

Pottstown Area Regional Park

Research Project

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Introduction

The purpose of this project was to: 1) develop a standardized process to evaluate the park system, 2) measure the condition of the park environments and park use, and 3) better understand factors that influence park use. Measuring the conditions, outcomes, and behaviors is important for many reasons.

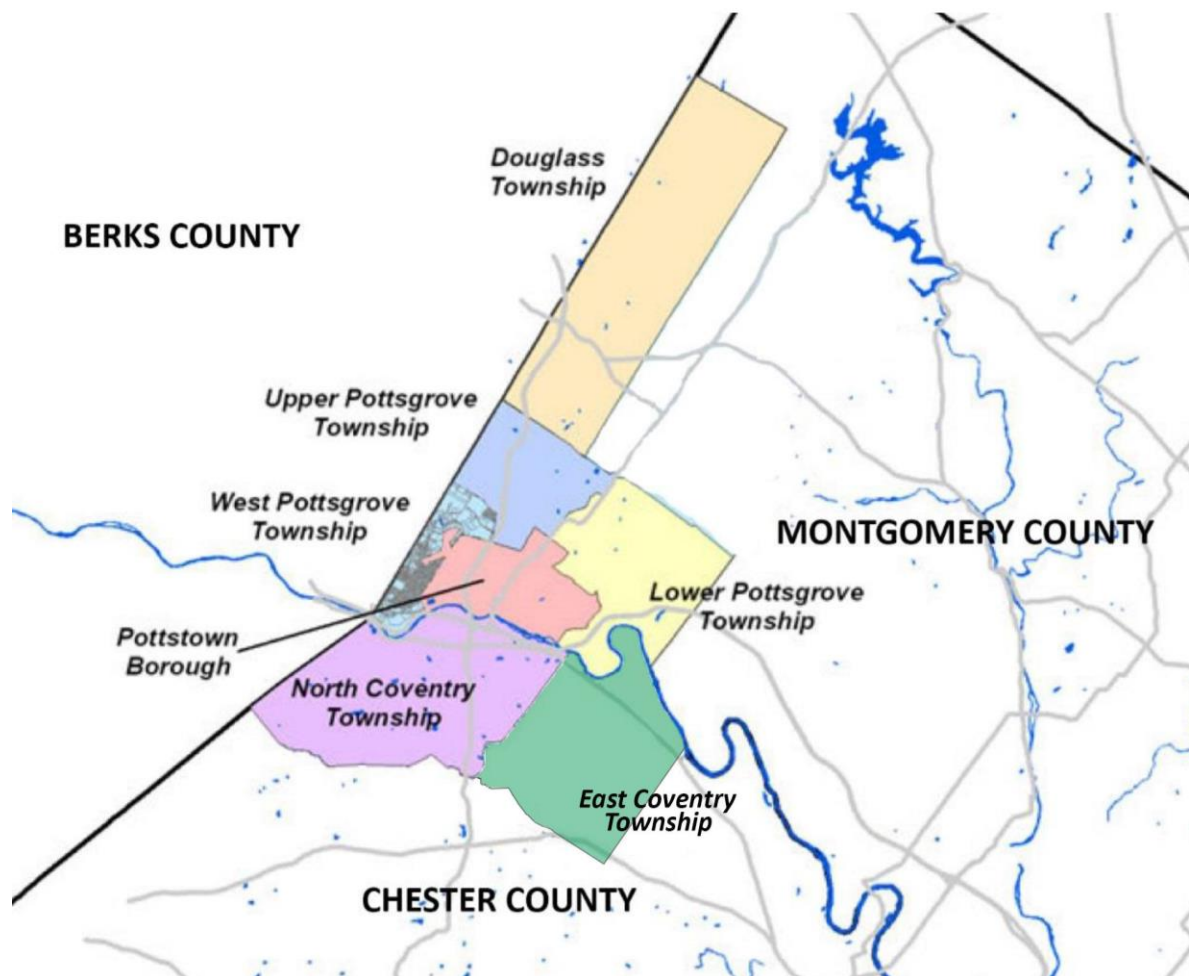
There is much competition for dollars between government services, and resources are limited for parks and recreation services. For example, although expenditures declined across most individual governmental services from 2010-2013, parks and recreation experienced the highest decrease in expenditures during this period (Mowen, 2017). This is despite the fact that parks and recreation can have innumerable benefits to property values, tourism, health, community cohesion, and environmental conditions. Data can help tell the story of parks and opens spaces to guide strategic planning, secure funding, and make well informed decisions regarding the allocation of limited resources.

The following report includes a description of the process used to collect data on the condition and use of parks in the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC) park system (Figure 1). There were three components included in the data collection process: 1) an inventory and assessment of park and neighborhood attributes using the Community Park Assessment Tool, 2) a systematic observation of visitor use at selected parks throughout the region, and 3) an on-site electronic survey of visitor perceptions of park attributes.

The results will provide information on the condition and quality of community parks in the PARRC system; a snapshot of who is visiting the park and their activity levels; and lastly, visitor satisfaction of park attributes and the importance of attributes to the quality of experiences. Collectively, this information can be used to direct efforts to improve park conditions that can positively contribute to a visitor's experience and increase visitation throughout the park system.

Study Region

Figure 1: Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee Members



The following includes the sample of parks that were included in the study:

Pottstown Borough

Memorial Park
Brookside Park
Terrace Lane Park
Riverfront Park
Potts Drive Park
Spruce Street Park
Washington Street Park
Walnut Street Park
South Street Park
Maple Street Park
Cherry Street Park
Chestnut Street Park

Upper Pottsgrove

Prout Farm Park
Sussell Park
Hollenbach Park
Hoffman/Kulp Fields
Heather Place Park

North Coventry

Riverside Park
Kenilworth Park
River Bend Park
Coventry Woods Park

West Pottsgrove

Murgia Park
Old Timers Field
Vine Street Park
Howard Street Park

Lower Pottsgrove

Gerald Richards Park
Sanatoga Park
Ringing Rocks Park

East Coventry

Ellis Woods Park
Towpath Park

Douglass Township

Douglass Park
Smith Road Park
Libor Tract

Community Park Auditing Tool

The Community Park Auditing Tool (CPAT) was developed to assess four topics: Park Information, Access and Surrounding Neighborhood, Park Activity Areas, and Park Quality and Safety. CPAT is a user-friendly tool that enables diverse community stakeholders to audit local parks for their potential to promote physical activity (Kaczynski, Stanis, & Besenyi, 2012). From May 2019 to August 2019, inventories were conducted at 33 parks in the study region. The third author conducted each park audit on paper, then transferred the results to SurveyGizmo to analyze results.

The tool also assesses whether the park is usable and in good condition:

- *Useable*: everything necessary for use is present (excluding portable equipment - rackets, balls, etc.) and nothing prevents use (e.g., are there nets up for tennis courts, goals for sports fields, are trails passable, etc.)
- *Good condition*: looks clean and maintained (e.g., minimal rust, graffiti, broken parts, even surface; etc.)

The CPAT captures the number of common park facilities located at each park, park amenities, park incivilities, neighborhood incivilities, and park aesthetic features (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of park system captured by the CPAT

Park Quality Variables	Items
Park Facilities	Baseball fields, basketball courts, dog parks, fitness stations, green spaces, lakes, playgrounds, skate parks, splash pads, sports fields, swimming pools, tennis courts, trails, volleyball courts, others
Park Amenities	Neighborhood: Bike lanes, bike racks, car parking, external trails, sidewalks, visibility, transit stops Quality: Animal waste bags, benches, drinking fountains, grills, restrooms, rules posted about animals, picnic tables, picnic shelters, shade, trash cans, vending machines Safety: Emergency devices, lights, roads throughout parks, park monitoring, traffic signals
Park Incivilities	Danger spots, excessive animal waste, excessive litter, excessive noise, graffiti, poor maintenance, threatening behaviors, vandalism

Neighborhood Incivilities	Evidence of threatening persons/behavior, excessive litter, excessive noise, graffiti, heavy traffic, inadequate lighting, lack of eyes on the street, poorly maintained properties, vacant or unfavorable buildings, vandalism
Park Aesthetic Features	Artistic features, historical or educational features, landscaping, meadows, trees throughout park, wooded areas, water features

The number of park facilities at each park ranged from 1 to 18 (Table 2). The number of measured amenities within a park that can enhance park use and visitation (23) ranged from 1 to 15. Park incivilities are negative aspects of the park environment that can deter park visitation and negatively affect a park experience. The number of measured park incivilities (9) per park ranged from 0 to 2. Eight park aesthetics are captured by the CPAT that can influence park use; the number of park aesthetics identified at the parks in this study ranged from 0 to 6. Lastly, out of the 11 neighborhood incivilities included in the CPAT, the number identified at parks ranged from 0 to 4.

Table 2. Characteristics of park system

Characteristics of park system	Mean	Range
Park Facilities	6.0	(1,18)
Park Amenities (23)	9.0	(1,15)
Park Incivilities (9)	0.5	(0,2)
Park Aesthetics (8)	2.1	(0,6)
Neighborhood Incivilities (11)	0.7	(0,4)

The following provides the results from each section of the CPAT and areas for improvement:

Section 1: Park Information

Locating Park: Of the 33 parks studied, 85% of parks had a map that was easy to find on the internet. When visiting the park, 66% of parks were easy to find, 33% were somewhat easy to find, and the remaining 3% were not easy to find. It is important to effectively communicate information and rules via onsite park signage. The large majority of parks had signage indicating the park name (79%), hours of operation (88%), contact information (76%), and rules and

regulations (85%). Only 4 parks had park/facility rental information; and only 1 park had a park map.

Notes for Improvement – some signs were located in an inconvenient place to view information, were blocked by an obstacle, or had conflicting information on them.

Section 2: Access & Surrounding Neighborhood

Barriers into a Park: Access is not much of an issue as more than 54% of parks have more than 5 points of entry, 39% have 2 to 5 points of entry, and the remaining smaller parks having one point of entry. Almost 80% of parks have traffic signals bordering the park. Parking is readily available for vehicles. However, public transportation is limited as 94% of parks have no public transit stops nearby. Ninety percent of parks did not have marked bike lanes, a bike route sign, or share the road sign on roads adjacent to the park. Nearly 60% of parks have sidewalks bordering them.

Notes for Improvement – Only 33% of parks have bike racks. Nearly all parks (94%) are not connected to an external trail or pathway system; and only 2 parks had a bike route on any roads bordering the parks.

Neighborhood Incivilities: Incivilities may be present in the neighborhood surrounding a park and may discourage community members from visiting a park. A little over half of all parks (51%) had no appearance or safety concerns. **Appearance concerns:** there was little evidence of excessive litter, poor maintenance, or vacant buildings. **Safety concerns:** three safety concerns were noted: 27% of parks lacked “eyes on the street”; 24% of parks had steady traffic flow nearby; and 12% had poor lighting on surrounding streets.

