

YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP

284 Briggs Road North

Middleville

BARRY COUNTY

MICHIGAN 49333

**COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION FIVE-
YEAR PLAN**

1/1/2018 - 12/31/2023

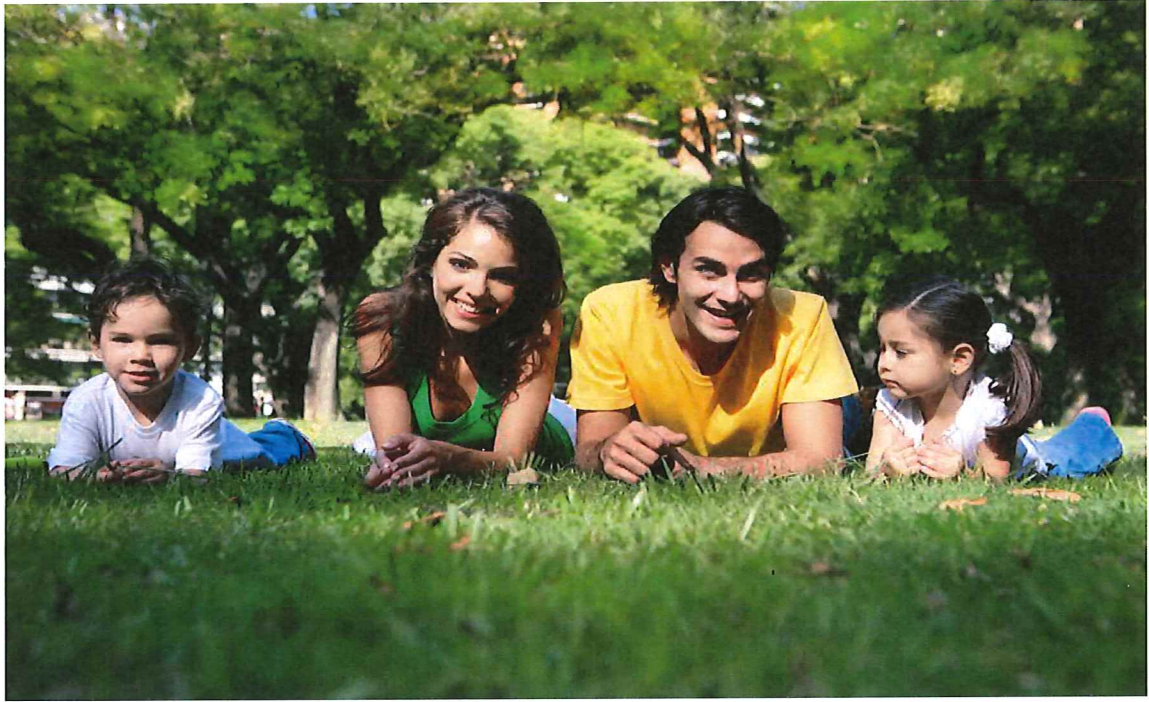
Adopted by Township Board of Trustees on 04.12 2018











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COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

This Community Parks and Recreation plan has been prepared for the single township of Yankee Springs, located in Barry County, Michigan. It is bordered to the north by Thornapple Township, to the east by Rutland Township, to the south by Orangeville Township, all in Barry County, and to the west by Wayland Township in Allegan County.

Following a considerable population increase between 1990 and 2017, the growth in Yankee Springs has slowed a bit, however, two adjacent townships (Thornapple and Irving) and the village of Middleville have shown significant growth. Many of the residents from these locations are regular visitors to Yankee Springs' recreational facilities.

