population of Canada Geese at the lake. Mowing the hillsides adjacent to Pierce Road once a year will limit the rapid sheet flow across this slope and minimize erosion. In addition, some areas around Marshall Lake should be revegetated with meadow vegetation or tall grasses.
- ***Change the mowing patterns at Mill Grove and Mill softball fields.*** Both facilities are in the floodplain of Pine Creek between the Marshall Lake dam and the backwaters of

North Park Lake. Mowing practices for this area should be changed to maintain a meadow rather than a lawn.

D. Design

- **Develop plans for gateway enhancements** (landscaping, signage, etc.) at the intersection of Pearce Mill Brown Roads at the northernmost entrance to North Park.

5.1.7 North Park Lodge (NP7)

This subarea sits along North Ridge Road at the northeastern corner of the park and includes North Park Lodge, the Observation Tower, and the Senior Citizen Softball complex.

A. Facilities and Activities

- **Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory**, including the Observation Tower.
- **Increase use of North Park Lodge.** A variety of rental/vendor opportunities should be considered for North Park Lodge, including concessions and flexible space for special events, such as parties, weddings, etc.

B. Cultural and Historic Resources

- **Develop a study for the stabilization and adaptive re-use of the Standpipe/Observation Tower.** This tower is historically significant and provides fine views of North Park but is in deteriorated condition. Restoration/re-use options should be explored as an alternative to demolition.

5.1.8 Latodami Open Space Reserve (NP8)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. The area is focused around the Latodami Farm Complex, which currently serves as North Park’s Nature Interpretive Center.

A. Facilities and Activities

- **Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.** These facilities include:
 - Oakmont Shelter
 - Ice Skating Rink – Refrigeration Building and Pavilion Interior
 - Latodami Nature Center Complex – Storage Buildings
- **Reconfigure the nature center complex** at Latodami to encourage more environmentally-focused programming activity.

- **Remove the North Dakota grove.** Its poor condition and proximity to wetlands detracts from the natural character of the area.
- **Relocate the Model Airplane Field to Deer Lakes Park.** The current location adjacent to the Latodami Nature Center is not compatible with the recommendation to expand the environmental education/outreach programming at the Latodami Complex. Deer Lakes Park has several well-suited undeveloped areas that would easily accommodate the flying of model airplanes without presenting a conflict with adjacent uses.

B. Programs

- **Enhance educational/interpretive programming at Latodami Nature Center.** Develop educational programming that relates directly to the K-12 Ecology and Environment Curriculum developed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

C. Natural Resources

- **Formally designate the Latodami Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.
- **Direct natural resource management to maintain a variety of habitats in various stages of succession** with the objective of attracting organisms associated with those communities. In other portions, natural succession should be allowed to proceed with the ultimate goal of establishing late successional forests typical of the region.
- **Discontinue mowing** around two fields on the Pearce Mill Road side of Pine Creek and adjacent to wetlands in the Latodami Nature Interpretive Center area from the Skating Rink upstream to the park boundary.

D. Trails

- **Develop and implement a defined loop trail** with connections *to* the park-wide trail system.
- **Enhance and maintain the existing Braille Trail.** Rehabilitate the Braille Trail with proper design and careful selection of materials to prevent vandalism.

5.1.9 Soccer Complex (NP9)

This subarea sits at the northwestern-most corner of the park to the west of McKinney Road. Included in this subarea are several soccer fields.

A. Natural Resources

- ***Clearly delineate vegetative buffers between the soccer fields and adjacent streams.*** Development in this area should be limited to maintain riparian buffers.

B. Trail System

- ***Create a bicycle/walking/jogging trail*** through the southern boundary of the Latodami Open Space Reserve. This trail would link the soccer complex area with the rest of North Park.

5.1.10 North Park Swimming Pool and South Ridge (NP10)

This subarea sits at the southeastern-most corner of the park, with the North Park Swimming Pool and Bathhouse at its center. Included in this subarea are many groves and shelters, the Pie Traynor and other playing fields, and a heavily used multi-use trail that follows the loop of South Ridge Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.*** These facilities include:
 - Road to Devil’s Elbow and Pie Traynor Fields
 - Forest Vale and Vermont Shelters
 - North Park Swimming Pool – Chlorine Building
 - North Park Swimming Pool Bathhouse
- ***Develop a plan to enhance the viability and use of the North Park Swimming Pool.*** Options that should be explored include reducing the size of the pool, creating an enhanced aquatic park (with water slides, lazy river, zero depth entry “beach,” etc.), and developing a recreation or community center at the North Park Bathhouse.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the North Park Swimming Pool.*** Enhanced programming should be developed as part of the plan to enhance usage of the pool.

C. Natural Resources

- ***Aerate the playing fields*** in this area to retain the permeability of the underlying soils. Infiltration of water in this area is important to maintaining the ecological health of the adjacent Hemlocks Natural Area.

D. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Retain the historic integrity of the North Park Swimming Pool and Bathhouse.*** Both the pool and bathhouse are significant historic resources in North Park, but they are outdated for accommodating current recreational demands. Careful attention should be paid to retaining the historic integrity of these features while updating their facilities in accordance with a plan to enhance usage.

5.1.11 Rocky Dell Open Space Reserve (NP11)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea includes the slopes along the southern edge of the South Ridge playing fields, Hemlock Drive, and several groves and shelters.

A. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Rocky Dell Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

B. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.
- ***Enhance the corridor through which the Rachael Carson Trail passes and exits the park.*** Maintain the trail with appropriate materials and prune the vegetation adjacent to the trail to provide safe access.

5.1.12 Hemlocks Natural Area (NP12)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as the park's only Natural Area. This subarea includes the slopes along the northern edge of the South Ridge playing fields, down to the banks of Pine Creek.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Remove old and unused structures,*** especially those near the snow trillium population. Re-grade and re-vegetate this area with native species.

B. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Hemlocks Biological Zone as a Natural Area.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.
- ***Apply forest management practices to accelerate natural succession.*** Where the woodland is less mature, forest management will accelerate succession and speed the creation of a mature old growth forest typical of the area.
- ***Manage snow trillium as a special concern species in this area.*** A monitoring program will determine the present size of the population and any trends that may be occurring. The park naturalist should be directed to establish a standard monitoring program as soon as possible, followed by a management or recovery plan.
- ***Discontinue mowing where appropriate.*** Mowing should be discontinued along Pine creek downstream of the dam and beyond the Wildwood Road Bridge, to the park boundary. The only exception should be for necessary right-of-way maintenance for sewer lines and for providing limited access to the stream.
- ***Close the dump located on the uplands in the vicinity of Massachusetts and Tupelo groves.*** An attempt to remove the material should be made to bring the slope back to the natural gradient. Revegetation with native materials is essential to assure that invasive weeds do not spread and overwhelm portions of the Natural Area.

C. Circulation

- ***Maintain the existing road, but limit its use.*** Although the retention of the existing internal park road in this area is not consistent with the recommended guidelines for Natural Areas, its apparent necessity suggests that it remain but not be expanded or more heavily used.

D. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a trail system that is sensitive to natural habitats.*** An inventory of official and unofficial trails should be conducted. Trails that negatively impact the special concern species should be closed. In conjunction with the park naturalist and local community representatives, a passive-use trail system should be designated and clearly marked.

5.1.13 Other Recommendations

A. Circulation

- ***Implement improvements to improve conditions for pedestrians and address conflicts with vehicles.*** The trail/roadway system around North Park Lake is of particular concern. The 1990 *North Park and South Park Trail Improvement Feasibility Study* and the associated *North Park Traffic Study* provide recommendations to address this issue. The County should use these recommendations as a starting point. Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) and trail use studies should be conducted to determine appropriate widths. Specific actions for consideration include:

Babcock Boulevard

- *Reduce Babcock Boulevard to 3 lanes.* The new configuration would provide two traffic lanes with one central turning lane. This configuration will help slow the speed of traffic entering the park.
- *Install a traffic light at the intersection of Babcock Boulevard and Hemlock Drive.*
- *Develop clearly-marked pedestrian crosswalks at the intersections of Babcock Boulevard/Hemlock Drive and Babcock Boulevard/Ingomar Road.* These crosswalks could serve as traffic calming devices if they are designed with “bump-outs” or as speed “humps” with a textured surface material to cue motorists to reduce their speed.
- *Develop bicycle lanes along each outside travel lane of Babcock Boulevard.* This new trail should link bicycle lanes around North Park Lake to the South Ridge area.
- *Add a separate walking/jogging trail along Babcock Boulevard.* This trail should link to the walking/jogging trails around North Park Lake and the South Ridge area.

North Park Lake/Marshall Lake Roads and Trails

- *Establish two-way bike lanes and a separate walking/jogging trail along Pearce Mill and Ingomar Roads.* This could be accomplished through roadway widening and shifting of the two vehicular lanes. Linkages should be established to the bicycle lanes and trails around Marshall Lake and to the South Ridge area.
- *Reduce Lake Shore Drive to establish two-way bike lanes and a separate walking/jogging trail.* This could be accomplished by reducing Lake Shore Drive to one lane for one-way vehicular traffic.

South Ridge Road

- *Enhance the paved bicycle and walking/jogging trail along South Ridge Road to separate users from vehicular traffic.*

B. Open Space

- ***Explore ways to protect lands adjacent to North Park with natural resource value.*** North Park is rapidly being encircled with residential development. The opportunity for expansion is closed for the most part to the south, east, and west. Remaining areas with natural resource value that should be considered are the Pine Creek Valley downstream of the confluence of Willow Run, a small section of Pine Creek and adjacent lands at the intersection of Pearce Mill Road and Route 910, and upstream in the Irwin Run Valley. All three of these areas are presently undeveloped and are to some degree fragile lands where development should be limited. They are also lands that could be added to the proposed Open Space Reserves.

C. Planning and Design

- ***Maintain North Lake and the North Lake Boathouse as park signature.*** Park informational materials and the design of physical improvement projects within the park should reflect or respond to this signature as appropriate.
- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.

5.2 SOUTH PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan maps for South Park (Figure 5-4 to 5-5), the following 11 subareas have been identified within South Park:

- SP1: Northern Fields/Shelters
- SP2: Ice Skating Rink/VIP
- SP3: Girl Scout Open Space Reserve
- SP4: Reflecting Pools Open Space Reserve
- SP5: South Park Golf Course
- SP6: Oliver Miller Homestead
- SP7: Wave Pool/Maintenance
- SP8: Game Preserve

- SP9: Southeast Groves
- SP10: Fairgrounds
- SP11: Sleepy Hollow Open Space Reserve

5.2.1 Northern Fields/Shelters (SP1)

This subarea lies at the northernmost entrance to the park, to the east of where Corrigan Drive enters the park from the north. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters and playing fields.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Emphasize this area as a passive-use recreation area*** that relates to the adjacent Reflecting Pools Open Space Reserve (SP4). The focus in this area should be on picnicking, outdoor gatherings and other small-scale special events.

B. Natural Resources

- ***Limit mowing*** in the vicinity of the 100-Acre House. To lower sheet flow and increase infiltration in the headwaters of Catfish Run, this area could be replanted as a native plant meadow and mowed annually.

5.2.2 Ice Skating Rink/VIP (SP2)

This subarea lies at the northernmost entrance to the park, to the west of where Corrigan Drive enters the park from the north. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters, the South Park Ice Skating Rink, and the South Park “VIP” facility.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Redevelop the South Park “VIP” facility as a recreation complex.*** Renovate the existing swimming pool, build indoor and outdoor basketball courts, provide an exercise center, and develop multi-purpose rooms for a variety of recreation activities. Develop a skate park at the complex.
- ***Develop a new tennis complex.*** The new complex would replace the courts located adjacent to the Oliver Miller Homestead and could be bubbled during winter months for indoor play.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the ice rink.*** Form partnerships to sponsor ice hockey tournaments or ice skating competitions that might generate revenue. Consider

year-round use of the facility by offering programs in the building.

