



Manheim Central Recreation Commission

**MC Rec Partnership Roles, Responsibilities and Funding
Recommendations**

2009

Manheim Central Recreation Commission
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MC Rec
Partnership Roles,
Responsibilities and Funding
Review & Recommendations

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Project Purpose

MC Rec, the Manheim Central Recreation Commission, retained Toole Recreation Planning to assist the Commission with the facilitation of three commission meetings and a stakeholders' workshop regarding the future directions and funding support for MC Rec. The goal was to reach consensus on how MC Rec would be funded in the future. The Scope of Services identified for this project includes:

- One pre-workshop meeting with the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee.
- Facilitation of a one-day workshop on a Saturday. The morning would focus on community organizations and the afternoon would involve the key partners.
- Report on the findings of the meeting and workshop with recommendations on future directions.
- Conduct a final meeting on the report.

Project Process

The project included three parts: research and analysis, the workshop and the report as described below:

1. Research, Analysis, and Workshop Preparation

- MC Rec provided relevant materials for review including plans, reports, budgets, meeting minutes and other materials that would help with project understanding.
- All partners were invited to all meetings, were interviewed on site at their locations and received materials related to the project.
- An on site work session was held with MC Rec management and staff. This included a tour of the communities and MC Rec and Manheim Central School District facilities.
- Interviews with identified stakeholders for the purpose of issue and opportunity identification, meeting planning and workshop development. Stakeholder analysis was conducted defining viewpoints, key issues, desired outcomes, and workshop participation role.
- A pre-workshop meeting was held with the key partners and identified officials.
- The workshop strategy, tasks, process and agenda were created.
- Workshop logistics and pre-workshop communication in conjunction with the principal point of contact for MC Rec.
- Workshop Project brief preparation including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges to the organization.

2. The Workshop

- The workshop for community organizations included a presentation of findings about parks and recreation in the community with respect to MC Rec, introduction of key findings of the research and presentation of opportunities,

issues and challenges. The agenda was a combination of the presentation of information and interactive exercises.

- Participants asked questions and then engaged in a three-part discussion regarding what works well, what could work better and the identification of the factor of importance to them regarding MC Rec.
- The Strategic Plan Sub-Committee Workshop focused on the results of community input, roles and responsibilities, management tools and funding formulas, as these were the key issues and opportunities that emerged for the committee to address.
- Alternative concepts for exploration for future directions and funding were explored.
- Preferred funding scenarios approaches to phasing in changes were identified.
- Future directions and support were identified including resources, sources and regional participation.
- A preferred plan and approach for the future direction of the partnership was formed to set forth a positive transformation of how MC Rec and the partners could work together in serving the public through parks and recreation.

3. Report Production and Project Finalization

- Development of a plan and report that simply and clearly documents the decisions made and the steps forward to implement the recommendations and consensus reached.
- Product refinement through review and revision.
- Final meeting of the project. This would include the project process and preferred plan/recommendations, input in the form of open discussion.

Findings

MC Rec

MC Rec serves as the regional parks and recreation department for Manheim Borough, Penn Township and Rapho Township contiguous with the Manheim Central School District. MC Rec provides recreation opportunities year round through organized programs and self-directed opportunities that the citizens can undertake on their own in the seven parks in the region. Interviews found a high level of public awareness and support for MC Rec.

If you've been to the Farm Show Complex, you've used MC Rec services! In 2009, MC Rec had 11,192 participants in its organized programs and special events. The community swimming pool was the host to over 26,500 visitors, mostly from within the school district. Pool memberships were nearly evenly distributed among residents from the borough and the two townships. Park visitation, as is customary, is not tracked but estimated with about 70 percent of the population using parks in line with other communities in Pennsylvania for a total of about 14,471 park visitors. **Table 1** presents comparisons about program and park visitation as a way of gauging MC Rec community participation.

MC Rec generates 68 percent of its operating budget from non-tax sources including program fees and charges, partnerships, sponsorships and rentals for its annual budget of about \$740,650.

Table 1 Benchmark Comparisons on MC Rec Usage		
	MC Rec	Typical Standard
Program Participation	16% for just programs and 60% when special events and pool attendance are included	22% maximum. This is the largest percentage a municipality could expect to participate in programs.
Park Visitation	Based on findings nationwide and Pennsylvania and the facilities available, projection would be the same 70% area.	70%
Appreciate Parks whether the person uses them or not	NA	82%

MC Rec: What Works Well

MC Rec

Overall MC Rec has a positive public perception regarding its programs, services, and awareness. Participation has increased as a result of the addition of the Old Middle School as a program site, effective advertising, program quality and new strategies such as e-mail outreach to participants. The service area is contiguous with the Manheim Central School District, which is consistent with how residents view their community orientation. Residents are oriented to the school district as a place of residence and for their community connections including recreation rather than oriented toward jurisdiction of residence. The intergovernmental agreement including three municipalities and the school district has served the community well over the last ten years in terms of service, facilities and effective use of tax dollars. For every tax dollar allocated to MC Rec, MC Rec generates another \$3.06.

The Partnership

Four governmental entities including the Manheim Central School District, Manheim Borough, Penn Township and Rapho Township have worked together collaboratively for over ten years in providing community recreation services through MC Rec. As a progressive way of delivering public services, this partnership has served as a model for other municipalities statewide. The school district supports parks and recreation to a higher level than is typical in other communities. School districts that are involved in multi-municipal recreation organizations here and elsewhere have found that making facilities and services available to the community at large benefits the community and generates important public support and good will for the school district that spills over to support other district initiatives. The community key

stakeholder workshop revealed strong public sentiment that these community organization representatives want the MC Rec partnership to continue with all three municipalities and the school district. They want to move ahead in a positive fashion and eliminate negative publicity.

MC Rec: What Could Work Better

MC Rec

While MC Rec overall operates in an effective and efficient manner given the organization's results, resources, level of expectation and increasing demands on staff and funding, everyone agrees there are always ways to improve operations. In this case, the scenario would be in line with the well-known business concept of "going from good to great" or locally as "always good but never satisfied".