Table 1
POPULATION: 1990, 2000, & 2010

	1990	2000	Percent Change	2010	Percent Change
Yankee Springs Twp	2,947	4,219	+43.2%	4,065	-3.6%
Barry County	50,057	56,755	+13.4%	59,173	+4.26%
Village of Middleville	1,966	2,721	+38.4%	3,319	+21.9%
Thornapple Township	3,260	6,685	+105.1%	7,884	+17.4%
Irving Township	1,1447	2,682	+85.3%	3,250	+21.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2010

There are no major villages or cities within Yankee Springs Township; however, it is close to the metropolitan centers of Grand Rapids to the north and Kalamazoo to the south. Expressway US 131 makes it convenient for both residents to commute for work and visitors to utilize the recreation facilities. Consequently this convenience affects the need for additional recreation areas. (See Appendix 1 for location maps)

Nearly a million tourists visit the Yankee Springs Recreational Area and the Barry County State Game Area annually. This State of Michigan-owned open space covers much of the Township. The land, lakes, and campgrounds receive heavy use, especially in the summer months. Therefore, the focus of this Plan is the development and operation of small recreational parks for neighborhood uses such as playground equipment, sports fields, social areas, and walking trails.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Role of the Township Board and Park & Recreation Committee:

The Yankee Springs Township Community Park is administered and financed by the Yankee Springs Township Board. An ad-hoc Park & Recreation Committee was appointed in April of 1999 by the Township Board to make recommendations and to develop a five-year plan.

The Township Board has the continuing responsibility of developing and maintaining the park. The Board also administers the Parks and Recreation Plan to insure that short- and long-term goals are met. The Board periodically reviews progress to insure that the projects are producing the maximum benefit to the public.

TOWNSHIP BOARD MEMBERS 2017-2020

Mark Englerth, Supervisor
Alice Jansma, Treasurer

Janice Lippert, Clerk
Roger Rottschafer, Trustee
(Jan – Oct)

Shanon Vandenberg, Trustee

Michael Boysen (Nov-Dec)

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2017

Kay Evans
Alice Jansma
Pat Kreple
Jan Lippert

Sandra Marcukaitis
Nancy Near
Cathy Strickland

Current Funding Source(s):

The amount of General Fund money devoted to the Yankee Springs Community Park Maintenance & Improvement is \$30,000 for FY 2018-19. (Appendix 2). The Township has received two (2) DNR – LWCF Matching Grants in 2005 and 2010.

26-01631	2004/2017	Received \$30,000 of \$77,854 cost
26-01695	2010/2012	Received \$49,986.44 of \$99,972.86 cost.
Cash donation \$6,300 – 9,000.		
Township General Fund --Picnic Shelter 2009 \$40,000.00		

Donations are received periodically from residents and others.

PARTNERSHIPS DEVELOPED & VOLUNTEERS

General Federation of Women's Clubs-Gun Lake Area Inc. (GFWC)
Eagle Scout from local Boy Scout Troop – Mike Wangerow
Barry County Foundation
"Day of Caring" – Coleman insurance Agency
Yankee Springs Golf Course
Landscape Impressions
Harrison Marina
Antique Tractor Club
Middleville Rotary Club
Dave and Vickie McKellar
Bay Meadows Condominium Association

The Role of the Volunteers:

- In 2002 the GFWC Gun Lake Area, Inc. Women's Club became involved in the Yankee Springs Township (YST) Park development project. Fran Leonard, then club president, chose the park as her special project during her club presidency.

In 2012, the Women's Club requested permission to install a memorial garden at the Township Park. This garden salutes the dedication of deceased club members. The Women's Club is dedicated to complete more landscaping project in the future.

Many club members participated in the Park dedication. Several fund-raisers were conducted & anonymous donations received that were kept in a special Women's Club account specifically for the Park. Clubwomen served lunch to the Antique Tractor Club members on the "plow, disk, drag & seed" workday. They also had workdays to spread mulch around planted trees in preparation for a fall workday that involved landscaping & planting shrubs, trees & plants in the fall. All expenses associated with the landscaping part of the park were paid for by the Women's Club.

- Warren Wheeler, resident, assisted with bid specifications and donated his and his team's services to help assemble the playground equipment.