C. Natural Resources

- ***Discontinue mowing*** along the grassy hillsides and the floodplain above the “VIP” facility to the edge of the park. Management of the hillside should be changed to an annual mowing regime to create grassy meadows.

D. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Evaluate options for the stabilization and adaptive re-use of the Maits House.*** This historic structure has been studied in the past for possible use as a restaurant or other rental facility.

E. Design

- ***Develop plans to improve the aesthetic quality of the South Park “VIP.”*** This architectural character of this structure detracts from the aesthetic value of South Park as a historic designed landscape of the 1920s. Façade and landscape improvements should be considered to improve the visual character of this complex.

5.2.3 Girl Scout Open Space Reserve (SP3)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea is located just to the south of the South Park “VIP” and ice skating rink and includes the Girl Scout Cabin.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Relocate the Nature Center to the Girl Scout Open Space Reserve.*** A new structure or addition to the Girl Scout Cabin would provide an office and interpretive center within a designated Open Space Reserve.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance Nature Center educational/interpretive programming.***

C. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Girl Scout Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

D. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.

5.2.4 Reflecting Pools Open Space Reserve (SP4)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea is located between the Northern Fields and Shelters and the South Park Golf Course and includes several groves and shelters.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***

B. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Reflecting Pools Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

C. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Renovate the series of stone walls and reflecting pools*** as the centerpiece of the Open Space Reserve. It is reported that these were built in the 1930's and that the most downstream of the series was the most developed.

D. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.

5.2.5 South Park Golf Course (SP5)

This subarea lies at the northeasternmost corner of the park, where East Park Drive enters the park from the north. Included in this subarea are the 27-hole golf course and the BMX track.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Expand the golf course by 9 holes.*** The golf course can be expanded to the north into the area where the BMX track is currently located. The historically-significant Spreading-Oak

Barn Dance Hall could be adaptively re-used as a concession area or small-scale clubhouse.

- ***Explore the feasibility of relocating the BMX track to Fairgrounds Area in the future.*** This facility draws a large number of people to the park each year. Relocating this facility to the fairgrounds area would cluster uses that draw large numbers of people to the park, provide concessions or other amenities to bikers and to spectators, and allow easy access to established parking areas.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the golf course.***

C. Natural Resources

- ***Develop plans to upgrade the existing golf course to standards set by the Audubon Society to provide habitat for wildlife.***

D. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Evaluate options for the stabilization and adaptive re-use of the Spreading Oak Barn Dance Hall.***

5.2.6 Oliver Miller Homestead (SP6)

This subarea lies at the central intersection of the park, at the Corrigan Drive circle. While the historic homestead is the focus of this subarea, tennis courts and a DEK hockey facility are also found here.

A. Facilities and Activities

Relocate the tennis courts away from the Oliver Miller Homestead and Catfish Run. This would improve the setting of the Oliver Miller Homestead, facilitate development of an enhanced interpretive program, and contribute to restoring Catfish Run.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance historical educational/interpretive programs at Oliver Miller Homestead.***

C. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Enhance the “front lawn” area of the Homestead to Corrigan Drive and the intersection at Corrigan Circle.*** After the tennis courts are removed, a landscape restoration effort should be applied to restore the historic integrity to the Homestead.

D. Design

- ***Enhance landscaping and signage to improve the visibility of the Homestead as a central feature and signature of the park.*** Restoring views from Corrigan Circle should be considered.

5.2.7 Wave Pool/Maintenance Area (SP7)

This subarea lies at the western entrance to the park, where McConkey Road enters the park from the east. Included in this subarea are the wave pool and the park maintenance facility, including the horticulture complex and greenhouse.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Create an enhanced aquatic park and a “family fun center” at the Wave Pool.*** An enhanced aquatic park would include water slides, a lazy river, zero depth entry “beach,” etc. Additionally, space could be provided around the wave pool for a variety of activities including miniature golf, basketball courts, batting cages, etc.

B. Design

- ***Enhance the landscape of the intersection and road corridor along McConkey Road.*** The purpose of the landscape enhancements would be to highlight the location of the County greenhouse and horticultural center at South Park.

5.2.8 Game Preserve (SP8)

This subarea lies in the southwestern area of the park, between Corrigan and Sesqui Drives. The game preserve houses several head of buffalo and includes a display area with many species of game birds. Several groves and shelters are located along Sesqui Drive upslope from the Game Preserve.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Relocate the game preserve to the Exhibit Farm at Round Hill Park*** to ensure responsible care of the animals in a proper context. This action will also result in cost savings since care of the animals will be concentrated in one location.
- ***Establish an off-leash exercise area for dogs.*** This area should be located on the buffalo pasture with appropriate parking, fencing, and vegetative buffers to separate dogs from other park uses.