Over the years, MC Rec has experienced increases in programs, participation, and responsibility for more parks and recreation facilities. The increasing demands on the small staff have required staff to focus on "putting out fires" rather than operating more in a scheduled, planned fashion. Formalized policies, procedures and work programs could help to facilitate communication and decision-making. This will help to foster management practices that are 80-90 percent routine and scheduled and 10-20 percent emergency.

Major inclusions to MC Rec's purview that appear to have come about without the best interest of the organization and a seeming lack of organized decision-making process and review of the long term impacts of such decisions include the swimming pool capital debt (retired), the Farm Show Complex and the Covered Bridge. All of these items have major costs associated with them and long-term relationships to parks and recreation that are somewhat questionable.

The Partnership

The decision of Penn Township to leave the partnership has major implications in terms of funding and community service. Negative press has been cited as a problem. Communication could be improved and decision-making enhanced through the development and use of policies and procedures on projects and programs of major significance. Involvement of the public on decisions of major importance regarding MC Rec is important. The key stakeholder workshop found that citizens who are heavily involved with community service organizations as well as general citizen representatives were unaware of why the partnership is changing in terms of Penn Township dropping out. Continued communication and discussion of major issues is important for the long-term viability of multi-municipal parks and recreation departments.

MC Rec: The Key Issues to Address

While many good ideas regarding how to work together better and improve MC Rec have been suggested, three core issues emerged from the interviews, work sessions and work shops. These include:

- Park and Recreation Facility Maintenance.
- Need for Policies and Procedures.
- The Funding Formula.

Analysis and Recommendations

Park and Recreation Facility Maintenance

Mc Rec maintains 113.9 acres of parkland, community swimming pool complex grounds, recreation facilities, the MC Rec portion of the old Middle School and the Farm Show Complex distributed among seven sites ranging in size from about seven for 46 acres. The Manheim Central School District is responsible for the maintenance of the old Middle School building along with its operating costs. MC Rec maintenance staff provides custodial and minor maintenance duties for the portion of the building designated for MC Rec programs.

The 2009 maintenance budget for parks was \$200,556 equating to \$1,760 per acre. This falls short of the customary range of \$1,500 to 3,000 per acre or more. Soccer field maintenance is estimated at about \$4,500 per field per year. This is less than the estimated cost elsewhere of \$7,000 to \$8,000. An effective working relationship between MC Rec and the Manheim Central School District including communication and information sharing as well as piggyback purchasing and constant refinement of maintenance practices have resulted in lower costs.

The roles and responsibilities of park and recreation facility maintenance have emerged as a major question. Factors for consideration include:

- Should MC Rec continue providing park maintenance? Doesn't MC Rec duplicate what townships can provide on their own in terms of park and recreation facility maintenance? Wouldn't it cost less for municipalities to perform park maintenance instead of MC Rec?
- What are the procedures for adding a facility to MC Rec for maintenance?
- What is the role of the school district in park maintenance and why don't they just maintain all parks?

Analysis

MC Rec and Park Maintenance - The principle purpose of municipal government is to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens when using public facilities. It is essential that parks be maintained in a safe, healthy and attractive condition for park users. Municipalities are exposed to liability and potential litigation based in operating parks and recreation facilities. Insurance carriers report that the single most important measure that a municipality can do to reduce hazardous conditions, exposure to liability and potential litigation is to have a formal maintenance management system. This includes expertise in park maintenance management, regular park inspections, and documentation about tasks performed and resolution of hazardous conditions. Parks require specialized expertise in sports turf management, sports facility requirements, trail maintenance, natural resource management, forestry, Consumer Product Safety Commission standards for play equipment, customer service, recreation programming with respect to schedules and facility support, coordination with leagues and facility renters and other activities specific to the special conditions of a site such as dog parks, amphitheaters etc.

The public perceives the parks and recreation facilities as well maintained. The cost per acre for MC Rec's park maintenance is lower than other similar communities in Pennsylvania. Athletic groups also contribute to sports field maintenance. The school district provides support, expertise, cost sharing, piggyback purchasing, problem solving, and funding to support the operation of MC Rec in park maintenance.

One of the most valuable services that MC Rec provides is "one stop shopping" for park users. Park users who secure permits, schedule tournaments, provide volunteer support for sports leagues, and schedule events have to deal with a single entity that is responsible for all aspects of facility use and conditions. Since MC Rec is performing park maintenance, park maintenance is a priority. Park maintenance that falls under the purview of a streets or public works department is often a secondary priority. When an emergency occurs or roadwork such as pothole attention in the spring is required, park maintenance is deferred even when it is essential to serve public scheduled events for which people often pay a fee. This results in poor public service, inadequately maintained facilities and cancelled events. By having scheduling, recreation programming and maintenance under one roof, proper scheduling, and work production can be accomplished. Park maintenance requires a completely different set of skills and expertise than do roads, streets and public works. By having park maintenance under one unit for parks and recreation, MC Rec has the expertise and cultivates the skills necessary to provide safe, clean attractive facilities that meet standards and guidelines for public recreational use.

Procedures for Adding Facilities for MC Rec Maintenance – Currently there is no official procedure for adding facilities to MC Rec for long-term maintenance. Consequently MC Rec has been designated as the agency responsible for maintenance of facilities unrelated to recreation such as the Farm Show Complex and the Covered Bridge, which became the responsibility of MC Rec at its inception. If this practice is left unchecked, it could result in additional unrelated responsibilities for MC Rec. When these facilities have been added, additional financial resources have not been added to compensate for the additional associated labor and costs. A formal process and procedural system needs to be established to discuss the addition of facilities to MC Rec.

The Manheim Central School District and Maintenance – The school district already provides exceptional support of parks and recreation in supporting MC Rec in terms of

funding, facility use and expertise. The school district provides maintenance for facilities that serve recreational needs as well on their school grounds. They also provide the maintenance of the old Middle School building and pay the building expenses. The maintenance of facilities that are not on school grounds is outside of their responsibility and beyond their scope of work.