Section 3: Park Activity Areas

Playgrounds: there were a total of twenty-nine playgrounds at the parks. As seen in Table 3, the playgrounds were useable, in good condition, were colorful, had benches nearby, and were away from a road.

Table 3: Playground Characteristics

Playground Characteristics	#	%
Good Condition	26	89.7
Distinct areas for different age groups	8	27.6
Colorful Equipment	24	82.8
Shade Cover for some (25%) of area	10	34.5
Benches in/surrounding area	26	89.7
Fence around area	17	58.6
Separation from road	28	96.6

Notes for Improvement: Only a limited number of playgrounds had distinct areas for different age groups; shade was lacking near playgrounds in 66% of the parks; and only half contained fences around them.

Table 4 lists the frequency of each type of facility in the park system, as well as the percentage that were useable and in good condition.

Table 4: Facilities

Activity Area	Frequency	Useable	Good condition
Sports Fields	15	92%	100%
Baseball Fields	17	94%	82%
Swimming Pool	0	n/a	n/a
Splash Pad	1	100%	100%
Basketball Courts	16	100%	75%
Tennis Courts	4	100%	100%
Volleyball Courts	2	100%	50%
Trails	18	77%	77%
Fitness Equipment Stations	6	100%	100%
Skate Parks	1	100%	100%
Dog Parks	1	100%	100%
Large Bodies of Water	9	100%	100%
Open/Green Spaces	45	85%	80%

Sports fields: nearly all of the sports fields (football/soccer) were useable and in good condition; and nearly all of the baseball fields were useable, and most were in good condition.

Courts (basketball/tennis/volleyball): all courts were useable and 75% of basketball courts (12), 100% of tennis courts (4), and 50% of volleyball courts (1) were in good condition.

Trails: About 80% of the trails were useable and in good condition and all were connected to an activity area. About half of them were paved (47%) and forty-one percent were earth/mulch and about 12% in stone.

Notes for Improvement: Additional amenities along the trails - 70% lacked markers/signs and 60% lacked benches.

Fitness equipment: Only one park contained fitness equipment; it was useable and in good condition (Gerald Richards Park).

Splash park, skate park and dog park: all were useable and in good condition at Memorial Park

Open/green spaces: most were useable (85%) and in good condition (80%).

Water bodies: all were useable and in good condition; none were designated for swimming.

Other areas: these included an amphitheater; batting cage; band shell; boat dock; BMX track; organic farm; gaga pits; recreation center; and disc golf course. Almost all were in good condition (92%) and useable (88%).

Section 4: Park Quality and Safety

Park Amenities

Restrooms/portable toilets: just under half of parks (16) had restrooms/portable toilets. Of these parks, 12 had all or most of their restrooms/portable toilets in good condition; 1 park had half of their restrooms/portable toilets in good condition; and 3 parks had none or few that were in good condition. There were no baby changing stations found in any parks with restrooms, and 25% had a family restroom.

Drinking fountains: the large majority of parks (88%) had no drinking fountains. Of the 4 existing fountains, there was 1 fountain that was not useable; the remaining were in good condition and most were near an activity area.

Places to Sit: benches were present at 82% of the parks; all were useable and most were in good condition (93%). Picnic tables were present at 85% of parks; all picnic tables were useable, and nearly all were in good condition.

Pavilions: just over half (55%) of the parks had pavilions and 43% had grills or fire pits.

Trash/Recycling cans: eighty-five percent of parks had trash cans, most were near an activity area, and few were overflowing; recycling cans were present at only 25% of parks.

Availability of food: only one park had food/vending machines and there were no parks with access to fruits or vegetables.

Shaded areas: only 10% of parks were more than 75% shaded; forty-five percent of parks had 25% to 75% shade, and the remaining 45% had less than 25% shade.

Pets: eighty-nine percent of parks had signs for leashing pets and 33% had doggie bag locations; however only 64% of those with doggie bag locations had bags available.

Lighting: eighty-two percent of parks are not lit at night. Of those that could be lit, half of the parks could have less than 25% of park areas lit; one-third of parks could have between 25-75% of park areas lit; and 17% could have more than 75% of park area lit.

Park monitoring (volunteers, paid staff, police, cameras): monitoring was observed at 5 of the parks visited. There may be park monitoring systems in place in additional parks, but they might not have been noticed or on duty at the time of observations.

Emergency devices: there are no emergency devices (a phone, button) in the parks, or emergency directions.

Visibility: visibility of the surrounding neighborhood can provide parks users with a sense of safety and encourage park use. The surrounding neighborhood is not visible from the center of the park at 30% of the parks; the surrounding neighborhood is partially visible at 42% of the parks; and the surrounding neighborhood is fully visible from the center of the park at 28% of the parks.

Roads through the park: eighty-two percent of parks do not have roads through them; only six parks have roads through them.

Aesthetic features: nearly all of the parks had at least one aesthetic feature present. Aesthetic features that were most present at parks were: scattered trees throughout (85%), followed by wooded areas (42%) and water features (30%). Features that were least present at parks included: historical or educational features (15%); landscaping (12%); artistic features (12%); and meadows (3%).

Park incivilities: fifty-one percent of parks had no park quality or safety concerns present in the park whereas safety concerns were found in 49% of the parks. There was excessive litter in 21% of parks; poor maintenance in 15% of parks; graffiti in 9% of the parks; and dangerous spots in 3% of parks.

Summary of CPAT Results

Positive notes

- Most of the park's locations were easy to find when they were googled
- Most had entrance, rules and information signage
- Most parks were open and easily accessible
- Most had no appearance or quality concerns
- Half of the parks had no safety concerns
- Playgrounds, sports fields and basketball/tennis/volleyball courts were useable and most in good condition
- two-thirds of the trails were useable and in good condition and all were connected to an activity area
- Half the parks had restrooms/portable toilets, and most were in good condition and useable
- Most of the parks had places to sit and these amenities were useable and most in good condition
- Half the parks had pavilions and adequate shading
- Most had trash cans and were near activity areas
- Most parks had signs for leashing pets

Notes for improvement

- Half of the parks had safety concerns
- Location of some signs are in an inconvenient place to view information; had conflicting information on them; or were blocked by an obstacle
- Only one-third of parks have bike racks
- Most are not connected to an external trail or pathway system and have no bike routes on any roads bordering the parks
- Age groups were not in distinct areas on playgrounds
- Shade was lacking in two-thirds of the parks near the playground and only half contained fences around them
- Amenities along the trails were inconsistent as most lacked markers/signs and a little over half lacked benches
- Only half the parks had restrooms/portable toilets
- Most parks had no drinking fountains
- Only half the parks had a pavilion
- Most parks did not have recycling bins
- There are no emergency devices (a phone, button) in the parks

System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC)

The System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) was developed as an observational tool to collect visitor use data and measure levels of physical activity in outdoor settings (McKenzie, Cohen, Sehgal, Williamson, & Golinell, 2006). The tool allows the observer to record the gender (male or female), age (child, teen, adult, or senior), and activity level (sedentary, walking, or vigorous) of each visitor. It also collects information on the characteristics of park activity areas (e.g. accessibility, usability, supervision, and organization).

SOPARC is based on momentary time sampling and collects a snapshot of visitors at the park at a single moment in time. A park is divided into target areas based on the size of park and facilities (Figure 2). The observer scans each target area from left to right and records the level of physical activity of each individual, and demographic characteristics of that individual with iSOPARC software on an iPad (a limitation of the software is that it does not collect information on the race or ethnicity of a visitor). Observations are made throughout the day and on different days of the week. Observing parks 4 days per week, 3 times per day, has been shown to provide a robust estimate of park use and physical activity over a week's time (Cohen et al., 2011).

Figure 2: Example of Target Area Map (RAND Corporation)



Data was collected at 12 selected priority parks (see list below) using an iPad. For each priority park, an observation was conducted immediately when arriving at the park, followed by another observation 30 minutes later to gather a snapshot of visitor use during that hour. For

larger parks that required more than 30 minutes for an observation, only one observation was conducted. The gender, age, and activity level were recorded for each activity area. While SOPARC can account for use in observed activity areas, it cannot account for all visitors at all areas at a moment in time, and therefore, some users may be omitted.

Priority Parks

- **Memorial Park**, Borough of Pottstown
- **Riverfront Park**, Borough of Pottstown
- **Potts Drive Park**, Borough of Pottstown
- **Spruce Street Park**, Borough of Pottstown
- **Prout Farm Park**, Upper Pottsgrove Township
- **Hollenbach Park**, Upper Pottsgrove Township
- **Sussell Park**, Upper Pottsgrove Township
- **Murgia Park**, West Pottsgrove Township
- **Douglass Park**, Douglass Township
- **Towpath Park**, East Coventry Township
- **River Bend Park**, North Coventry Township
- **Gerald Richards Park**, Lower Pottsgrove Township

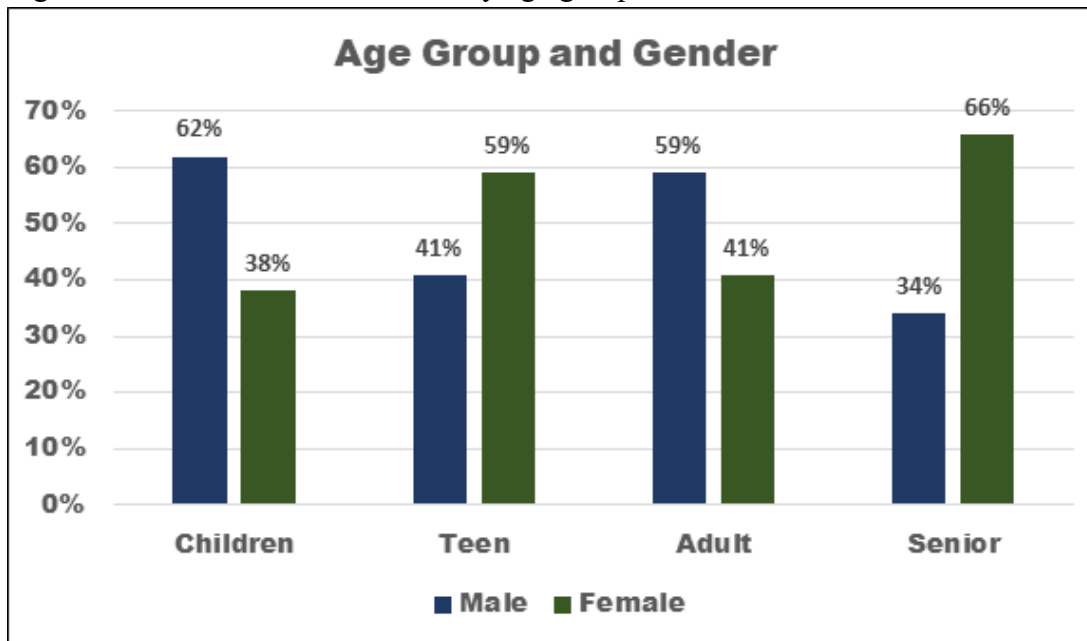
The twelve priority parks were observed on weekends and weekdays throughout the summer at different times of the day (i.e. morning, midday, afternoon). The total number of visits to the 12 parks was 144. During these 144 visits, 1,929 scans were made at activity areas. The number of activity areas observed per park depended on the size of the park and ranged from 1 activity area to 20 activity areas. Between June and August, there were a total of 1,361 visitors observed during the scheduled times (Table 5). Of all visitors observed, 61% were male, whereas 39% were female. The majority of visitors were adults (58%), followed by children (25%), teens (15%), and seniors (2%). Of the visitors observed, 44% were walking, 40% were sedentary, and 16% were engaging in vigorous activity.