- ***Enhance the aesthetic quality of the duck pond.*** A landscape planting plan for the edge of this pond and its surroundings could enhance the attractiveness of this feature.
- B. Programs**
- ***Provide interpretive programming on the ecology of a freshwater pond.***
- C. Natural Resources**
- ***Improve the water quality and quality of vegetation at the duck pond.***
- D. Cultural and Historic Resources**
- ***Memorialize the past use of the land as a pasture for buffalo.*** This could include interpretive signage to tell the story of the buffalo herds at North and South Parks.
- E. Design**
- ***Improve the landscaping of the parking lot at the duck pond.***

5.2.9 Southeast Groves (SP9)

This subarea lies at the southeasternmost area of the park, where Brownsville Road enters the park from the east. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters and playing fields.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Emphasize this area as a passive-use recreation area*** that relates to the adjacent Oliver Miller Homestead (SP6) and Fairgrounds Complex (SP10). The focus in this area should be on picnicking, outdoor gatherings and other small-scale special events.
- ***Explore the feasibility of developing a new soccer complex.***

5.2.10 Fairgrounds (SP10)

This subarea lies at the southernmost entrance to the park, where Brownsville Road enters the park from the south. This intensive-use area consists of many buildings and a central field historically used for County Fair activities. Currently, several ballfields occupy the central field and many buildings are in need of repair. This subarea also includes a concert shell, a children’s theater, a horse

show ring, the park office and police headquarters, and the nature center.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Prepare a detailed Master Plan for the re-design of the Fairgrounds complex to accommodate various active uses and events.*** This plan should explore feasibility of a conference center/hotel, a campgrounds/RV area to accommodate visitors to special events (County Fair, concerts, other events).
- ***Improve equestrian use facilities and associated riding trails*** as part of the enhanced usage plan for the Fairgrounds and surrounding area.
- ***Explore the feasibility of relocating the BMX track to the Fairgrounds area.*** See discussion for SP5.

B. Programs

- ***Continue to reestablish the County Fair:*** The County should work with Allegheny County Fair and Exposition group to improve the County Fair, develop additional special events, and generate funds to improve the fairground facilities.
- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the horse show ring and other equestrian facilities in the Fairgrounds Complex.***

C. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Rehabilitate buildings at the Fairgrounds Complex for their original intended use for the purpose of County Fair functions.***

D. Circulation

- ***Enhance parking areas and traffic management for special events at the fairgrounds.***

5.2.11 Sleepy Hollow Open Space Reserve (SP11)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This wooded subarea is located in the southernmost region of the park and includes the model airplane field and one building.

A. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Sleepy Hollow Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this

area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

B. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.
- ***Provide a connection to the Montour Regional Trail.***

C. Other

- ***Protect Sleepy Hollow area from future strip mining proposals.***

5.2.12 Other Recommendations

A. Circulation

- ***Implement improvements to improve conditions for pedestrians and address conflicts with vehicles.*** The paved multi-use trail along Corrigan Drive is of particular concern. The 1990 *North Park and South Park Trail Improvement Feasibility Study* and the associated *South Park Traffic Study* provide recommendations to address this issue. The County should use these recommendations as a starting point. Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) and trail use studies should be conducted to determine appropriate widths. Specific actions for consideration include:

Corrigan Drive

- ***Reduce Corrigan Drive to 3 lanes.*** The new configuration would provide two traffic lanes with one central turning lane. This configuration will help slow the speed of traffic entering the park.
- ***Install a traffic light at the intersection of McConkey Road and Corrigan Drive.***
- ***Develop clearly-marked pedestrian crosswalks at the major intersections of Corrigan Drive. These crosswalks could serve as traffic calming devices if they are designed with “bump-outs” or as speed “humps” with a textured surface material to cue motorists to reduce their speed.***
- ***Develop bicycle lanes along each outside travel lane of Corrigan Drive. This new trail would occupy the existing outside lane of the north bound side of Corrigan Drive, adjacent to the existing paved bike trail.***
- ***Convert the existing paved bicycle trail along Corrigan Drive to a separate trail for walking/jogging only.*** This trail should include clear pavement marking to define the type of use and control at intersections.

B. Catfish Run

- ***Discontinue mowing within 20 feet (minimum) of the banks of Catfish Run.***
- ***Establish riparian buffers along Catfish Run.*** Existing tree cover ***should*** be maintained and mowing lines pulled back to a minimum of 20 feet on each side of the stream.
- ***Control erosion and stabilize streambanks along Catfish Run.*** There may be some areas that could benefit from the planting of shrubs, but where erosion is severe, such as along the parking lot for the tennis courts, mechanical structures may be the only resort.
- ***Create wetlands along Catfish Run.*** This would create long meanders in the stream and slow the water flow of Catfish Run. A hydrologist or fluvial geomorphologist should be consulted for recommendations to restore the stream to more natural conditions and help to minimize potential downstream damage in a future flood event.

C. Planning and Design

- ***Change the signature of the park to the Oliver Miller Homestead.*** This important historic feature sits at the central intersection of the park and is highly visible to park visitors. Park informational materials and the design of physical improvement projects within the park should reflect or respond to this signature as appropriate.
- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.

5.3 BOYCE PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for Boyce Park (Figure 5-6), the following six subareas have been identified within Boyce Park:

- BP1: Central Groves
- BP2: Recreation Complex
- BP3: Piersons Run Open Space Reserve
- BP4: Wave Pool
- BP5: Ski Area
- BP6: Indian Hill Open Space Reserve

5.3.1 Central Groves (BP1)

This subarea lies directly to the south of the northernmost entrance to the park, where Centerview Drive enters the park from the north. Included in this subarea are several groves and shelters and playgrounds.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Emphasize this area as a passive-use recreation area*** that relates to the adjacent Piersons Run and Indian Hill Open Space Reserves (BP3 and BP6, respectively). The focus in this area should be on picnicking, outdoor gatherings and other small-scale special events.

5.3.2 Recreation Complex (BP2)

This subarea lies at the northernmost area of the park and includes the existing recreation complex, the maintenance facility, and the soccer fields located adjacent to Pierson Run Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Develop an 18-hole golf course*** by the existing recreation area in the northeast corner of the park. This new course would require lands within the Piersons Run Open Space Reserve, but the course would be required to comply with standards set by the Audubon Society for golf course design that offers wildlife habitat.
- ***Establish an off-leash exercise area for dogs.***

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs*** for lessons and tournaments (tennis, basketball, etc.) at the recreation complex.

C. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Protect the culturally-significant Indian Village located at the Recreation Complex from future disturbance.***

D. Circulation

- ***Construct an appropriate road for public use linking the soccer fields to the recreation area.*** Currently, a road exists but it is only used by maintenance vehicles. This action would allow park visitors to travel to all facilities within the park boundaries.