Recommendations

1. MC Rec should establish a formal process for evaluating whether to accept the maintenance responsibility for an additional public facility. **Figure 1** presents a Management Impact Statement tool for this purpose. The MIS offers a series of questions to address as part of the discussion and decision-making process for all facilities under consideration. This tool can also be used to assess major new programs under consideration as well.
2. Consider creating a minimum size park that would fall under MC Rec's care. This could be a park larger than 5 acres or community parks only, no neighborhood parks.
3. At a minimum, MC Rec should be responsible for the maintenance of all sports fields, playgrounds, and game courts and anything that would be scheduled and permitted for public recreational use.
4. Plan for increasing human and financial resources for any additional facilities in the budget. Use the MIS to develop the figures for the additional resources needed along with their sources. As an alternative, use the per acre rate for park maintenance by MC Rec at the time the project is under consideration.
5. Allow for provisions for municipal park maintenance of small parks five acres or less, neighborhood parks or aspects of park maintenance such as mulching shrubbery and tree care and so on.

Policies and Procedures

The development of policies and procedures is an ongoing task. As situations and circumstances change, new policies are needed or existing ones modified. Policies provide the mechanism for communicating the standard operating practices and protocols of an organization. They provide a framework for discussion and decision-making. Policies communicate a common reference for those involved to understand how things work in a way that ensures progress, facilitates routine operations, and minimizes putting out fires. Policies could help to foster public understanding and build support for MC Rec.

Analysis

The Intergovernmental Agreement is the overriding policy document governing the MC Rec partnership. The IGA falls under state law regulating these agreements. State law specifies that only municipalities, counties and school districts can sign on as partners in intergovernmental agreements. While alternatives to this organizational structure were suggested including board composition without municipal and school district representatives instead by citizens or by business, these alternatives are not legally

permitted. The Board also has by-laws that govern the regulation and management of MC Rec. Potential changes in funding formulas raised the question about partner representation on MC Rec. Consideration could be given the reviewing the structure of MC Rec to determine if and how it should be re-structured.

Figure 1
MIS
Management Impact Statement

Purpose

1. To assess the impact of a significant proposed project or a major program considering the capital and operating costs including human resources and the effect on other parks and recreation facilities and services.
2. To use the assessment to make an informed decision about feasibility and viability of the proposed project.

Method

Determine:

1. Capital cost of the proposed project.
2. Operating costs of the proposed project. Include:
 - Number of staff hours required
 - Cost of the staff hours
 - Cost of materials and supplies
 - Miscellaneous costs
 - Volunteer support over the long term
3. Impact on other facilities and programs with the implementation of the proposed project.
 - Will the project/service require funds needed for other facilities/programs?
 - Will the project/service require staff time needed for other services/programs?
 - How will the project impact the quality of service in the MC Rec service area?
 - Will the project require resources from the community and are they available?
4. Revenue Sources
 - Grants
 - Donations
 - Municipal funds – additional appropriation
 - Municipal funds – within current budget
 - Non-tax funds to be generated from the project/program

Decision-Making

Based upon the above information, does MC Rec have the resources to move ahead with this project?

MC Rec operates primarily on a strong history of successful operating practices that have not been formalized as policies. Consequently when a new situation emerges, there is no foundation in place to facilitate decision-making and discussion. Policies that would help MC Rec and its partners include the following:

- Use of the MIS tool.
- Fees and Charges Policy.
- Maintenance parameters with respect to park size and facility types.
- Establishment of annual goals, objectives and priorities.
- Procurement Policy – include roles and responsibilities of the MC Rec Board and MC Rec Management and Staff.
- Capital Project Selection.

Recommendations

- Review the MC Rec Board composition in light of changes in the funding formula. Consider composition that reflects the formula. For example if the adopted formula is part equal share and part by population, then have each member appoint one member plus additional members with respect to the formula. It is most important to recognize that this is a regional service and that the good of the region as a whole is crucial. While not everyone will get everything they want, nor will everyone have to sacrifice everything they want, the region, as a whole will benefit.
- Use the MIS shown in **Figure 1** to evaluate proposed facilities or programs that are major in terms of scale, cost and staff resources required. Set ground rules for when this policy would be used, for example projects over \$10,000.
- Develop a park and recreation facility maintenance policy. Include minimal size of parks to be maintained by MC Rec. Specify facilities to be under MC Rec’s purview, which should include ballfields, game courts, playgrounds, the community pool grounds and other active facilities as well as all facilities that are scheduled and reserved for recreational use.
- Develop and adopt a policy in fees and charges.
- Adopt a policy to establish annual goals, objectives and priorities for MC Rec in conjunction with the development of the annual budget.
- Adopt a policy to determine how capital improvement projects are selected. With about \$75,000 a year in municipal capital funding allocations, a three to seven year capital improvement program could be established. Strive to get grants to leverage every local tax dollar. Use the criteria shown in **Figure 2** as the method to select projects. The criteria and criteria weights could be revised as needed based upon emerging opportunities.

Figure 2
Sample Criteria for Selection of Capital Improvement Projects
Applied for an Example Project

Project Title: Project X Capital Cost: \$100,000 Funding Source(s): Muni's. & DCNR						
Annual Operating cost: \$10,000 Operating budget source(s): User Fees						
Criteria	Yes (2)	No (1)	High Priority (3)	Medium Priority (2)	Low Priority (1)	Total Points
1. Does proposed project meets broad public need?	2		3			5
2. Does the project benefit a majority of the citizens?		1			1	2
3. Will the project meet safety and accessibility needs of community?		1			1	2
4. Is the project consistent with MC Rec Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan , design guidelines, park master plan and mission?	2				1	3
5. Will the project improve existing park conditions? That is, it will fix up what the township has rather than build new?	2		3			5
6. Is project in an area of the community that needs municipal investment?		1			1	2
7. Is funding available for the project?	2		3			5
8. Does a community group support(s) the project?	2		3			5
9. Will MC Rec or other provider be able to maintain the improvement/project upon completion?	2		3			5
10. Will the quality of the project enhance the public image of the MC Rec community?	2			2		4
11. Do you have time to undertake the project?	2					2
TOTAL Points						40

(#) = point value

Chart Formula

- Step 1.** Answer each question of the criteria with a yes or no.
- Step 2.** Mark either “2” in the yes box or “1” in the no box.
- Step 3.** Determine if the project is a high, medium or low priority.
- Step 4.** Mark either a “3”, or a “2” or a “1” in the appropriate priority box.
- Step 5.** Multiply the Yes (2) or No (1) points times the Priority Points High (3), Medium (2) or Low (1). Put that answer in the total point’s column for that criterion.
- Step 6.** Continue working your way through all of the criteria in the same manner.
- Step 7.** Add the Total Points Column. Write the score in the box in the bottom of the column. Compare this score against the scores of other projects under consideration. In the example above, Project X scored a value of 41 out of a total 60 points possible. Compare this score with other projects that could range in value from 10 to 60. Use as part of decision-making process.
- Step 8.** Adjust the criteria and point values as merited based upon the use of the rating scale.