Table 5: Schedule of Park Visits

Observations																	Inventory
Park Name	Weekday # 1				Weekday # 2				Saturday				Sunday		Date		
	Day	Time	Time	Time	Day	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time	Time			
*Memorial Park (BP)	T	8:00am	1:00pm	4:00pm	W	9:15am	2:30pm	6:00pm	8:00am	11:00am	6:00pm	8:00am	11:00am	3:00pm	5/30		
*Riverfront (BP)	M	8:00am	2:00pm	4:15pm	W	8:15am	11:30am	5:00pm	8:30am	11:45am	7:20pm	9:00am	12:15pm	3:00pm	6/9		
*Potts Drive (BP)	T	8:00am	3:45pm	4:30pm	W	10:00am	1:30pm	4:30pm	9:45am	11:15am	5:30pm	10:00am	1:15pm	3:45pm	6/9		
*Spruce Street (BP)	M	8:00am	3:00pm	5:00pm	W	8:00am	12:30pm	3:30pm	10:30am	12:45pm	6:45pm	10:45am	1:45pm	4:00pm	6/10		
*Prout Farm (UPT)	Th	8:00am	12:00pm	4:45pm	F	8:00am	11:30am	4:30pm	9:00am	12:45pm	3:00pm	8:15am	12:45pm	4:30pm	5/29		
*Hollenbach (UPT)	Th	9:45am	1:00pm	4:00pm	F	9:45am	1:00pm	4:30pm	10:30am	2:15pm	4:20pm	9:45am	11:30am	5:30pm	5/30		
*Sussell (UPT)	W	8:00am	1:15pm	4:00pm	F	8:45am	12:15pm	3:45pm	9:45am	1:00pm	3:35pm	9:00am	12:00pm	6:10pm	6/9		
*Murgia (WPT)	Th	9:00am	1:00pm	5:45pm	F	10:30am	1:45pm	4:00pm	8:00am	12:00pm	4:45pm	10:30am	2:00pm	5:15pm	6/7		
*Douglass (DT)	M	10:00am	1:00pm	4:30pm	T	9:30am	2:30pm	3:30pm	10:15am	2:30pm	6:00pm	9:45am	1:00pm	6:50pm	7/9		
*Gerald Richards (LPT)	T	9:00am	1:30pm	3:30pm	F	8:00am	11:15am	3:00pm	9:30am	1:30pm	5:00pm	8:45am	1:00pm	6:00pm	6/18		
*Towpath (ECT)	W	8:45am	10:45am	3:15pm	F	9:00am	2:30pm	4:45pm	8:45am	1:30pm	4:00pm	8:00am	11:00am	4:45pm	6/17		
*River Bend (NCT)	T	8:00am	1:30pm	4:15pm	F	9:45am	1:00pm	5:30pm	9:00am	11:00am	3:15pm	10:30am	2:30pm	7:30pm	6/25		

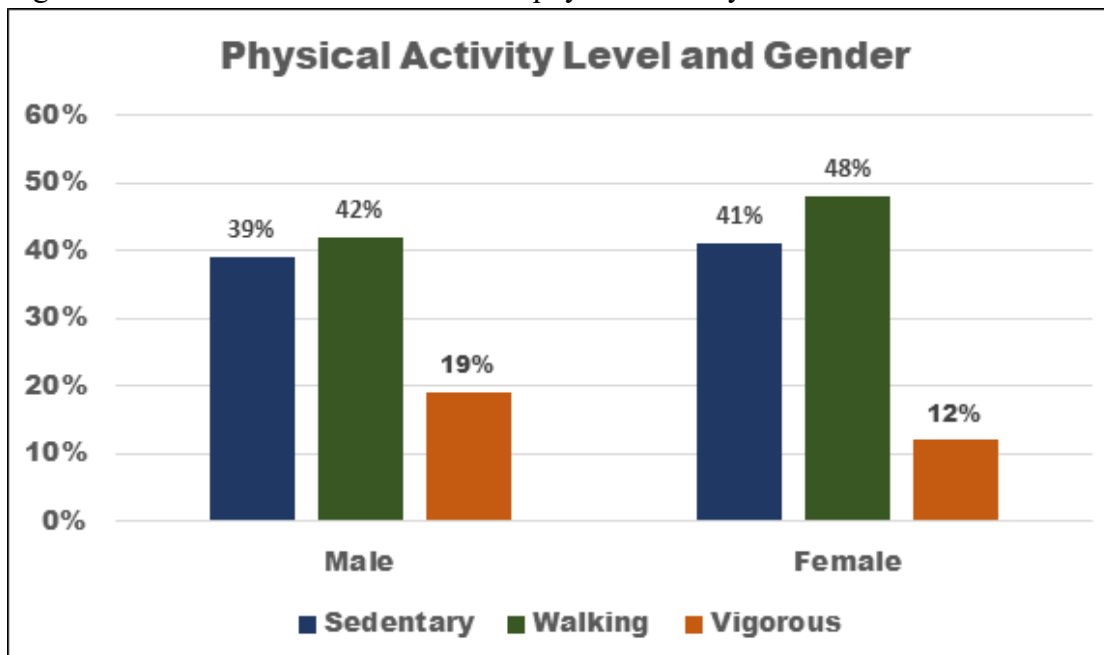
As seen in Figure 4, the percentage of use by males and females differed by age group. Whereas the majority of children (62%) and adults (59%) were male, the majority of teens (59%) and seniors (66%) were female.

Figure 4: Gender differences in use by age group



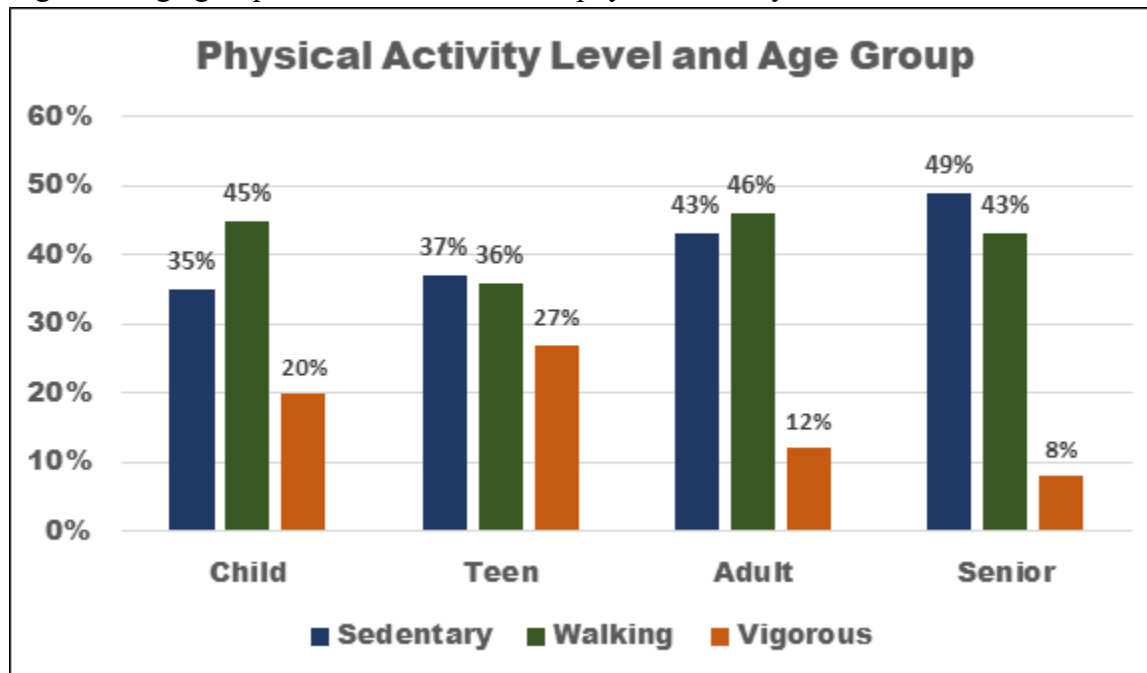
As seen in Figure 5, males (19%) engaged in more vigorous physical activity than females (12%); females (48%) engaged in walking more than males (42%).

Figure 5: Gender differences in levels of physical activity



As illustrated in Figure 6, there were different levels of activity across age groups. Teens had the highest percentage of vigorous physical activity (27%), whereas seniors had the lowest percentage of vigorous activity (8%).

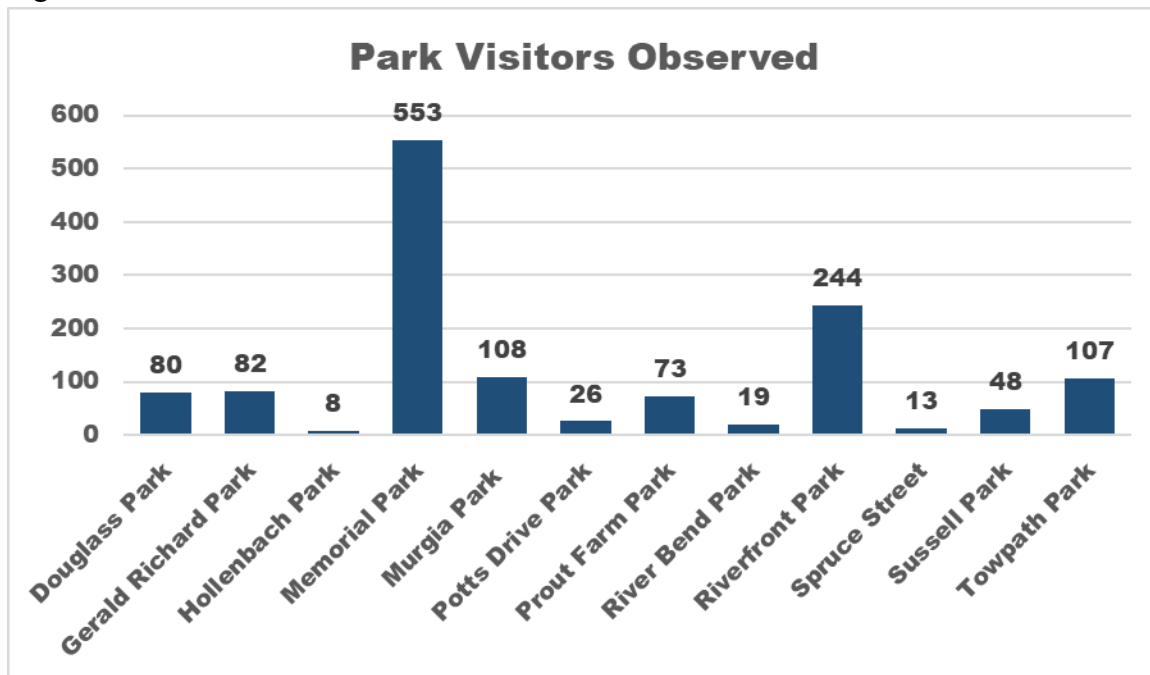
Figure 6: Age group differences in levels of physical activity



Visitors observed using SOPARC

Figure 7 shows the total number of visitors that were observed at each park. Some parks had higher observed use than others. The park with the highest observed use during the sample of days and times was Memorial Park and the park with the least number of users observed was Hollenbach Park.