E. Design

- ***Improve the landscaping of the parking lot at the soccer fields.***

5.3.3 Piersons Run Open Space Reserve (BP3)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea includes much of the land to the east of Piersons Run Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Address parking needs at the Loghouse/Barn area for performances and special events.***

B. Programs

- ***Evaluate the potential for increased cultural/arts programming at the Loghouse/Barn area.***

C. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Piersons Run Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.
- ***Develop a mowing program*** for fields in this area to further expand the diversity of habitats in reverting fields that are now at the shrub stage, the clearing should be done as randomly as possible. Mowing need not be in straight courses but rather should meander through the shrub thickets, creating long curving arcs and irregularly shaped openings.

D. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system. From these open areas in the south, a well-developed trail could be developed to extend to the north and west, again along the flat bench created by former strip mining. While winding along the topography, the trail ultimately would connect to a service road that leads from the Pierson Run Road park entrance northeast to the maintenance facilities adjacent to the Recreational Facilities where the trail now begins. From this central loop trail, inner trails could be developed for specific uses such as mountain bikes, horses, and hiking.

- ***Develop a trail system to accommodate mountain bikers.*** Many existing trails in the park are used by mountain bikers, which creates conflicts with other types of trail users.

5.3.4 Wave Pool (BP4)

This subarea includes the wave pool and related parking areas and lies at the southernmost area of the park, to the south of where Old Frankstown Road passes through the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Create an enhanced aquatic park and a “family fun center” at the Wave Pool.*** An enhanced aquatic park would include water slides, a lazy river, zero depth entry “beach,” etc. Additionally, space could be provided around the wave pool for a variety of activities including miniature golf, basketball courts, batting cages, etc.

5.3.5 Four Seasons Lodge and Ski Area (BP5)

This subarea lies at the southeasternmost corner of the park and includes the downhill ski area and the “Four Seasons” Lodge.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Enhance the ski area to increase the efficiency of operations and provide a variety of recreational activities.*** Re-establishing the holding pond at the base of the slopes would provide water for snowmaking, thereby decreasing the need for municipal tap water. Additional activities to generate additional revenues would include snow tubing and an outdoor ice skating rink.
- ***Develop an outdoor concert space between the base of the ski slopes and the Four Seasons Lodge.***
- ***Utilize “Four Seasons” Center for the Park Office and year-round programs and events.*** This central location would be well-suited for use as the main administrative office of Boyce Park and would reinforce a year-round presence at this facility. A variety of rental/vendor opportunities for Four Seasons Center should be considered to maximize its use in the “four seasons.”

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs*** for lessons and tournaments at the ski area.

C. Trails

- ***Develop a network of cross-country ski trails throughout park.*** Offer cross-country ski rentals at the Four Seasons Lodge.

5.3.6 Indian Hill Open Space Reserve (BP6)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. The area includes the land along the western boundary of the park, to the north of the ski area.

A. Programs

- ***Enhance Nature Center educational/interpretive programming.***

B. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Indian Hill Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.
- ***Establish meadows*** for warm season grasses as well as plantings of native plants that are common to the old fields of western Pennsylvania.

C. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.

5.3.7 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.

5.4 DEER LAKES PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for Deer Lakes Park (Figure 5-7), the following four subareas have been identified within Deer Lakes Park:

- DL1: Fishing Lakes
- DL2: Northern Groves and Fields
- DL3: Wagman Observatory
- DL4: Deer Lakes Open Space Reserve

5.4.1 Fishing Lakes (DL1)

This subarea lies directly to the east of the western entrance to the park and includes the area surrounding the fishing lakes.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Evaluate vendor opportunities around fishing lakes and Wagman Observatory.***

B. Programs

- ***Evaluate the potential for increased programming*** or special events related to fishing ponds, Wagman Observatory “Star Parties,” or outdoor sporting activities.

C. Natural Resources

- ***Stabilize the banks of the Deer Lakes to protect water quality.*** In addition to the current effort to improve the water quality of the Deer Lakes (aeration, water supply well, etc.), a regular monitoring program should be implemented.

5.4.2 Northern Groves and Fields (DL2)

This subarea includes the groves, shelters and playing fields in the northwest corner of the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Relocate Park Office to a site closer to the park’s main entrance.*** Visitors to the fishing lakes, picnic groves, or to Wagman Observatory would benefit from a central park office location.
- ***Develop a disc golf course.***

B. Trails

- ***Re-establish the Bridle Trail for equestrian use.***

5.4.3 Wagman Observatory (DL3)

This subarea includes the Wagman Observatory and the farm complex in the northeast corner of the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Improve the parking area adjacent to the Wagman Observatory.***
- ***Evaluate the area adjacent to the Observatory for recreational uses that would not conflict with the operations of the Observatory.*** Any proposed uses in this area should be free of night lighting of any kind. Possible uses include a disc golf course, model airplane field, or an off-leash exercise area for dogs.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance the partnership with the Wagman Observatory to provide additional programming.***

5.4.4 Deer Lakes Open Space Reserve (DL4)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea is located in the southernmost region of the park and includes the current park office and maintenance facility.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Evaluate the feasibility of a tent camping site and/or overnight cabins within the West Deer Lakes Open Space Reserve.*** Tent sites or cabins should be located close to the existing buildings in the southernmost section of the park (where the Park Office is currently located). The buildings should be rehabilitated to offer a restroom facility and multi-purpose meeting room for campers.
- ***Develop an orienteering course*** or other “outdoor sporting” activity area.

B. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Deer Lakes Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

C. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.
- ***Establish viewsheds and scenic overlooks as part of trail system.*** The trail system should connect to the hilltop along the eastern edge of the park to provide a view of the park landscape and fishing lakes.

5.4.5 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.