Funding Formula

The funding formula was the compelling public reason that sparked this study. The formula established with the creation has been in place for the past ten years. According to this formula, the School District pays for the MC Rec Director's salary and benefits. This is equally matched by Manheim Borough, Penn Township and Rapho Township. The amount allocated through this partnership in 2009 was \$242,095.36. This appropriation is dedicated to operating the day-to-day expenditures of MC Rec.

In addition to the operating budget the following other allocations are provided through the partners:

- Each municipality has contributed \$25,000 annually since 2007 for park and recreation facility capital improvement projects. Combined this totals \$75,000 annually and if continued for the next ten years would generate a total of \$750,000. This is significant funding that would enable MC Rec to plan for capital improvements efficiently and effectively.
- The Manheim Central School District pays for the operation and maintenance of the Old Middle School. The districts charges rent for the lease with the Intermediate Unit. This lease will expire in 2013 and other plans for this school are under discussion. The district also provides purchasing power to MC Rec in allowing MC Rec to purchase materials and supplies through piggybacking with the school on bids as well as in direct purchasing through their vendors.

Analysis

Benchmark Comparisons - Benchmarks provide a useful comparison for parks and recreation organizations and municipalities to assess how they compare with other similar operations elsewhere. **Table 2** presents comparisons between Manheim Borough, Penn Township and Rapho Township with the Pennsylvania and nationwide average municipal per capita investment as well as in ratios of parks and recreation to township expenditures.

Table 2 Benchmark Comparisons on Funding Parks and Recreation		
	Per Capita	Ratio of Parks and Recreation to Operating Budget
Manheim Borough	\$12.65	2.39%
Penn Township	\$8.28	2.15%
Rapho Township	\$7.05	4.00%
State Average	\$32	NA
National Average	\$65	3.14%
Best Department Municipal Operating Ratio Nationally	NA	5.00%+

Table 2 shows that the MC Rec partners spend less than the average statewide per capita municipal investment. This should be the case because of the cost savings they realize by pooling their resources. However, if each municipality offered parks and recreation on its own, the \$32 would be the standard of measure. In that case these municipalities would

be only 20 to forty percent of the statewide average. Manheim and Penn’s appropriation is less than the 3.14 percent average of the municipal operating budget ratio. While Rapho is higher at four percent, the township’s overall budget is low. In comparison, Penn has a higher per capita investment in MC Rec than Rapho but a lower ratio of the operating budget. None of the partners is at the level of “Best Department”. This refers to departments nationwide that are viewed as successful public assets by the business community. These departments generally have five percent or more of the municipal operating budget.

A second level of questioning emerged regarding funding beyond the formula itself. This question raised was regarding the budget amount: is the funding enough to operate MC Rec efficiently and effectively? The fact that MC Rec generates 68 percent of its budget from non-tax funds is an important consideration. Certainly, MC Rec is not expecting the municipal and school district partners to pay for everything and operates in an entrepreneurial fashion to ensure a mix of funding sources. While programs are self-sufficient, park maintenance is the one area that may be under funded. At about \$1,760 per acre this is less than the cost per acre in similar communities in Pennsylvania. Coordination with the school district and successful management and material practices has produced effective maintenance. But the inclusion of structures like the Covered Bridge has resulted in expenditures beyond the budget parameters. The addition of substantial facilities should be addressed before their acceptance into the system and included in the operating budget or other funding sources.

Program Use and Park Use - It is important to note that municipal discussions have been oriented towards programs when it comes to the formula. However, most of the public use of parks and recreation systems is in park use not in programs. About 70 percent of citizens use parks while up to about 30 percent participate in organized programs or special events. The public use of parks needs to be considered as a major factor in the value of MC Rec services. Fairness and equity needs to include both park use and programs when considering share value; it’s not only about programs! A municipality paying an additional fee to cover non-resident rates in programs or pool membership fails to include the value of citizens using the parks and recreation facilities system wide. Park usage should be considered when calculating the value of regional recreation.

Budget Composition by Tax and Non-Tax Sources. Table 3 presents the MC Rec budget according to tax and non-tax budget sources.

Table 3 MC Rec 2009 Budget Sources		
	Amount	%
Tax Support	\$242,095.36	32%
Non-Tax Support	500,250.00	68%
Total	\$742,345.36	100%

Cost recovery of municipal parks and recreation departments is generally in the 30 -35 percent ranges. Fifty percent is often a goal. Nearly seventy percent can

be achieved but it is difficult and ever more difficult than a 50 percent recovery rate. MC Rec’s cost recovery also includes the maintenance budget making this cost recovery rate especially notable. Park maintenance results in costs without revenue while programs generate revenue. As maintenance costs increase, the cost recovery goes down.

Achieving a 68 percent cost recovery rate with maintenance is very high. Park maintenance requires expertise, knowledge and experience in areas of sports turf management, safety inspections, Consumer Product Safety Commission play equipment

standards, recreation program support, customer service, natural resource management, workload cost tracking, horticulture, landscaping, equipment maintenance and other areas. Effective park maintenance is required to reduce a municipality’s exposure to risk and litigation.

Current Allocation According to Equal Shares

The Manheim Central School District pays for the salary and benefits of the director. This amount is matched equally by each of the partnering municipalities. **Table 4** presents the current funding information according to tax dollars and ratio of parks and recreation operating expenses to overall municipal operating expenses.