Figure 7: Number of Visitors Observed at each Park



Park Use in each target area

Figure 8 illustrates the number of visitors present at each target area type i.e. Court, Play Space, Lawn, Picnic Area, Field, and Trail. The following describes each type of target area:

Court Space: Area marked for basketball, tennis, volleyball, and/or other court games.

Play Space: Self-contained outdoor area designated for physical activity.

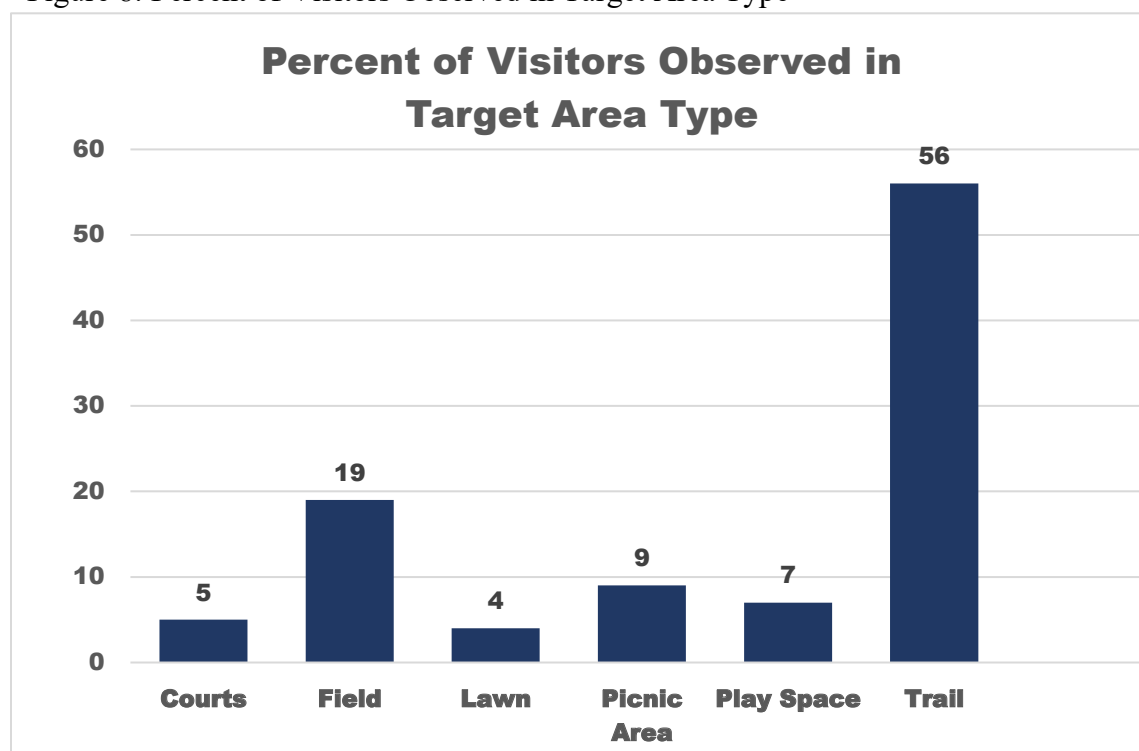
Field: Large open area designed for activity. It may or may not have goals, backstops, etc.

Lawn: A park area not designated for a specific purpose. Open spaces should be mowed/cut to be available for active (e.g., frisbee, kite flying) or passive (e.g., reading, picnics) use.

Picnic Area: A park area designated for visitors to sit and eat. Would normally include a set of picnic tables or picnic tables under a picnic pavilion.

Trail: A paved, gravel, mulch, or dirt path that has been designed for people to use to get throughout the park (for recreation or transportation). Does not include short paths that connect park areas with one another (e.g., parking lot to playground). Does not include sidewalks around the park as trails.

Figure 8: Percent of Visitors Observed in Target Area Type



Characteristics of Activity Areas

SOPARC also collects contextual information of the target area including its accessibility, usability, supervision, organized activities, and presence of equipment. The following defines these characteristics and the percentage of observations that characteristics were present.

Accessibility: area is accessible to the public (e.g., area is not locked or rented to a private party). Target areas were accessible during 97% of the observations.

Usability: area is useable for physical activity (e.g., is not excessively wet or roped off for repair). Target areas were useable during 99% of the observations.

Equipped: equipment (e.g., balls, jump ropes) provided by the park is present during the scan. Target areas were equipped during 5% of the observations.

Supervised: area is supervised by designated park or adjunct personnel (e.g., park rangers, playground supervisors, volunteers, sport officials, teachers). Target areas were not supervised during 98% of the observations.

Organized: an organized physical activity is occurring in the scan area (e.g., a scheduled sporting event or exercise class is being led by park staff or adjunct personnel). Target areas were organized during 5% of the observations.

Summary of SOPARC Results

- More males were observed than females
- Visitors were more likely to be adults (56%), least likely to be older adults (2%)
- Children, Adults, and Teens were more likely to be male, seniors were more likely to be female
- Males were more likely to engage in vigorous activity than females
- Levels of physical activity differed by age groups; teens were more likely to be vigorous and children were least likely to be sedentary
- Trails received significantly more use than other activity types
- Target areas were accessible and usable, however there was little organized activity, supervision, or available equipment observed
- Overall, the highest percentage of observed use was in the afternoon (57%), followed by morning (23%), and midday (20%).

General Use Survey

The General Use Survey was developed to get feedback on primary reasons for park use, barriers to park use, and user satisfaction with certain attributes of the park environment. Visitors completed surveys on-site by using their smartphone and scanned a QR code that was located on signs placed throughout the park system (Figure 9). The QR code was also placed on business size cards that were distributed to visitors while researchers visited the park. In total, 278 surveys were completed.

Figure 9: Signs placed at parks requesting feedback



YOUR FEEDBACK IS NEEDED!

COMPLETE A SURVEY ON YOUR PARK EXPERIENCE AND ENTER YOUR NAME IN A DRAWING FOR A \$25 AMAZON GIFT CARD

- 1) Go to App Store on iPhone  or Play Store on Android 
- 2) Download "QR Reader" Application
- 3) Scan QR Code to right
- 4) Complete Survey

Survey Results

Visitors were asked to indicate which park they were visiting while completing the survey. The parks that received the highest percentage of submitted responses were Riverfront Park (11%), Ellis Woods Park (9%) Kenilworth Park (8%) and Towpath Path (7%).

- Riverfront Park (11%)
- Ellis Woods Park (9%)
- Kenilworth Park (8%)
- Towpath Park (7%)
- Memorial Park (5%)
- Ringing Rocks Park (5%)
- Coventry Woods (Fernbrook) (5%)
- Sanatoga Park (4%)
- Spruce Street Park (3%)
- Less than 3%: Heather Place Park; Riverbend Park; Congo Road Open Space; Maple Street Park; Murgia Park; Brookside Park; Smith Road; Old Timers Field; Potts Drive Park; Althouse Arboretum; Chestnut Street Park; Gerald Richards Park; South Street Park; Terrace Lane Park; Prout Farm; Sussell Park; Howard Street Park; Washington Street Park; Douglass Park; Hanover Meadows; Hollenbach Park; Riverside Park; Vine Street Park

Respondents were asked who they were visiting with at the time of completing the survey. The majority of respondents were visiting with young kids (19%). Seventeen percent (17%) indicated they were visiting by themselves, and 14% indicated that they were visiting with a spouse/partner.

- Young kids (19%)
- By myself at (17%)
- Spouse/partner (14%)
- Walking pets (12%)
- Older kids (11%)
- Babies or toddlers (10%)
- Friends (7%)
- Other family (4%)
- Teens (5%)
- Organization/club (1%)

Frequency of use: the majority of respondents visited the park frequently. Just over 60% of respondents indicated that they visited the park either daily (10%), a few times a week (29%) or once a week/a few times a month (22%). It was the first time visiting for 17% of the respondents. Fourteen percent of respondents visited a few times per year and 7% visited monthly.

Time of visit: the largest percentage of respondents visited the park between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

- 5:00 AM to 9:00 AM (9%)
- 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (24%)
- 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM (21%)
- 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM (31%)
- 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM (15%)

Barriers to park use: respondents were asked if there were any barriers that limited their ability to access the park they were visiting. For the large majority of respondents (73%), there were no barriers to park use. Some of the top barriers were transportation-related and included: lack of entrance/directional sign (6%), sidewalk connections (5%), and safety related to traffic (4%).