5.5 HARRISON HILLS PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for Harrison Hills Park (Figure 5-8), the following four subareas have been identified within Harrison Hills Park:

- HH1: Southern Groves
- HH2: Harrison Hills Natural Area
- HH3: Northern Groves/Watts Memorial Overlook

5.5.1 Southern Groves (HH1)

This subarea includes the groves, shelters and McCurdy soccer fields in the southern area of the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Enhance recreational facilities at the McCurdy soccer complex.***

B. Trails

- ***Enhance the corridor through which the Rachel Carson Trail passes and meets up with the Baker Trail.*** The Rachel Carson Trail enters the park from the southwest and runs along the upper edge of the steep river slope. The terminus of the Rachel Carson Trail is located in Harrison Hills Park at the Ox Roast Shelter. However, the Baker Trail

continues north along the upper edge of the cliff to the far northern end of the park and continues north to State forest lands in northwestern Pennsylvania.

5.5.2 Harrison Hills Natural Area (HH2)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as a Natural Area. This subarea includes the slopes along the eastern boundary of the park along the Allegheny River, and the woodlands around the park's central stream corridor.

A. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Harrison Hills Biological Zone as a Natural Area.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.
- ***Clean up the dump site.*** The next ridge south opposite the Watts Memorial Overlook is the location of an enormous mass of glass bottles. Apparently this area was formerly a dump for municipal waste. The organic materials, including much of the metal, have decomposed but the glass remains on the surface in young woods that have grown since the dumping was stopped. This area will require a major clean-up effort, but it is presently a source of potential liability to the County.

B. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a passive-use walking trail*** within the Natural Area that is sensitive to the natural habitats. In conjunction with the park naturalist and local community representatives, a recognized set of paths should be clearly marked.

5.5.3 Northern Groves/Watts Memorial Overlook (HH3)

This subarea includes the groves and shelters in the north-central section of the park, as well as the Watts Memorial Overlook at the east end of Cottontail Drive, and the park office facility to the north.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in "poor" condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Evaluate the feasibility of developing a regional Environmental Education Center*** that relates to the past uses and current context of the park. As the only County park

that sits directly along one of the three major rivers in Allegheny County, an opportunity exists to provide a regionally significant education center that celebrates the work of Michael Watts and Rachel Carson as environmental activists and policymakers.

- ***Relocate the Park Office to a site closer to the park entrance.***
- ***Preserve the view at the Watts Memorial Overlook*** by applying vegetation management measures and regular pruning.
- ***Re-establish community gardens.***

B. Programs

- ***Establish environmental educational programming*** that relates to the work of Michael Watts and Rachel Carson.
- ***Develop educational programs that focus on sustainable gardening.***
- ***Create an interpretive site at the old municipal dump area*** with environmental education programs focusing on waste management.

5.5.4 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.
- ***Explore a strategy to expand the park to the south*** to protect sensitive lands and allow access to the Allegheny River, the only major river flowing through the county that interfaces with a county park.

5.6 WHITE OAK PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for White Oak Park (Figure 5-9), the following four subareas have been identified within White Oak Park:

- WO1: Southern Groves
- WO2: Jacks Run Natural Area
- WO3: Angora Gardens
- WO4: Southeast Fields

5.6.1 Southern Groves (WO1)

This subarea includes the groves, shelters, and multipurpose playing field along Sylvan Drive in the southwest section of the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Emphasize this area as a passive-use recreation area*** that relates to the adjacent Jacks Run Natural Area (WO2). The focus in this area should be on picnicking, outdoor gatherings and other small-scale special events.

5.6.2 Jacks Run Natural Area (WO2)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as a Natural Area. This area includes the heavily forested valley in the northernmost region of the park.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Develop a small-scale Nature Center*** to provide interpretive programming for the Jacks Run Natural Area, staffed with a Naturalist.

B. Programs

- ***Establish environmental educational programming*** that relates to the special ecological communities in the Jacks Run Natural Area.

C. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Jacks Run Biological Zone as a Natural Area.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.
- ***Establish special events that relate to the signature of the park.*** The Jacks Run Natural Area and its outstanding natural habitats should be established as the park signature.

D. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a passive-use walking trail*** within the Natural Area that is sensitive to the natural habitats. In conjunction with the park naturalist and local community representatives, a recognized set of paths should be clearly marked.

5.6.3 Angora Gardens (WO3)

This subarea sits in the southeast includes the historic John J. Muse farmstead, which is now used as the Mon-Yough mental health facility with gardens and an Angora rabbit farm. The park office and maintenance facility is located adjacent to the historic farmstead.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Construct a Park Office that is welcoming to the public and separated from the maintenance building.*** This could be an expansion of the existing structure.

B. Programs

- ***Develop rehabilitative or therapeutic programs*** that build on the current programming of Mon-Yough Center and Angora Rabbit Farm. This would involve strengthening the partnership between Allegheny County and Mon-Yough Community Services.

C. Trails

- ***Enhance and maintain the existing Braille Trail.***

D. Design

- ***Improve landscaping around the Park Office/Maintenance*** facility to improve the aesthetic quality of this area and blend the facility in with the adjacent area managed by Mon-Yough Community Services.

5.6.4 Southeast Fields (WO4)

This undeveloped subarea is located in the southeastern most section of the park, across from the Mon-Yough facility to the south of Muse Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Develop outdoor rehabilitative or therapeutic facilities focused on users with special needs.*** This area should be developed to meet therapeutic recreation needs and could include a barrier-free playground for special needs or disabled children, a “Healing Garden” as a gateway to the area from Muse Lane, and possibly a recreation center with facilities geared toward therapeutic recreation.
- ***Evaluate the feasibility of developing a tent camping area.***

B. Programs

- ***In partnership with Mon-Yough or other local hospital or rehabilitative centers, develop regional programming focused on rehabilitative or therapeutic activities.***

C. Natural Resources

- ***Protect the stream corridor in this area with a 100' (minimum) vegetative buffer.***

D. Trails

- ***Develop a network of trails focused on therapeutic recreation or other accessible/sensory experience trails*** to accommodate a variety of users with disabilities or with rehabilitative/physical therapy needs.