Table 4 Current Funding for the Municipal Shares		
NOTE: Numbers vary but are within a tight range due to rounding and use of percentages.		
	Current: Equal share matching the School District’s contribution in \$.	Current Ratio of Parks & Recreation Expenditures to the Municipal Operating Budget - %
Manheim Borough	\$60,523.84	2.39%
Penn Township	60,523.84	2.15%
Rapho Township	60,523.84	4.00%
TOTAL	\$181,571.52	

Potential Funding Formulas

Since the current allocation of equal municipal shares is no longer in favor and the partners want to explore another funding formula the following approaches were created for exploration. A per capita formula was discussed with no sense of agreement that this would be a formula that would work for all partners. **Table 5** presents an alternative formula that includes four factors to relate capacity to pay, property values, population and amount of parkland. **Table 6** presents the share for each municipality based upon this formula. Using this formula, the Manheim and Penn shares decrease while Rapho’s share would increase. It is important to note that Penn Township has no parks and recreation facilities. Manheim Central School District has facilities in this township that essentially serve as de facto recreation facilities. Penn Township is in the process of developing two neighborhood parks in conjunction with developers constructing housing developments.

It is important to note that while Rapho Township does not have a property tax, the assessed valuation is used only for formula purposes here. The inclusion of the assessed valuation is not a recommendation for a property tax; it is merely part of the formula.

**Table 5
Combination Formula by Earned Income, Assessed Valuation, Population, & Percentage of Parkland**

	Earned Income		Assessed Valuation		2000 Census		% of Parkland		Avg. of Proportion of the four factors
	Amount	Percentage	Amount	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Acres	%	%
Manheim Borough	\$470,000	19.12	\$249,141,600	17.14	4,784	23.14	78.9	69.3	32.17
Penn Township	855,626	34.81	585,349,900	40.28	7,312	35.36	0	0	27.61
Rapho Township	1,131,690	46.05	618,561,300	42.56	8,578	41.49	35.0	30.7	40.20
Total	\$2,457,316.00	99.98	\$1,453,052,800	99.98	20,674	99.99	113.9	100%	99.98%

**Table 6
Comparison: 2009 Municipal Contribution and the Combination Formula Contribution**

Municipality	2009 Share	Combination Formula	Share based on 2009 Budget
Manheim Borough	\$60,523.84	32.17%	\$58,411.56
Penn Township	60,523.84	27.61%	50,131.89
Rapho Township	60,523.84	40.20%	72,991.75
Total	\$181,571.52	0.9998%	\$181,535.20

Since all partners were concerned about any one partner requiring too much of an increase in any one year, the partners wanted to consider how to phase in share adjustments resulting from a new formula. **Table 7** presents a strategy to phase in the combination formula by using an equal share plus the formula over the next two years in decreasing amounts. **Table 8** presents the shares over the next three years by municipality.

**Table 7
Municipal Contribution Formula of Equal Shares and Percentage of the Combination Formula Year 1 and Year 2**

50% Equal/50% Percentage of the Combination Formula				25% Equal/75% by Percentage of Population in \$			
YEAR 1				YEAR 2			
	50% Equal Share	50% of \$90,785.76 by Combination Formula	Total	25% Equal Share	75% of \$136,178.64 by Combination Formula	Total	
Manheim Borough	\$30,261.92	32.17 %	\$29,205.78	\$15,130.96	32.17 %	\$43,808.67	\$58,938.63
Penn Township	30,261.92	27.61 %	25,065.95	15,130.96	27.61 %	37,598.92	52,729.88
Rapho Township	30,261.92	40.20 %	36,495.88	15,130.96	40.20 %	54,743.81	69,874.77
Total	\$90,785.76	99.98 %	\$90,767.61	\$45,392.88		\$136,151.400	\$181,543.28

Municipality	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	50% Equal/50% Combination Formula	25% Equal/75% Combination Formula	100% Combination Formula
Manheim Borough	\$59,467.70	58,938.63	\$58,411.56
Penn Township	55,327.87	52,729.88	50,131.89
Rapho Township	66,757.80	69,874.77	72,991.75
Total	\$181,553.37	\$181,543.28	\$181,535.20

Capital Funding: Crucial

The formulas do not include capital funding. However, capital funding is essential for safe, clean and attractive facilities. The recommendation would be for the partnering municipalities to continue allocating the \$25,000 in capital funding annually. The capital contributions since 2007 have enabled MC Rec to repair recreation facilities used by residents of all three municipalities. The risk in changing the funding formulas is that municipalities that will experience an increase in the share may transfer their capital allocation to their operational funding share. This would be a dangerous precedent. This practice may be a necessary measure in the immediate future to deal with the loss of funding resulting from Penn Township’s withdrawal. However, it is important to determine how to provide capital funding annually to cover the cost of repairs when an emergency happens as well as for planned cyclic repairs and rehabilitation.

Benefits of Municipal Participation as a MC Rec Partner

By participating in MC Rec, the municipalities are pooling limited funding to provide a full-time professional parks and recreation system to provide public recreation opportunities and facilities year round. None of the three municipalities is large enough by population or resources to warrant its own parks and recreation department. The average per capita municipal investment for parks and recreation statewide is \$32, which is well more than the \$7.05 to \$12.85 per capita now allocated in MC Rec. For that investment the partners have a year round professional staff that plans, directs, and maintains parks and recreation programs and facilities. MC Rec leverages every dollar contributed by the municipalities with another \$3.06. The partnerships help to maximize limited human and financial resources and prevent the duplication of services. For example, Rapho’s new community park of 30 acres would typically cost between \$60,000 to \$90,000 annually to maintain. In 2009, Rapho Township contributed \$60,524 to MC Rec for not only maintenance of the park but also year round program opportunities, community swimming pool use, volunteer coordination, park maintenance, and use of a total of seven parks. Other benefits of participating in MC Rec for the municipalities include the following:

- Professional management and staff manage park area and recreation facility use and scheduling.