- None (73%)
- Other (15%): bridge closure, lack of fencing at playgrounds, wet areas, no mountain bike trails, lack of activities to engage in, lack of stroller or wheelchair accessibility, dogs unleashed, and speeding in parking lots
- Lack of Entrance/directional sign (6%)
- Sidewalk connections (5%)
- Safety concerns related to traffic (4%)
- Lack of parking (3%)
- Concerns related to crime/violence (3%)

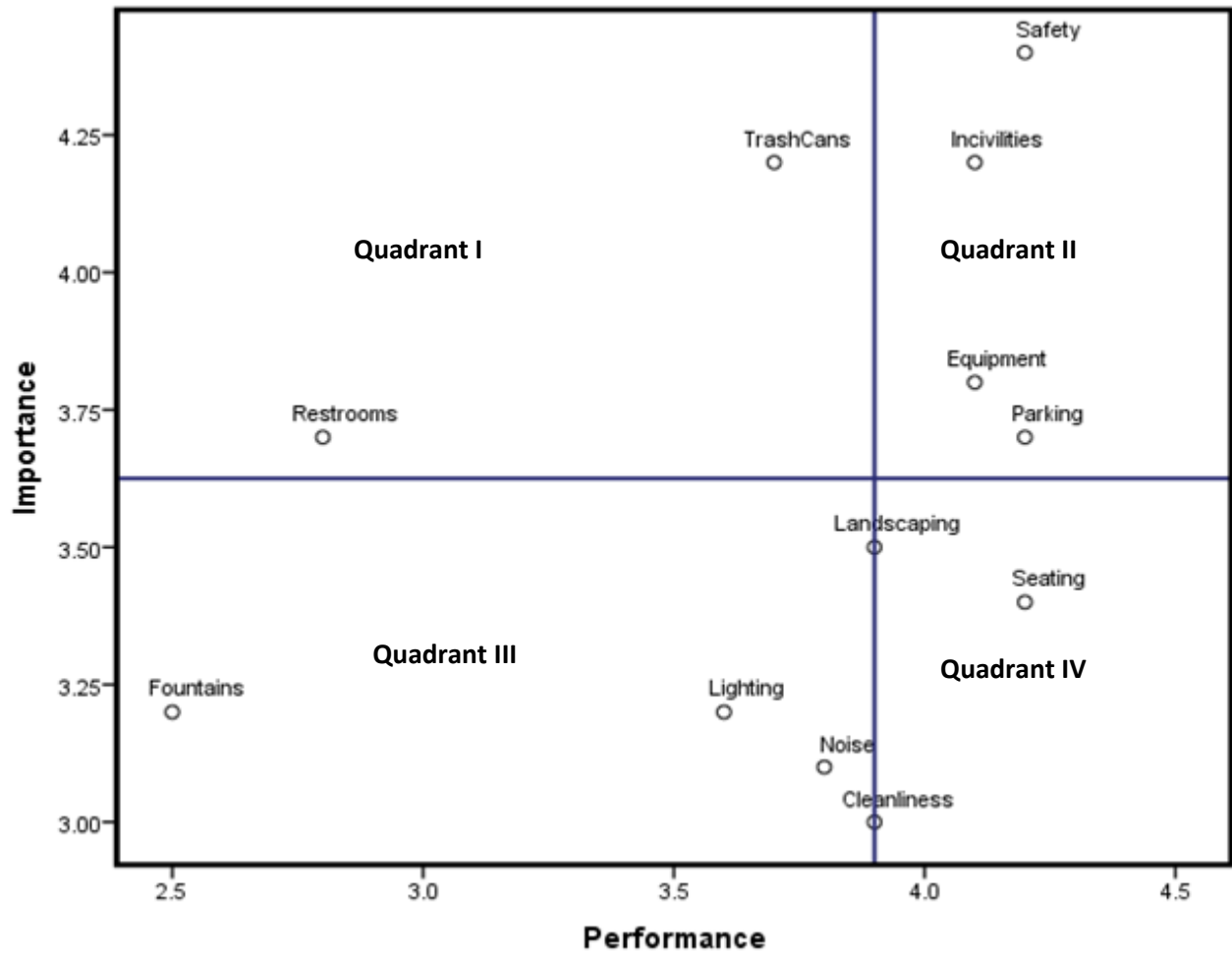
Reasons for visit: respondents were asked to indicate the reasons that they visited the park. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that the reason for their visit was to be outdoors (45%). This was followed by: to walk (37%), exercise (28%), walk the dog (23%), and reduce stress (23%). Activities that received the least percentage of responses were: to attend a class (.5%), watch a child play sports (2.4%), and have a picnic (4.2%).

Importance - Performance Comparison: respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with park related indicators as well as the importance of these indicators to their overall park experience. Items were rated on a scale from 1-5 where 1 was “not at all important/very dissatisfied” and 5 was “very important/very satisfied”. This strategy can be used to prioritize resources by identifying the level of importance and satisfaction (performance) that visitors associate with specific attributes of the park. High priority areas are those indicators that users are unsatisfied with but view as very important (Quadrant I). If visitors rate an attribute that is high satisfaction but low importance (Quadrant VI), this may be an area that does not need as much attention. Areas that are rated as high importance and high satisfaction (Quadrant II) should continue to be addressed; and areas of low importance and low satisfaction may be considered a low priority (Quadrant III) (Chart 1). Table 6 lists the mean values of importance and performance for each item.

Table 6: Attributes and mean values for importance and performance

Characteristic Description	Mean Importance	Mean Performance
Restrooms	3.7	2.8
Fountains	3.2	2.5
Trash Cans	4.2	3.7
Safety	4.4	4.2
Incivilities	4.2	4.1
Parking	3.7	4.2
Noise	3.1	3.8
Seating	3.4	4.2
Cleanliness	3.0	3.9
Equipment	3.8	4.1
Landscaping	3.5	3.9
Lighting	3.2	3.6

Chart 1: Importance-Performance Matrix



Quadrant I: High Importance, Low Performance/Concentrate Here

- Restrooms
- Trashcans

Quadrant II: High Importance/High Performance/Keep up the good work

- Quality of Equipment
- Parking
- Incivilities
- Safety

Quadrant III: Low Importance, Low Performance/Low Priority

- Water Fountains
- Lighting
- Noise

Quadrant IV: Low Importance, High Performance/Possible Overkill

- Landscaping
- Cleanliness
- Seating

Demographics of respondents: the following describes the demographics of the park visitors that responded to the survey.

Age:

- Under 18 (6%)
- 18 – 25 (7%)
- 26 – 35 (30%)
- 36 – 45 (23%)
- 46 – 55 (14%)
- 56 – 65 (10%)
- 66 – 75 (5%)
- 76 and older (1%)
- Do not wish to share (4%)

Gender:

- Female (55%)
- Male (43%)
- Not willing to share (2%)

Race/Ethnicity:

- Black/African American (3%)
- Hispanic (2%)
- Native American (1%)
- White (83%)
- Biracial (4%)
- Asian (1%)
- Do not wish to share (6%)

Governmental assistance:

- No (79%)
- Yes (15%)
- Do not wish to share (6%)

Summary of General Use Survey

Positive Notes

- Respondents were frequent users of the park with over 60% of respondents visiting the park daily (10%), a few times a week (29%) or once a week/a few times a month (22%)
- Respondents visited park to be outdoors, to walk, exercise, and to reduce stress
- Most of the park characteristics received high performance rating
- Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents indicated that there were no barriers to park use

Notes for improvement

- Attributes that rated low performance included: water fountains, lighting, noise level, restrooms, and trash cans.
- Lack of entrance/directional signage, sidewalk connections, and parking can be improved
- Safety measures to combat traffic incidents and crime/violence related incidents could be increased
- Suggested improvements included bridge reconstruction, fencing at playgrounds, landscape design to prevent wet areas, mountain bike trails, more activities, stroller or wheelchair accessibility, pet leash rules, and decrease speeding in parking lots

Individual Municipality Reports

Murgia Park, West Pottsgrove Township

Table 7: Percent Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Murgia Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Creek	45	✓	✓
Trail*	26	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 1	27	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 2	2	✓	✓

***Trail:**

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: ✗

Benches along trail: ✓

Trail surface: Crushed stone/paved

All areas are useable and accessible; no activity areas were supervised, equipped or organized. Most observations of use are at the creek at 45%, followed by Open/Green Space 1 (27%), and the Trail (26%). Sixty-two percent were adults, followed by children (31%), teens (7%); no seniors were observed. The percentages of observed females and males were nearly equivalent, 49% and 51% respectively. Most activity was sedentary (52%), followed by walking (48%); no observed users were engaged in vigorous activity. The majority of use was in the afternoon (50%), followed by midday (43%), and the morning (7%).

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

At Murgia Park, a map was not able to be located before visiting (on many maps, this is still known as Manatawny Park). The park was easy to find when visiting and it was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential and natural. There was signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. The park boundary is open and there is a parking lot available on site. There are no external trails connected to the park. There are portable toilets available at the park that are all useable and in good condition; at least one family restroom is available. There are benches and picnic tables in the park that are all useable and in good condition. There are plenty of picnic tables at the park, but there is no picnic shelter in the park. There are multiple grills at the park; many are near picnic tables. There are also trash cans at most picnic tables, none are overflowing with trash. There are no food or vending machines available at the park. If the sun is directly over the park, 25-75% of the park would be shaded.

There are no lights in the park, and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteers, paid staff, police, camera, etc.).

Positive Notes

- There are nearby traffic signals on roads bordering the park
- No park quality or safety concerns are present in the park
- There are portable toilets available at the park that are all useable and in good condition, and at least one family restroom
- There are benches and picnic tables in the park that are all useable and in good condition
- There are plenty of picnic tables at the park, but there is no picnic shelter
- There are trash cans at most picnic tables, none are overflowing with trash
- There are four aesthetic features in the park: Historical or Educational feature (e.g., monument, nature display, educational signs, etc.), Wooded area (e.g., thick woods or dense trees), Trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees), Water feature (e.g., lake, stream, pond)

Notes for improvement

- No public transport stops in sight of the park
- No sidewalks on bordering roads of the park
- No bike routes on any road bordering the park
- Sign with rules says no pets, but there is an additional ordinance sign that mentions cleaning up after pets
- Poor lighting (e.g., low or no lighting on surrounding neighborhood streets)
- Heavy traffic (e.g., steady flow of vehicles)
- Lack of eyes on the street (e.g., absence of people, no houses or store fronts)
- No baby changing station in any restroom
- No drinking fountains
- No recycling containers provided
- There is a dog waste bag station, but no bags were available at the station
- Center of the park is not visible to the surrounding neighborhood
- No emergency devices in the park

Douglass Park, Douglass Township

Table 8. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Douglass Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Trail*	10	✓	✓
Multi-Use Field 3	31	✓	✓
Basketball Courts	10	✓	X
Tennis Courts	4	✓	✓
Pavilion 2	20	✓	✓
Pavilion 1	12	✓	✓
Playground 1**	8	✓	X
Playground 2 (Swings)***	0	✓	✓
Pavilion 3	0	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 1	0	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 2	0	✓	✓
Multi-Use Field 1	5	✓	✓
Multi-Use Field 2	0	✓	✓
Baseball/Softball Field	0	✓	✓

***Trail:**

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: ✓

Benches along trail: X

Trail Surface: Paved

****Playground 1:**

Distinct areas for different age groups: **X**

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): **✓**

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): **✓**

Benches in/surrounding area: **✓**

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): **✓**

Separation or distance from road: **✓**

*****Playground 2 (Swings):**

Distinct areas for different age groups: **X**

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): **✓**

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): **X**

Benches in/surrounding area: **✓**

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): **X**

Separation or distance from road: **✓**

All areas are useable and accessible. Most use was observed on Trail and Multi Use Field 3, followed by the Basketball Court, and Pavilion 2. The majority of users were children (61%) followed by adults (35%); the remaining were teens and seniors. Sixty seven percent of users were male, and 33% were female. Most activity was sedentary at 43%, followed by walking (31%) and vigorous activity (26%). Trail sensor data indicates that the time frame between 3 PM to 8 PM is the busiest.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Douglass Park, it is possible to locate a map. The park is only somewhat easy to find because one entrance to the park does not have signage; although it is noticeable that there is a park. There is also no park sign at the Park Lane entrance, making it very unnoticeable that the park is there. When observed, the park was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. The park has 2-5 points of entry and there is a parking lot available on site. There are no external trails or paths connected to the park. There are sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park (all are useable), and there are curb cuts and ramps present. There are also nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park.