5.6.5 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.
- ***Explore ways to protect the forested land contained along the upland stream corridor.*** Although there has been development on the uplands, the steep valley walls remain forested. Incorporating these lands into the park will help maintain a vegetative buffer around the tributaries to protect downstream water quality. These steep forested lands have little development value, but are critical to maintaining the flow and quality of Jacks Run as one of the few trout streams remaining in Allegheny County.
- ***Work with the local municipality*** to assure that any new development located upstream from the park that creates extensive impervious surfaces has as part of the site development plan a storm water system that will prevent excessive downstream flows during storms. If possible, the storm water system should mimic the natural systems presently in place and include means of disposing of excess water as groundwater recharge rather than to surface streams.

5.7 ROUND HILL PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for Round Hill Park (Figure 5-10), the following four subareas have been identified within Round Hill Park:

- RH1: Exhibit Farm
- RH2: Northern Groves
- RH3: Soccer Complex and Eastern Fields
- RH4: Douglass Run Open Space Reserve

5.7.1 Exhibit Farm (RH1)

The Exhibit Farm is the focus of Round Hill Park and is located at the park's western entrance along Round Hill Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in "poor" condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Relocate animals from the South Park Game Preserve to the Farm.*** Evaluate the feasibility of relocating the buffalo herd to Round Hill Park. This would include an assessment of the grazing requirements and any potential conflicts with the current uses on the Exhibit Farm complex. Additionally, evaluate the Exhibit Farm complex to provide an appropriate location for the game birds.

B. Programs

- **Enhance programs at the Exhibit Farm.** Consider special event opportunities at Exhibit Farm. Partner with Penn State Cooperative Extension to enhance educational programming.
- ***Develop Sustainable Agriculture demonstration areas.***
- ***Enhance opportunities for coordination*** between special events at the Round Hill Exhibit Farm and the re-establishment of the Allegheny County Fair (Penn State Cooperative Extension, 4-H groups, etc.).

C. Natural Resources

- ***Enhance the duck pond at the main entrance to the park.*** Stabilize the slopes around the pond to reduce erosion and improve water quality. Develop a clear trail with several benches located around the edge of the pond to invite visitors to sit by the water.

5.7.2 Northern Groves (RH2)

This subarea is located in the northwesternmost section of the park and includes groves, shelters, playgrounds, and trails. Most of the land to the east of the picnic groves, however, is undeveloped farm land.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Emphasize this area as a passive-use recreation area*** that relates to the adjacent Exhibit Farm (RH1). The focus in this area should be on picnicking, outdoor gatherings and other small-scale special events.

5.7.3 Soccer Complex and Eastern Fields (RH3)

This subarea is located to the northeast of the intersection between Round Hill Road and Simpson-Howell Road and consists mainly of agricultural land. The soccer fields adjacent to the intersection represent the only recreational use in this area.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Work with the Elizabeth Forward Soccer Association to enhance the existing soccer complex.*** Recommended improvements include adding a facility with restrooms, concessions, drinking fountain, and spectator stands; improving the access to field, including an expansion of the parking area to provide ADA-accessible parking; expansion of the field area and improvements to the existing fields including drainage considerations, fencing, and regular care of the lawns.
- ***Explore the feasibility of developing a recreation complex, including a variety of courts and fields.*** In partnership with the municipality, a recreation/community center could be developed here.

5.7.4 Douglass Run Open Space Reserve (RH4)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea is located in the southernmost region of the park and includes much of the land to the south of Round Hill Road.

A. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Douglass Run Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this

area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

- ***Preserve the herbaceous spring vernal wildflower colonies*** found on the north-facing slopes adjacent to Douglass Run, and in some of the small coves carved into the slope.

B. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.

5.7.5 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.

A. Youghiogheny River Trail Connection

- ***Develop a trail along Round Hill Road for bicyclists and walkers/joggers.*** The Youghiogheny River Trail has been developed along this stretch of river and is becoming a very popular recreational attraction.

B. Opportunities for Addition of Lands to Round Hill Park

- ***Explore ways to protect lands*** to augment the proposed Douglass Run Open Space Reserve to the south, into the Gillespie Run valley. Additional opportunities for expansion exist to the east surrounding the village of Mustard, across a small hill, and onto the slopes overlooking the Youghiogheny River between the towns of Smithdale and Blythedale.

5.8 SETTLER'S CABIN PARK

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for Settler's Cabin Park (Figure 5-11), the following four subareas have been identified within Settler's Cabin Park:

- SC1: Wave and Diving Pools
- SC2: Tennis Complex and Groves
- SC3: Southeastern Fields

- SC4: Pinkerton Run Open Space Reserve
- SC5: Botanic Garden

5.8.1 Wave and Diving Pools (SC1)

This subarea includes the wave pool, diving pool and related parking areas and lies at the northeasternmost corner of the park along Ridge Road.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Create an enhanced aquatic park and a “family fun center” at Wave Pool Complex.*** An enhanced aquatic park would include water slides, a lazy river, zero depth entry “beach,” etc. Additionally, provide space around the wave pool for a variety of activities including miniature golf, basketball courts, batting cages, etc.
- ***Explore vendor opportunities*** at the Wave Pool Complex and tennis courts/playground.

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the diving pool.***

5.8.2 Tennis Complex and Groves (SC2)

This subarea includes the picnic groves and shelters as well as the tennis complex and playground in the northeastern corner of the park, just to the south of the Wave Pool Complex.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Repair facilities identified to be in “poor” condition in the facility inventory.***
- ***Emphasize this area as a passive-use recreation area*** that relates to the adjacent Wave Pool and Open Space Reserve. The focus in this area should be on picnicking, outdoor gatherings and other small-scale special events.
- ***Consider vendor opportunities at the tennis courts/playground.***

B. Programs

- ***Enhance programs for lessons and tournaments at the tennis complex.***

5.8.3 Southeastern Fields (SC3)

This undeveloped subarea sits in the southeast corner of the park, between Greer Road and the park's eastern boundary.