- Non-tax resources that comprise 68 percent of the budget complementing the 32 percent contributed by the municipal partners.
- Advertising and outreach through the program brochure, e-mail, direct mailing and response to citizen inquiries and requests for assistance via telephone.
- Generation of sponsors and partners for recreation and parks. This includes 43 business partners and over a dozen community organizations.
- Coordination of youth sports organizations
- A year round slate of programs, activities and special events.
- Management of volunteers such as Eagle Scouts who undertake park improvement projects.
- Technical assistance to the municipalities on a range of topics related to parks and recreation.
- One-stop shopping for community recreation: the citizen and community organizations know to go to MC Rec for assistance and problem resolution.
- Increased competitive value for the municipalities when seeking grants due to the partnership.
- Safe, clean and attractive parks and recreation facilities at a higher standard and lower cost than any one municipality could do on its own.
- Social capital and public goodwill as evident on the positive public perception of MC Rec.

Recommendations for Future Directions

1. **Strive to hold the MC Rec partnership together.** This is important to the citizens according to the findings of this study. Having a parks and recreation system contiguous with the school district serves the community well and makes the most use of public resources. Citizens relate to their school district more than their municipality and tend to use facilities and services within the school district service area. No single partner would be able to provide the level of programs and services offered through their partnership a MC Rec.
2. **Hold a public meeting.** Inviting citizens to hear about MC Rec, the partnership and potential changes. This study found that the public appears to be unaware of municipal considerations regarding their partnership in MC Rec, the changes that may happen in the near future, the reasons for those changes and the implications for future community park and recreation services.
3. **Agree on a formula and how it will be phased in over time.** Work towards gaining agreement on a new funding formula that meets the criteria set forth in this study. Use the formulas presented in this study that gained preliminary consensus of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee that consisted of municipal and school district representatives.

Continue to use the current process of budget formulation. The Director should continue to develop the draft budget using the base of the previous year; add new projects, programs or initiatives; and consider economic and funding conditions. The MC Rec Board would continue to review the proposed budget, engage in a budget discussion and make recommendations. The Director finalizes the budget draft and submits it to the

Board for final approval and then on to the partners for their approval. This budget should hold fast throughout the year, while allowing staff the flexibility to take advantage of additional opportunities in programs and other potential equipment deals that present themselves with board review and approval for larger items. Once the budget is approved, the Director should be empowered to carry it out.

4. **Develop policies.** Begin the process of developing and adopting policies for MC Rec operations. Start with adopting the use of the MIS and Project Selection Criteria tools.

Develop a policy on facility maintenance regarding the roles and responsibilities of MC Rec, the municipalities and the School District. Include the maintenance of sports fields, game courts, playgrounds and other active facilities under MC Rec. This should also include any facility that is scheduled or reserved and permitted for recreational use. The municipalities may want to maintain things like landscaping or other tasks not associated with the active recreational use of facilities.

A user fees and charges policy would also be helpful. Setting user fees should also consider administrative and advertising costs as well as saving for cyclic facility repairs. The American Public Works Association recommends that two to four percent of the facility development cost be set aside for cyclic repairs and renovation.

Conduct an assessment of policies that would facilitate operations and schedule their development as part of an annual goals and objectives for MC Rec.

5. **Consider a MC Rec Board restructuring.** Consider re-structuring as related to a revised formula using a combination of one representative per organization and additional members according population. The board does need to follow the Pennsylvania state law regarding intergovernmental agreements that provide eligibility for board members for municipalities, counties and school districts. Since the concept of different types of representation emerged in this study including citizens and the business community, consideration could be given to establishing a Friends of MC Rec or Friends of the Parks group perhaps as a private non-profit 501-c-3 organization.
6. **Explore how fundraising for recreation is conducted in the Manheim Central region.** Establish a study committee to explore alternatives to the current method of every organization tapping the same resources multiple times throughout the year. Essentially many community groups are tapping the service area for the same limited dollar from the same businesses and citizens. Perhaps a regional foundation could be considered that would do fundraising and allocate resources.
7. **Evaluate facilities not related to parks and recreation.** Consider the Covered Bridge and Farm Show Complex regarding their fit in MC Rec and means of support.
8. **Continue to provide capital improvement funds.** Although the formula will change, the capital allocations should continue and not be transferred in to the operational costs supported by the municipal shares.
9. **Begin to plan for the potential loss of the old Middle School by 2011.** Conduct a feasibility study to assess potential alternatives to the old Middle School should it be removed from use for community recreation.

10. **Work towards establishing and strengthening MC Rec as an organization with long-term viability.** Continue to track facts and figures about the benefits of MC Rec. Let all parties know what they get for their money and time. Costs such as utilities, benefits, materials and supplies continue to increase but the partner contributions are decreasing or provided with a cap despite rising fixed costs of MC Rec. Consideration for how the partners' share can be adjusted with respect to goals, objectives as well as with respect to economic measures such as cost of living indices are needed. Document and use the benefits of MC Rec to ensure the organization's viability over time. MC Rec has a lot to offer the municipal partners in terms of expertise and assistance. MC Rec could be involved in park and recreation planning as well as trail planning and development and other areas.

Alternative Direction

What if Penn Township carries out its stated intention of withdrawing as a MC Rec partner? The optimum future direction that appears to have broad public support is to continue the MC Rec partnership with all four partners. However, if Penn Township ceases to be a partner, MC Rec needs to plan for the impact of that scenario. Considerations include:

- Without Penn Township as a partner, MC Rec would still be capable of operating due to the non-tax revenues it generates as evident in its track record. It is likely that Penn Township residents would continue to participate in MC Rec programs, use parks and recreation facilities within MC Rec and partake in pool memberships and activities albeit at higher cost to them due to higher non-resident fees. While the operational contribution of Penn Township is \$60,524, MC Rec could still function due to the fact that the organization raises \$500,250 annually in non-tax support. Even if one third of that were to be generated from Penn Township citizens, that would mean MC Rec raising \$330,165 without Penn Township. However, additional revenues generated would continue to be generated from Penn Township participants paying as non-residents at higher fees and charges than the citizens from Manheim and Rapho would pay.
- Make provisions for municipal contributions for capital improvements. Without capital funding, MC Rec will be unable to pay for regular and emergency repair of facilities.
- Many of MC Rec's expenditures cannot be reduced such as grass mowing, sports facility maintenance, and pool operating expenses for utilities, chemical, and supplies. Even if MC Rec were to cease, these expenses would still have to be paid.
- Establish a fees and charges policy. Include setting non-resident rates based upon direct and indirect costs for administration, program expenses, advertising, and facility use.
- Explore the potential of offering a school district program such as an after school program, fitness and wellness and or environmental education in return for the School District paying a portion of the Program Director's salary and benefits.
- Explore the potential to raise additional funds through sales, grants, gifts, donations, bequests, fund-raising for specific projects or programs. While MC Rec already raises 70 percent of its income, the organization is vigilant about looking for new revenue sources. This practice should continue.