There are public restrooms and/or portable toilets present in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There are three drinking fountains in the park that are all in good condition and near activity areas, but none or few of them are useable. There are multiple benches and picnic tables in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There are

three picnic shelters in the park; all or most with a grill nearby. There are trash cans and recycling bins in the park and none or few are overflowing. There seems to be a snack bar station seasonally. If the sun was directly overhead, less than 25% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park, places to get dog waste pick up bags, and bags are available at those locations. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). Also, the neighborhood is fully visible from the center of the park. There are no roads of any type throughout the park.

Positive Notes

- There are public restrooms and/or portable toilets present in the park, all or most are useable and in good condition
- There are trash cans *and* recycling bins in the park, none or few are overflowing
- There are no safety or appearance concerns present in the neighborhood surrounding the park
- There are no park quality or safety concerns present in the park
- Park has artistic features (e.g., statue, sculpture, gazebo, fountain)
- Park has trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees)

Notes for improvement

- There is no public transit stop in sight of the park
- There are no bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- There is a stop sign at Park Lane leaving the park, but no crosswalk or stop sign for Philadelphia Avenue to cross the street
- There is no family restroom or baby changing station
- <25% of the park is shaded
- Dog waste bag dispenser is at a far edge of the park, and not very noticeable
- There are three drinking fountains in the park that are in good condition and near activity areas, but none or few of them are useable. Water spigots at pavilions are locked
- There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.)

Gerald Richards Park, Lower Pottsgrove Township

Table 9. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Gerald Richards Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Trail*	60	✓	✓
Playground*	30	✓	✓
Basketball Court	6	✓	X
Open/Green Space	2	✓	✓
Baseball Field 1	0	✓	✓
Baseball Field 2	0	✓	✓
Baseball Field 3	0	✓	✓
Baseball Field 4	0	✓	✓
Soccer Field 1	2	✓	✓
Soccer Field 2	0	✓	✓
Soccer Field 3	0	✓	✓
Soccer Field 4	0	✓	✓
Soccer Field 5	0	✓	✓
Soccer Field 6	0	✓	✓
Fitness Equipment	0	✓	✓

***Trail:**

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: ✓ (very faded)

Benches along trail: ✓

Trail surface: Paved

***Playground:**

Distinct Areas for different age groups: ✓

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): ✓

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): X

Benches in/surrounding area: ✓

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): X

Separation or distance from road: ✓

Gerald Richards Park – all areas are useable and accessible. Most observation of use was on the trail (60%), followed by the playground (30%) and basketball court (6%). Thirty-four percent of users were children, 15% were teens, and 51% were adults; there were no seniors observed. Thirty-nine percent of the observed users were female, and 61% were male. Most activity is walking (50%) with similar amounts of vigorous activity (26%) and sedentary activity (24%). Most use was observed in the afternoon (68%) and the remainder was observed at midday.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Gerald Richards Park, it is possible to locate a map. The park is easy to find when visiting. When observed, the park was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential and institutional. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. The park boundary is open, with a parking lot and bike racks available on site. There is no public transit stop within sight of the park. There are no external trails or paths connected to the park. There are sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park; all are useable, and there are curb cuts and/or ramps present. There are no bike routes on any roads bordering the park. There are traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are public restrooms and/or portable toilets, including a family restroom, present in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There was no baby changing station in any restroom. There are no drinking fountains in the park.

There are benches and picnic tables in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition, with no picnic shelter. There is also no grill or fire pit in the park. There are trash cans and recycling containers in the park; all or most are near activity areas and none or few are overflowing. There are no food/vending machines available. If the sun was directly overhead, 25-75% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park, places to get dog waste pick up bags, and there were bags available at the locations. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park, and it is unsure if the park is monitored (volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is only partially visible. There are no roads of any type throughout the park.

Positive Notes

- Public restrooms and/or portable toilets, including a family restroom, present in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Benches and picnic tables in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Places to get dog waste pick up bags and bags available at the locations
- There are no safety or appearance concerns present in the neighborhood surrounding the park
- Aesthetic features including trees throughout the park (e.g., a few scattered trees)

Notes for improvement

- No public transit stop within sight of the park
- No bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- No baby changing station in any restroom
- No drinking fountains in the park
- No grill or fire pit in the park
- No lights or emergency devices in the park, and it is unsure if the park is monitored
- Excessive litter (e.g., noticeable amounts of trash, broken glass, etc.)
 - Excessive litter in area near basketball court. Putting another trash can or recycling bin on the trail coming out of the neighborhood could minimize litter
- Only one dog waste bag dispenser near very far corner of the park on trail. Having one at the entrance of the park would be beneficial
- Broken nets, excessive litter, and weeds growing in basketball court
- Add more trees for shade

Prout Farm Park, Upper Pottsgrove Township

Table 10. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Prout Farm Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Organic Farm	20	✓	✓
Trail*	74	✓	✓
Picnic Area	6	✓	✓

*Trail:

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: ✗

Benches along trail: ✗

Trail surface: Crushed stone, Dirt/mulch

Prout Farm Park – all areas are useable and accessible. Most use was observed on the trail (74%); 20% was on the organic farm and 6% at a picnic area. Ninety-two percent of the users were adults; only 7% were teens and 2% were children. There were no seniors observed at the park. Sixty percent of the observed users were female, and 40% of the observed users were male. Most activity is walking (82%), followed by vigorous activity (8%) and sedentary activity (10%). Most use is in the morning (65%) followed by afternoon (26%) and midday (9%). According to the trail sensors the largest spikes in use were at 9 AM and 3 PM.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Prout Farm Park, it is possible to locate a map and the park is easy to find when visiting. When the park was observed, it was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. The park has 2-5 points of entry and there is a parking lot available on site. There is no public transit stop in sight of the park. There are also no sidewalks on any roads bordering the park or external trails or paths. There are no bike routes on any roads bordering the park, but there are nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are no public restrooms, portable toilets, drinking fountains, or benches available at the park. There is one picnic table in the park and it is useable and in good condition; however, there is no picnic shelter. There is one trash can in the park and it was overflowing and far from activity areas. There are no recycling containers provided. There are no food/vending machines available. If the sun was directly overhead, the park would be 25-75% shaded (mostly the trail). There are rules posted about animals in the

park. There is also a dog waste pick up bag location in the park, but there are no bags available. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is only partially visible. There is a trail throughout the park that doubles as a road, but there are no traffic control mechanisms present.

Positive Notes

- Park is accessible and easy to find when visiting
- Picnic table in the park is useable and in good condition
- Aesthetic features include wooded area (e.g., thick woods or dense trees) and meadow (e.g., natural, tall grassy area)

Notes for improvement

- Poor lighting (e.g., low or no lighting on surrounding neighborhood streets)
- Heavy traffic (e.g., steady flow of vehicles)
- No public transit stop in sight of the park
- No sidewalks on any roads bordering the park
- No public restrooms, portable toilets, drinking fountains, or benches available
- Trash can is far from activity areas and was overflowing
- No recycling containers
- Dog waste pick up bag location in the park, but there are no bags available (park is highly used by dog walkers)
- Picnic benches only located in parking lot
- Farm area has no shade
- Meadow is a nice feature, but there is no maintained green space in that area

Hollenbach Park, Upper Pottsgrove Township

Table 11. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Hollenbach Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Playground*	72%	✓	✓
Soccer Field 1	28%	✓	✓
Soccer Field 2	0%	✓	✓

*Playground:

Distinct areas for different age groups: **X**

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): ✓

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): **X**

Benches in/surrounding area: ✓

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): **X**

Separation or distance from road: ✓

Hollenbach Park – all areas are useable and accessible and no areas of activities are supervised, equipped or organized. Most observed visitors were on the playground (72%), and the remainder of use was observed on Soccer Field 1. Majority of users were adult (75%), followed by children (25%); there were no teens or seniors observed. The percentage of observed male users (50%) and female users (50%) were equivalent. Most activity observed at the park was sedentary (50%), followed by walking (38%), and vigorous activity (12%). Sixty-seven percent of use was in the afternoon, and the remainder of use was at midday (33%); no use was observed in the morning.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Hollenbach Park, it is possible to locate a map and the park is easy to find when visiting. When observed, it was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential and institutional. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. The park boundary is open and there is a parking lot available on site. There is no public transit stop within sight of the park, no sidewalks on any roads bordering the park, no external trails or paths, no bike routes on any roads bordering the park, and no traffic signals on any roads bordering the park. There are portable toilets available at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There is no family restroom or baby changing station. There are also no drinking fountains.

There are benches and picnic tables at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There is no picnic shelter, grill or fire pit. There are trash cans available, all or most are near activity areas, and none or few are overflowing with trash. There are no recycling containers provided. There are no food/vending machines available in the park. If the sun was directly overhead, <25% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park and there is a place to get dog waste pick up bags, though no bags were available. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). The surrounding neighborhood is only partially visible from the center of the park. There are no roads of any type through the park.

Positive Notes

- Portable toilets available at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Benches and picnic tables at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Trash cans available; all or most are near activity areas, and none or few are overflowing with trash
- There are no safety or appearance concerns present in the neighborhood surrounding the park
- There are no park quality or safety concerns present in the park

Notes for improvement

- No public transit stop within sight of the park
- No sidewalks on any roads bordering the park
- No bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- No traffic signals on any roads bordering the park
- <25% of the park is shaded
- No bags available at dog waste pick up bag location
- Only 1-2 nearby houses have eyes on the park
- No lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored
- There are no aesthetic features in the park

Sussell Park, Upper Pottsgrove Township

Table 12. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Sussell Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Trail*	52	✓	✓
Pond 1	15	✓	X
Pond 2	27	✓	✓
Classroom	0	✓	✓
Open/Green Space	6	✓	X

*Trail

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: X

Benches along trail: X

Trail surface: Dirt/mulch

Sussell Park – all areas are useable and accessible. Fifty-two percent of observations were on the trail, followed by Pond 2 (27%), Pond 1 (15%), open/green space (2%). Nineteen percent of the observed users were female, and 81% of the observed users were male. Fifty-two percent of activity was sedentary, and 48% was walking; no users were engaged in vigorous activity. Most use was observed at midday (64%); the remainder was observed in the afternoon (18%) and morning (18%) equally. According to trail sensor data, use spikes at 11 AM and 5 PM.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Sussell Park, it is possible to locate a map. The park is not easy to find when visiting, as the park entrance is very narrow and sudden. When observed, the park was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential and natural. There is signage for park name and rules only. There are between 2-5 entries to the park and a parking lot is available on site. There is no public transit stop in sight of the park, no sidewalks on any roads bordering the park, and no bike routes on any roads bordering the park; there are nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are useable, external trails or paths connected to the park. There are no public restrooms, portable toilets, or drinking fountains at the park. There is a useable bench near the creek, but it is not in good condition. There are picnic tables available; all or most are useable and in good condition.