A. Facilities and Activities

- ***Relocate the Park Office*** to the main entrance near the Wave Pool or the Tennis Complex and Groves.
- ***Explore the feasibility of developing a 9- or 18-hole golf course.*** The existing park office complex could be adaptively re-used as a golf clubhouse between two sets of 9-holes of golf. Nine holes could be included in this area, while the other nine could be designed to the north of the existing park office, along Greer Road.

B. Natural Resources

- ***Create or maintain vegetative buffers around all park stream corridors.***

5.8.4 Pinkerton Run Open Space Reserve (SC4)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. The area is located in the northwestern region of the park and includes the forested stream valley of Pinkerton Run.

A. Natural Resources

- ***Formally designate the Pinkerton Run Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.*** The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

B. Trails

- ***Develop and implement a defined loop trail*** with connections to the park-wide trail system.

C. Cultural and Historic Resources

- ***Restore the historic Ewing-Walker House and Barn.***

D. Other

- ***Form partnerships with corporate neighbors.*** The headquarters grounds of Bayer Corporation is located at the headwaters of the Run east of the main stem and northwest of the Linions Run branch. The company has extensive holdings

in this area and has made a concentrated effort to increase the wildlife and open space value of these lands through a cooperative effort with the Wildlife Council of America. These efforts are consistent with the proposed objectives of Open Space Reserves in the Allegheny County parks and it is possible that Bayer Corporation, and the Wildlife Council, may be interested in furthering their activities to address the whole of the Pinkertons Run Valley.

5.8.5 Botanic Garden (SC5)

This subarea in the southwestern corner of the park is being developed by the Horticultural Society of Western Pennsylvania as a Botanical Garden. Conceptual designs were developed for this area in 2000, and a consultant was hired in 2001 to complete the detailed design.

A. Programs

- ***Strengthen partnership with the Horticultural Society of Western Pennsylvania.*** The Horticultural Society has negotiated a long-term lease with Allegheny County to develop a Botanic Garden in the southwesternmost section of the park. The facilities and programs of the Botanic Garden should be integrated with other park programs, especially educational or interpretive programs developed for the Pinkertons Run Open Space Reserve.

5.8.6 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.
- ***Re-establish Greer Road as the primary north-south access within park.*** Currently this internal park road is closed just to the south of the park office, limiting internal vehicular circulation
- ***Enhance park gateways with clear signage.*** Work with the municipalities to improve directional signage around the park area.

5.9 HARTWOOD

As can be seen on the attached Conceptual Master Plan map for Hartwood (Figure 5-12), the following four subareas have been identified within Hartwood:

- HW1: Mansion and Stables
- HW2: Little Deer Creek Open Space Reserve
- HW3: Horse Show and Jumping Area
- HW4: Concert/Stage Area

5.9.1 Mansion and Stables (HW1)

This subarea includes the historic mansion and stable complex in the center of the park. This area is surrounded entirely by the Little Deer Creek Open Space Reserve.

A. Facilities and Activities

- *Enhance revenue generating opportunities at the Mansion* with tours, rentals, etc.
- *Reestablish horse stables* for riding lessons and other equestrian-related uses.

B. Programs

- *Enhance cultural/historic programming at the mansion site.*
- *Provide horseback riding and other equestrian-related lessons.*

5.9.2 Little Deer Creek Open Space Reserve (HW2)

This subarea was identified in the inventory phase of the planning process as an important biological zone, and is being recommended for designation as an Open Space Reserve. This subarea includes approximately two-thirds of the park land and completely encircles the Hartwood Mansion and Stables.

A. Natural Resources

- *Formally designate the Little Deer Creek Biological Zone as an Open Space Reserve.* The natural resource value of this area is discussed in Section 2.3. Guidelines for managing this area as an Open Space Reserve are presented in Section 4.4.1.A.

B. Trails

- **Develop and implement a defined loop trail** with connections to the park-wide trail system.
- **Establish winter uses**, including cross-country ski trails and a sledding hill.

5.9.3 Horse Show and Jumping Area (HW3)

This subarea is located in the northwest corner of the park, to the north of the concert/stage subarea, and is currently used for equestrian-related events.

A. Facilities and Activities

- **Develop a designated area for horse trailers** and related vehicles for visitors to the park.
- **Develop an off-leash exercise area for dogs.** This area should be located close to Middle Road with appropriate parking, fencing, and vegetative buffers to separate dogs from other park uses.

B. Programs

- **Develop programs in this area related to equestrian use in park** including riding lessons, jumping, polo, etc.

5.9.4 Concert/Stage Area (HW4)

This subarea is located along the park’s western boundary at Middle Road and includes the large open field area currently used for concert events and parking.

A. Facilities and Activities

- **Design and install a vegetative buffer between Middle Road and the concert area.** This buffer will improve the visual quality of Middle Road and provide a visual separation between the adjacent neighborhoods and the stage area.
- **Develop a clear parking area** for special events at the stage complex.

B. Programs

- **Apply special event criteria to the concert series.** Concerts at this venue should be selected to minimize impacts on adjacent neighborhoods. Concerts that are likely to attract larger numbers of people or generate greater noise should be scheduled at the Fairgrounds Complex in South Park or at the Boyce Park Ski Area.

- ***Apply the special event criteria to the Celebration of Lights.***

5.9.5 Other Recommendations

- ***Prepare more detailed plans as necessary to address specific planning, design, and resource management issues.*** Consistent with the system-wide recommendations presented in Chapter 4.0, these plans include a Park Master Plan, Signage Plan, Resource Management Plan, Preservation Plan, and Watershed Management Plan.
- ***Explore ways to protect lands*** to the south of the park extending to Harts Run Road and Saxonburg Boulevard.