Appendix

Steering Committee Findings

Pre-Workshop Meeting

9-29-09

Participants

Dave Wood, Penn Township
Dave Kratzer, Penn Township
Brenda Faulhaber, Community Member
Jeff Book, Community Member
Michelle Stone, Community Member
Tim Ryan, Community Member
Doug Lowery, MC Rec Director

Duane Martin, Rapho Township
Sara Gibson, Rapho Township
Jay Kready, MC Rec Board Representative
Matt Parido, Manheim Borough
Bonnie Martin, Manheim Borough
Sam Parks, Manheim Central School District
Ann Toole, Toole Recreation Planning

Purpose

To obtain input from Strategic Plan Committee members regarding what MC Rec does well, what MC Rec could do better on, and priorities to address regarding MC Rec.

MC Rec: What Works Well

- Great parks and the pool.
- Lots of green space.
- Old Middle School is a great place for programs. Noticeable change since MC Rec got the old Middle School for programs.
- The program guide has increased participation and public awareness.
- Program participation is up.
- The e-mail system in place to notify participants works well.
- Great staff.
- Great parent volunteers.
- Serve different ages.
- Strong positive community identity and awareness.
- School district support and funding.
- School district support in maintenance.
- Maintenance and scheduling is under one roof.
- Good maintenance of sports turf and fields.
- Open communication.
- New facilities.
- MC Rec in existence for nearly 11 years.
- Do a lot with a low budget.
- Convenience in registrations and payment options of cash, check and credit card.
- Variety in programs and facilities.

- *Everyone is at this pre-workshop meeting and around the table discussing issues and opportunities.*

MC Rec: What We Value

- Centralized planning for recreation.
- Intergovernmental agreement is better than a 501 c 3 organization.
- Capital Improvement Funding of \$25,000 annually per municipality is necessary and works well.
- Major improvements in programs and facilities under the purview of MC Rec.
- Partners know they have to invest.
- Many different groups, such as sports, contribute in various ways; ie: field maintenance.
- Increased program participation and use of facilities.

MC Rec: What Could Work Better

- Strong municipal focus on acquisition and park development but less so on maintenance.
- Lack of consideration for long-term maintenance of facilities.
- Lack of communication about facility transfers. This is a gray area with no discussion. Added facilities drive up costs. Examples include the Farm Show Complex and the Covered Bridge.
- Concern about the potential loss of the old Middle School once the lease by the IU expires in three to four years. The loss of this facility will have a major negative impact in community service, recreation participation and revenue for MC Rec. School District provides operating costs.
- School District is under turmoil with change in Superintendent. Previous superintendent was most supportive of MC Rec.
- Partners seem to have lost sight of the big picture of what is important in the community citizen service, especially for youth.
- Lots of anger and hurt feelings over recent discussions and negative press
- Limited resources and competing priorities.
- Maintenance is duplicated and not as efficient as it could be.
- Aging facilities such as the pool locker rooms and the old Middle School.
- MC Rec responsibilities such as the Covered Bridge, additional parks, retired pool capital debt and so on.
- Feuding and negative press has caused poor public perception.
- Political atmosphere and the “need to be right” are non-productive and damaging to the community and MC Rec.
- Resistance to change.
- These are normal “bumps in the road” in intergovernmental agreements.
- Communication is huge.

- Come to resolution on the issues under discussion and move ahead in a positive manner.
- Need to get positive press.
- Resolve the negative press – it is a huge problem affecting the public and MC Rec.
- Issues include maintenance, funding and different government philosophies. Wears you down and makes you feel bad.
- Decide what is good for the community. Make good decisions and get positive press.
- Voice of the public is essential.
- Needs Toole Recreation Planning perspective on maintenance, contributions and comparisons with other operations.
- Address the funding formula of equal municipal contributions that results in different rates for the same citizens. This is referring to the municipal per capita share, not program fees and charges, which are the same for everyone.
- Citizens don't know the costs.
- Ability to pay needs to be considered.
- Citizens do not understand the impact if Penn Township drops out. If Penn drops out, they still pay school taxes.
- Should park planning be under MC Rec or not? If MC Rec is expected to take over the park maintenance, should they be involved in the planning process?
- It is important to continue regional park and recreation facility planning within Manheim Central School District.
- How can we bring the volunteers together such as MAA under MC Rec?
- Concern about branding and continuing to increase public awareness about the benefits of MC Rec.
- Maintenance should be separate from MC Rec.
- Municipalities decide what will be in their own parks.
- How do we catch up on everything? Things have been building up and now result in emergency attention to situations rather than scheduled routine management tasks now.
- There should be coordination to prevent duplication of facilities.
- Centralized location of park and recreation facilities in the borough works well for citizens and everyone uses borough facilities.
- Want to avoid future “residency/non-residency” issues regarding park use and program fees.
- People use facilities throughout the school district without regard to the location of the facility by jurisdiction.

One thing to Do for MC Rec

- Decide what we need to work on.
- Provide fairness in fees for residents.
- Address issue of Penn leaving MC Rec.
- How can MC Rec make up this support?
- Involve the public so that all citizens know about the impact of Penn Township leaving.
 - Provide a framework for here's where we are and here's where we need to go.