There is no picnic shelter, grill, or fire pit. There are trash cans in the park; all or most are near activity areas and none or few are overflowing. There are no recycling containers provided or food/vending machines available. If the sun was directly overhead, 25-75% of the park would be shaded. There are no rules posted about animals in the park and no place to get dog waste pick up bags. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is not at all visible. There are no roads of any type throughout the park.

Positive Notes

- Aesthetic features include wooded area (e.g., thick woods or dense trees), trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees), and water features (e.g., lake, stream, pond)

Notes for improvement

- Park entrance is very narrow and sudden
- Only signage is for park name and rules
- Poor lighting (e.g., low or no lighting on surrounding neighborhood streets)
- Lack of eyes on the street (e.g., absence of people, no houses or store fronts)
- Excessive litter (e.g., noticeable amounts of trash, broken glass, etc.)
- Poor maintenance (e.g., overgrown grass/weeds/bushes or lack of grass in green areas)

River Bend Park, North Coventry Township

Table 13. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in River Bend Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Pavilion	53	✓	✓
Playground (Swings)*	26	✓	✓
Deegan Field	0	✓	✓
Batdorf Field	0	✓	X
Anderson Field	0	✓	✓
Picnic Area	21	✓	✓
Gaga Pit	0	✓	✓

*Playground:

Distinct areas for different age groups: X

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): X

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): X

Benches in/surrounding area: ✓

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): X

Separation or distance from road: ✓

River Bend Park – all areas are useable and accessible and no areas were supervised, equipped or organized. Most use was observed at the pavilion (52%), followed by the playground (26%) and the picnic area (21%). Observed users were adults (58%) and children (42%). Seventy-four percent of activity was sedentary, and the remainder was walking (16%). All use was observed in afternoon.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting River Bend Park, it is possible to locate a map and it is easy to find the park when visiting. When observed, the park could be accessed for use. The main land use around the park is residential. There is signage for park name, hours, and rules. The park boundary is open with a parking lot available on site. There is no public transit stop within sight of the park and there are no sidewalks on any roads bordering the park. There are no external trails or paths connected to the park and no bike routes on any roads bordering the park. There

are nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are restrooms or portable toilets at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There is no family restroom or baby changing station. There are no drinking fountains in the park. There are benches and picnic tables in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. Some picnic tables are under a picnic shelter. There is no grill or fire pit. There are no trash cans in the park; there are signs requesting users to pack in/pack out. There are no food/vending machines available. If the sun was directly overhead, only <25% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park, but no place to get dog waste pick up bags. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is only partially visible. There are no roads of any type throughout the park.

Positive Notes

- No safety or appearance concerns present in the neighborhood surrounding the park
- Restrooms or portable toilets at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Benches and picnic tables are in the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- No quality or park safety concerns are present in the park
- Aesthetic features include trees throughout the park (e.g., a few scattered trees)

Notes for improvement

- No signage for park contact information
- There is a "Watch for children" sign, but no stop signs or crosswalks
- No public transit stop within sight of the park
- No sidewalks on any roads bordering the park
- No bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- No trash cans in the park
- No family restroom or baby changing station
- <25% of the park is shaded
- No place to get dog waste pick up bags
- No lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored
- Batdorf Field in poor condition

Memorial Park, Borough of Pottstown

Table 14. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Memorial Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Trail*	7%	✓	✓
Basketball Court	5%	✓	✓
Baseball Field 1	14%	✓	✓
Baseball Field 2	21%	✓	✓
Playground*	4%	✓	✓
Pavilion	3%	✓	✓
Splash Pad	11%	✓	✓
Creek	3%	✓	✓
Baseball Field 3	12%	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 1	9%	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 2	1%	✓	✓
Dog Park	1%	✓	✓
Skate Park	2%	✓	✓
BMX Range	6%	✓ (not always open)	✓
Memorial	1%	✓	✓
Gazebo	0%	✓	✓
Wall Memorial	0%	✓	✓
Volleyball Court	0%	✓	X

***Trail**

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: X

Benches along trail: ✓

Trail surface: Paved

***Playground:**

Distinct Areas for different age groups: ✓

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): ✓

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): X

Benches in/surrounding area: ✓

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): ✓

Separation or distance from road: ✓

Memorial Park – Most areas are useable and accessible. Forty-seven percent of the users observed were using the baseball fields, followed by 11% at the splash park, and 10% at the open green spaces. The majority of observed users were adults (53%), followed by children (23%), teens (22%), and seniors (2%). Thirty-six percent of observed users were female, and 64% were male. Use at the park was primarily sedentary (46%) and walking (43%), followed by vigorous activity (11%). According to trail sensor data, most use was in the afternoon (58%), followed by midday (30%), and morning (12%).

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Memorial Park, it is possible to locate a map and the park is easy to find when visiting. When observed, the park was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential and commercial. There is signage for park name, hours, facility rental information, and rules; condition of signs are poor. The park boundary is open and there is a parking lot available on site. There is a public transit stop in sight of the park and there are sidewalks on most roads bordering the park; all or most are useable and have curb cuts/and or ramps. There are no external trails or paths connected to the park. There is a marked bike lane on at least one road bordering the park and nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are restrooms or portable toilets at the park, few are useable and about half are in good condition. There is a family restroom, but there are no baby changing stations. There are 2 drinking fountains in the park, none or few are useable, but all or most are in good condition; all or most are near activity areas.

There are benches and picnic tables; all or most are useable and in good condition, most are under a picnic shelter. There is a grill in the park. There are trash cans and possibly one recycling can in the park; none or few are overflowing and all or most are near activity areas. There are no food/vending machines in the park. If the sun was directly overhead, only <25% of the park would be shaded. There are no rules posted about animals in the park. There are dog waste pick up bag locations in the park, but there are no bags available. There are lights in the park with the ability to light <25% of the park. The park appeared to be monitored by police on bikes. There are no emergency devices in the park. From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is partially visible. There are roads throughout the park with traffic control mechanisms (speed limit signs, stop signs) in place.

Positive Notes

- Aesthetic features include evidence of landscaping (e.g., flower beds, pruned bushes), artistic features (e.g., statue, sculpture, gazebo, fountain), historical or educational feature (e.g., monument, nature display, educational signs, etc.), wooded areas (e.g., thick woods or dense trees), trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees), and water features (e.g., lake, stream, pond)
- Public transit stop in sight of the park
- Sidewalks on most roads bordering the park; all or most are useable and have curb cuts/and or ramps
- Marked bike lane on at least one road bordering the park
- Benches and picnic tables; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Trash cans and possibly one recycling can in the park; none or few are overflowing
- Monitored by police on bikes

Notes for improvement

- Heavy traffic (e.g., steady flow of vehicles)
- Marked bike route lane could use another indicator
- Very few benches
- Most of the trail/benches have no shade
- No picnic benches in the park except the picnic shelter
- Graffiti (e.g., markings or paintings that reduce the visual quality of the area)
- Excessive litter (e.g., noticeable amounts of trash, broken glass, etc.)
- More eyes needed on Manatawny Street entrance of park
- Condition of signage is poor
- Restrooms or portable toilets are at the park, but few are useable and about half are in good condition
- None or few drinking fountains are useable
- Only <25% of the park is shaded

- Few activity areas lit by lighting in the park
- No rules posted about animals in the park
- No dog waste pick up bags available at bag locations
- Surrounding neighborhood is only partially visible

Riverfront Park, Borough of Pottstown

Table 15. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Riverfront Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Trail*	80%	✓	✓
Pavilion/Memorial	7%	✓	✓
Picnic Pavilion	9%	✓	✓
Amphitheater	3%	✓	✓
River	1%	✓	✓

*Trail

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance markers/sign: ✓

Benches along trail: ✓

Trail surface? Paved

Riverfront Park – all areas are useable and accessible and no areas of activities were supervised, equipped, and organized. The large majority of observed users were recreating on the trail (80%). Other users were observed at the Memorial and Pavilion (14%), larger picnic pavilion (9%), and the amphitheater (3%). There was little use observed on the Schuylkill River (1%). Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the observed users were female and 67% of the observed users were male. Adults made up 76% of the observed use, whereas children made up 12% of observed use, teens made up 7% of observed use, and seniors made up 5% of observed use. Most of the activity observed was walking (43%); thirty-four percent were engaged in vigorous activity and the remaining 23% were engaged in sedentary activity. Most use was observed in the morning (50%), followed by the afternoon (30%) and midday (20%).

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Riverfront Park, it is possible to locate a map and the park is easy to find when visiting. When observed, the park was accessible for use. The main land use around the park is residential and institutional. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, rules, and map. The park boundary is open, with a public transit stop in site of the park, a large parking lot and bike racks on site. The Schuylkill River Trail is connected to the park. There are sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park; all are useable and there are curb cuts and ramps present. There is also a marked bike lane on the road bordering the park and nearby traffic signals. There may be a safety concern surrounding the park with heavy traffic and lack of eyes on the street. There are portable toilets available on site; all or most are useable and in good condition. There is also a family restroom, but no baby changing station. There are no drinking fountains in the park. There are benches and picnic tables available, and all or most are useable and in good condition. Most are covered by a picnic shelter, some with a grill nearby. There are trash and recycling containers at the park; all or most are near activity areas, but about half were overflowing with trash. There are no food/vending machines available in the park. Over 75% of the park would be shaded if the sun was directly overhead. There are rules posted about animals in the park, places to get dog waste pick up bags, and bags available at those locations. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park but there are lights in the parking lot; it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). The center of the park is not at all visible to the surrounding neighborhood. There are no roads of any type throughout the park.

Positive Notes

- >75% of the park is shaded
- Aesthetic features in the park include evidence of landscaping (e.g., flower beds, pruned bushes), historical or educational features (e.g., monument, nature display, educational signs, etc.), wooded areas (e.g., thick woods or dense trees), trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees), water features (e.g., lake, stream, pond)

Notes for improvement

- Heavy traffic (e.g., steady flow of vehicles)
- Lack of eyes on the street (e.g., absence of people, no houses or store fronts)

Potts Drive Park, Borough of Pottstown

Table 16. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Potts Drive Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Playground*	42	✓	✓
Basketball Court	58	✓	X
Green Space 1	0	✓	✓
Green Space 2	0	✓	✓

*Playground:

Distinct areas for different age groups: X

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): ✓

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): X

Benches in/surrounding area: ✓

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): ✓

Separation or distance from road: ✓

Potts Drive Park – all areas are useable and accessible and no areas are supervised, equipped or organized. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the use was observed on the basketball court, with the remainder observed on the playground. Activity level of users were distributed almost equally among activity level types: sedentary (30%), walking (35%), and vigorous (35%). Most observed users were children (42%), followed by teens (31%), and adults (27%). There were no seniors observed at the park. Forty-two percent of the observed users were female and 58% of the observed users were male. The large majority of use was in the afternoon (87%) and the remainder of use in the morning (13%). There was no use observed at midday.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Potts Drive Park, it is possible to locate a map. The park is somewhat easy to find on site because it is located at a dead end of a neighborhood. When observed, the park could be accessed for use. The main land use around the park is residential and commercial. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. There is only one entrance to the park and it is fenced in. The parking lot in the park is typically shut off for visitors and parking takes place on the neighborhood street. There is no public transit stop within sight of the park. There are sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park; all or most are useable. There

are no bike routes on any roads bordering the park. There are no public restrooms or portable toilets at the park. There are no drinking fountains.