Community Organization Findings

Workshop

10-31-09

Participants

Lyn Carvell, Manheim Soccer
Jen Martin, Doe Run PTO
Mary Whiting, Doe Run PTO
Mike Givler, Church Softball
Marlin Becker, Farm Show
Kevin Stauffer, Rotary, 3T Security
Don Wenger, Manheim Rec League, Softball
Mel Graybill, Senior Softball
Bill Loercher, Manheim Tennis Club
Barbara Basile, Manheim Library

Ron Smith, Germania Band Club
Brian Smith, Germania Band Club
Jennifer Shearn, H.C. Burgard PTO
Traci Cooper, H.C. Burgard PTO
Donna Garman, Summer Swim Team
Dave Gibson, MAA
Pat Weaver, MAA
Brooks Hastings, MASC Soccer
Doug Lowery, MC Rec
Craig Merkey, MC Rec
Ann Toole, Toole Recreation Planning

Purpose

To obtain input from community organizations regarding what MC Rec does well, what MC Rec could do better on, and priorities to address regarding MC Rec.

MC Rec: What Works Well

- Lots of youth programs.
- Programs such as the summer recreation program for kids and after school rock climbing are great. The after-school programs are an especially good idea and should be expanded.
- Community pool.
- Citizens relate to the school district not to their municipality of residence. School district-wide parks and recreation works for the citizens.
- Good use of existing facilities.
- Coordinate effectively with the School District and community likes the school district being involved.
- Farm Show, MC Rec and School District all working together will help us to get grants.
- Community spirit.
- MC Rec works well with the municipalities and the community.
- Nice bus trips.
- Good use of old Middle School.
- Impressed with the communications in 2009 such as targeted e-mails to citizens regarding programs of interest to them as individuals, the fliers in the schools and building up public awareness.
- Special community events such as the midnight swims, concerts and Breakfast with Santa.

- MC Rec is good about being open to ideas, solving problems and anticipating and resolving issues.
- Coordinate openly. Doug and his staff encourage ideas and input.
- Collective management of parks and facilities provides “one stop shopping”.
- Collaboration on events with MC Rec, MAA and others.
- Doug is effective at envisioning ways to make things better for the community.
- High quality instructors for programs.
- In comparison with other parks and recreation systems elsewhere in Lancaster County, MC Rec parks and recreation facilities look great. Hats off to the park maintenance staff.
- Willingness to work with other organizations such as churches.
- MC Rec provides information about sports groups.
- MC Rec and community sports organizations generate good will.
- Provide summer jobs for youth.
- Competent staff.
- On-going improvements such as in Mummau Park.

MC Rec: What Could Work Better

- Keep MC Rec partnership open and flexible. Decision-makers need to be open to compromise and willing to hear each other out. All points need to be considered and no lines in the sand drawn. Do not demonize people and their opinions as this creates a defensive atmosphere instead of a productive one. Leaders of all three municipalities are open to negotiation. The board needs to get over things and move ahead. Frustration comes from not knowing.
- Penn Township residents do not know what is going on regarding the Township withdrawing from MC Rec. Residents want to be in MC Rec. They want to continue to be pool members and use MC Rec’s parks, recreation facilities and programs. Concern about pool membership and program fees increasing.
- No long-term goals or strategic plan.
- MC Rec is micro managed.
- Non-users don’t understand MC Rec and its value. Once you use MC Rec services, you understand MC Rec’s value.
- MC Rec spends a lot of time putting out fires. Seems to be a trend based on the issues going on with the partnership, the press and cloudy future directions of the organization, not the staff. Staff is competent and does a good job.
- Need to resolve capital funding and ensure that it continues in the future.
- Pool rental fees for swim team: not understood by swim team organization and appear to be high. Breakdown of costs would be informative.
- Pool locker rooms need to be upgraded especially the floor. “Waffle” type of rubber floor surface is preferred. Locker rooms are smelly.
- Mushroom/baby pool was closed in 2009. Informing pool users about the sound reason for closure would help in creating understanding of the issue. “The pool needs a drain retrofit costing about \$6,000 to meet new state safety regulations.”
- Look for other revenue sources. Example cited was Hempfield generating income from selling the naming rights to facilities.

- Although MC Rec has greatly improved advertising and public awareness, people still have a sense that they don't know all the things that are going on. Kids lose fliers. People misplace their brochures.
- Some organizations may not always receive the staff cooperation needed.
- Library has the same issues with stability of funding and the worry associated with an uncertain future.
- Need to look at all funding alternatives. Sports groups are seeing decreased contributions and volunteerism.
- MC Rec has four masters.
- Expectations of MC Rec are increasing while resources and municipal support are decreasing.
- Why doesn't the School District maintain all the parks and recreation facilities? They already have the staff and equipment.
- Fundraising is competitive. Many organizations are seeking the same limited dollar from the same limited pool of donors on an on-going basis. Consider establishing a unified way for recreation related organizations to raise money.
- Consider board composition. Suggestions including having a citizen board or a board run by business people. The premise was to keep politics out of the board to create objective board oversight.
- Offering too many new programs may result in decreased quality.
- Need rail trails.

One Important Thing to Focus On

Participants were asked to vote on the items of highest importance. The overwhelming top issue was keeping the MC Rec partnership intact. No other issues approached the significance of that concern to the community organization representatives participating in this meeting.

- Get the partnership back.
- Fix the pool.
- Keep centralized services for recreation school district wide.
- Combine resources under one umbrella.
- Audit use and participation in order to know who the MC Rec market is and direct services to increase satisfaction and participation.

Steering Committee Summary

Workshop Meeting

10-31-09

Participants

Duane Martin, Rapho Township
Sara Gibson, Rapho Township
Brenda Faulhaber, Community Member
Jeff Book, Community Member
Michelle Stone, Community Member
Tim Ryan, Community Member
Ann Toole, Toole Recreation Planning

Sam Parks, Manheim Central School District
Justin Wolgemuth, MCSD Board
Jay Kready, MC Rec Representative
Matt Parido, Manheim Borough
Doug Lowery, MC Rec
Craig Merkey, MC Rec

Purpose

To review project findings to date, view the public input from the community organization meeting and to discuss the key issues emerging from the project findings.

Meeting Summary

Ann Toole presented the project findings. She presented potential directions in funding formulas, maintenance and decision-making tools. The participants discussed these matters, provided input on future directions and worked to produce a strategy regarding the revision of the MC Rec funding formula. The results of this discussion are reflected in the body of this report.