There are benches and all or most are useable and in good condition. There are no picnic tables in the park. There are no picnic shelters, grills or fire pits in the park. There are trash cans in the park near activity areas and none are overflowing with trash. There are no recycling containers provided and there are no food/vending machines. If the sun was directly overhead, 25-75% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park. There are no places to get dog waste pick up bags. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park, and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is only partially visible. From one corner of the park, no surrounding neighborhood is visible. There are no roads of any type through the park.

Positive Notes

- No safety or appearance concerns are present in the neighborhood surrounding the park
- Aesthetic features include trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees)
- Sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park; all or most are useable

Notes for improvement

- Gate to parking lot is locked
- Only one park entrance through a tall, fenced in area
- No public transit stop within sight of the park
- No bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- No public restrooms or portable toilets at the park
- No drinking fountains
- No recycling containers provided
- No places to get dog waste pick up bags
- No lights or emergency devices in the park, and it is unsure if the park is monitored
- Some graffiti under playground slide
- Basketball court doesn't have lines, has only one hoop and is in poor condition
- Only one bench
- No picnic tables

Spruce Street Park, Borough of Pottstown

Table 17. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Spruce Street Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Playground*	31	✓	✓
Basketball Court	61	✓	✓
Green Space 2	0	✓	✓
Green Space 1	8	✓	✓

*Playground:

Distinct areas for different age groups: ✓

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): ✓

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): ✗

Benches in/surrounding area: ✗

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): ✓

Separation or distance from road: ✓

Spruce Street Park – All areas are useable and accessible and no areas of activities are supervised, equipped or organized. The large majority of observed users were either on the basketball court (61%) and playground (31%). Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the users were female and 23% of the users were male. The majority of activity was vigorous activity (77%) Most use is in the morning (67%) and afternoon (33%); there was no use at midday.

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Spruce Street Park, it is possible to locate a map. The park is easy to find when visiting. When observed, the park could be accessed for use. The main land use around the area is residential and institutional. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, and rules. The park boundary is open and there is on-street parking available. There is no public transit stop in sight of the park. There are sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park; all or most are useable and have curb cuts and/or ramps. There are no external trails or paths. There are no bike routes on any roads bordering the park. There are nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are no public restrooms or portable toilets in the park. There is one drinking fountain at the park; it is useable and in good condition, but is not near activity areas. There is one bench in the park. There are no picnic tables, grills, or fire pits in the park.

There are trash cans in the park; none are overflowing and most are near activity areas. There are no recycling containers provided. There are no food/vending machines available. If the sun was directly overhead, only <25% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park, but there are no places to get dog waste pick up bags. There are no lights or emergency devices, and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is fully visible. There are no roads of any type through the park.

Positive Notes

- Sidewalks on at least one road bordering the park; all or most are useable and have curb cuts and/or ramps
- Trash cans in the park; none are overflowing and most are near activity areas
- Surrounding neighborhood is fully visible from the center of the park
- No safety or appearance concerns are present in the neighborhood surrounding the park
- No park quality or safety concerns present in the park
- Aesthetic features include trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees)

Notes for improvement

- No public transit stop in sight of the park
- No bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- No public restrooms or portable toilets in the park
- Drinking fountain is not near activity areas
- No picnic tables, grills, or fire pits
- No recycling containers provided
- Only <25% of the park is shaded
- No places to get dog waste pick up bags
- No lights or emergency devices, and it is unsure if the park is monitored
- More benches are needed

Towpath Park, East Coventry Township

Table 18. Percent of Visitors Observed in Activity Areas in Towpath Park

Activity Area	Percent Use	Useable	Good Condition
Dock	18	✓	✓
Road (Trail)*	23	✓	✓
Pavilion	36	✓	✓
River	6	✓	✓
Playground*	12	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 2	3	✓	✓
Open/Green Space 1	1	✓	✓
Pond	1	X	X
Open/Green Space 3	0	✓	✓
Volleyball Court	0	✓	✓

***Road (used as a trail):**

Connected to activity areas: ✓

Distance marker/sign: X

Benches along trail: ✓

Trail surface: Crushed stone, Dirt/mulch

***Playground:**

Distinct areas for different age groups: X

Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors): ✓

Shade cover for some (25% of the area): X

Benches in/surrounding area: ✓

Fence around area (i.e., half or more): X

Separation or distance from road: ✓

Towpath Park – All areas are useable and accessible and no areas of activities were supervised, equipped, or organized. Majority of users were observed at the pavilion (36%); other areas with higher observed use were road (trail) (23%) and dock (18%). There was little to no use observed at the river, green spaces, ponds and volleyball court. Most of the activity was sedentary (53%) and walking (45%); there was little amount of vigorous activity (2%). Seventy-four percent of observed users were adults, 15% were children, 7% were seniors, and 4% were teens. Forty-one percent of the observed users were female and 59% of the users were male. Most use was observed in the afternoon (50%) followed by the morning (43%), and midday (7%).

Summary of Community Park Assessment Tool Results

Before visiting Towpath Park, it is possible to locate a map. The park is somewhat easy to find when visiting; there is one entrance and it is sudden and narrow. The main land use around the park is commercial and natural. When observed, the park could be accessed for use. There is signage for park name, hours, contact information, facility rental information, and rules. There are 2-5 entries to the park and a parking lot is available on site. There is no public transit stop within sight of the park and there are no sidewalks on any roads bordering the park. There are no bike routes on any roads bordering the park, but there are nearby traffic signals on at least one road bordering the park. There are portable toilets at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition. There is a family restroom, but no baby changing station. There are no drinking fountains in the park. There are benches in the park, all or most are useable and about half are in good condition. There are picnic tables; all or most are useable and in good condition, most are under a picnic shelter. There are multiple grills in the park. There are trash cans and recycling containers provided; all or most are near activity areas and none or few are overflowing. There are no food/vending machines available in the park. If the sun was directly overhead, 25-75% of the park would be shaded. There are rules posted about animals in the park and locations for dog waste pick up bags. There are no lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored (by volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, camera, etc.). From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is not at all visible. The stone drive through the park is used as a trail as there are no trails in the park. There is one paved walkway to the pavilion.

Positive Notes

- Aesthetic features include historical or educational features (e.g., monument, nature display, educational signs, etc.), wooded areas (e.g., thick woods or dense trees), trees throughout the park (e.g., scattered trees), and water features (e.g., lake, stream, pond)
- Portable toilets at the park; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Picnic tables; all or most are useable and in good condition
- Trash cans and recycling containers provided; all or most are near activity areas and none or few are overflowing

- Traffic control mechanisms in place

Notes for improvement

- There is one entrance and its sudden and narrow
- Heavy traffic (e.g., steady flow of vehicles)
- Lack of eyes on the street (e.g., absence of people, no houses or store fronts)
- From the center of the park, the surrounding neighborhood is not at all visible
- No public transit stop within sight of the park
- No sidewalks on any roads bordering the park
- No bike routes on any roads bordering the park
- No drinking fountains in the park
- No lights or emergency devices in the park and it is unsure if the park is monitored
- Scratched graffiti on turtle play structure in playground
- Some benches are off to the side along road on higher ground, and not right along the road close to the river; half in good condition
- Signage at dock is wearing away/old
- Pond has a bench nearby to sit on, but the pond itself seemed to be in poor health
- Add a trail in the park

Final Conclusions

The following conclusions represent a summary of data from all three sources: Community Park Assessment Tool, System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities, and the Community Park User Survey. They conclusions are separated into five themes: Park Conditions, Park Facilities, Park Amenities, Visitor Use, and Barriers.

Park Conditions

- Overall, the parks are useable and in good condition.
- Half the parks did not have any safety or appearance concerns
- Safety measures to combat traffic incidents and crime/violence related incidents could be increased; 27% of parks lacked “eyes on the street”; 24% of parks had steady traffic flow nearby; and 12% had poor lighting on surrounding streets
- There was excessive litter in 21% of the parks; poor maintenance in 15% of the parks; graffiti in 9% of the parks; dangerous spots 3% of parks; other park quality or safety concerns were observed in 21% of parks.

Park Facilities

- Parks are useable and in good condition
- Improve trail conditions (77%) useable and good condition)
- Playgrounds: add distinct age groups; shade; fence around area
- There is a diversity of opportunities but no public swimming pool

Park Amenities

- More amenities desired such as drinking fountains (88% lacked) and permanent restrooms
- Most had signs for rules and hours of use
- Half the parks had useable restrooms in good condition but lacked a family restroom or baby changing station.
- Most had benches and picnic tables but were lacking interesting amenities such as artistic features, landscaping, historical or educational features
- Parks with pavilions provide much needed shelter for families and rental spaces for social gatherings as well as shade for nearby attractions
- Parks could use more shade, doggy bags and safety lighting, interpretive and directional signage, patrols and emergency devices

Visitor Use

- The parks provide a safe, varied and close-by area for people to be outdoors, to walk, to exercise, to reduce stress, to walk their dog and to be with their child.
- Parks with trails and playgrounds are actively used; majority of use was observed on trails
- Survey responses showed that there was frequent visitation for majority of respondents. Approximately 30% of respondents had only been to the park a few times per year or it was their first time.
- Visitors were more likely to be adults and less likely to be older adults; and older adults were more likely to be female. More males were observed than females and males were more likely to engage in vigorous activity. As shown by trail sensors at 4 municipalities, use at the parks was heavier during the weekend, and used more during the 3-6 PM time frame, followed by 9-12 AM, 12-3 PM, 6-9 PM and lastly from 5-9 AM.
- Older adults were not frequent users of the park which could mean more amenities addressing their interests may be needed to attract them to the park.
- People come to the parks to be outdoors, to walk, to exercise, to reduce stress, to walk their dog and to be with their child.

- The percentage of use by males and females differed by age group. Whereas the majority of children (62%) and adults (59%) were male, the majority of teens (59%) and seniors (66%) were female.

Barriers

- If you wanted to find a nearby park or open space, it was relatively easy to find.
- 73% of responses indicated that there were no barriers to park use
- Most parks were virtually barrier-free and there were many ways to access them. There was adequate parking and nearby traffic signs.
- There was little public transportation near parks or external trails connecting to the park. However, more than half had nearby sidewalks.
- There was a lack of entrance/directional signage and sidewalk connections; improvements to parking were needed; there could be traffic safety improvements and safety measures for crime/violence related incidents.
- Only 33% of parks have bike racks. Nearly all parks (94%) are not connected to an external trail or pathway system; and only 2 parks had a bike route on any roads bordering the parks.