- Eagle Scout Mike Wangerow built two nice benches for the park as part of his Community Service project in 2002.
- The employees from the Coleman Insurance Agency participated in the Barry County United Way "Day of Caring" by helping to clean up the park and plant spring bulbs.
- Carly Potts from Landscape Impressions prepared the landscaping plan and lent her expertise at no charge.
- Harrison Marina provided storage for the playground equipment when it arrived too late in the season for installation until the following spring.
- Cathy Strickland negotiated with Cascade Township for the donation of a dozen previously-used picnic tables that were being replaced by Cascade.
- Dave and Vickie McKellar provided assistance in obtaining several new park benches. The GFWC-Gun Lake placed the benches.
- Bay Meadows Condominium Association, located adjacent to the Township Park, donated a large number of trees and perennial plants to the park when the condo project updated its landscaping. The trees and plants were re-planted by volunteers.



RECREATION INVENTORY

Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory: The information was taken directly from the Yankee Springs Land Use Plan from 2007 and from the Parks and Recreation Five Year Plans from 2002 and 2008.

Inventory of all Community-Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities:

As of late 2012, Yankee Springs Township owned and operated only one recreational facility, the Township's Community Park located at 1825 Parker Drive, south of M-179. (see Appendix 3 for **Location Maps and Site Plan**).

The Yankee Springs Township Community Park is a neighborhood-type park. It consists of a 9.5 acre parcel with picnic tables, a half-mile walking path, a multi-sport court for tennis, pickleball, with half-court basketball, a softball diamond, a soccer field, and a paved parking area. In 2009, a large octagonal open-sided, metal-roofed pavilion was constructed with DNR grant funds to provide shelter from rain and sun. Water has been added and sewer is available in the street. Electric, cable and telephone utilities are underground. Landscaping improvements include trees, shrubs, flowers, benches, and signage.

Accessibility Assessment:

The park is barrier-free, accessible to people with disabilities. (#5 ranking)

Other Government-Owned Recreation Areas:

A large portion of the Barry State Game area lies within Yankee Springs Township along with the greater part of Gun Lake. The Barry State Game

area is maintained by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and provides hiking and biking trails and seasonal hunting and fishing opportunities. Water sports, public boat launches and fishing are available on Gun Lake. Deep Lake has a boat launch and primitive camping facilities.

The state-owned Yankee Springs Recreation Area contains a horseback-riding trail that is open to the public, camping and picnic facilities, boat launches, fishing and swimming, trails for skiing, biking, snowmobiling and hiking, hunting, volleyball courts and playground equipment.

Though the vicinity is rich in natural resource recreational opportunities, little is available in terms of facilities for organized sports. Orangeville Township, south of Yankee Springs, offers two unlit ball diamonds and playground equipment. Allegan County hosts a small park on the western shore of Gun Lake with a boat launch, small picnic area and playground equipment.

There are recreational facilities available in nearby Middleville and Hastings but their use is at full capacity. These growing municipalities are expanding their facilities as well to meet the increased demand, but in the meantime, many of their residents avail themselves of the facilities offered in Yankee Springs.

DNR Recreation Grant Inventory:

Grant Number: 26-01631
Date Received: April 7, 2005
Amount: \$30,000
Park Name: Yankee Springs Township Park
Scope of items developed from this grant and their current condition:

- Playground equipment (tower, slides, swings etc.) – excellent
- Installation of playground equipment
- Net goals for soccer fields – excellent
- Featherwood ground cover for playground area – good
- One-half mile paved walking path - good

Grant Number: 26-01695
Date Received: August, 2010
Amount: \$50,000
Park Name: Yankee Springs Township Park
Scope of items developed from this grant and their current condition:

- Multi-Sport Court (tennis, pickleball, basketball)– fenced – excellent
- Goals for Basketball – excellent
- Permanently-mounted Metal Benches – excellent
- Engineering & Signage

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

In 2001, the Township Board solicited and encouraged community input into the initial planning stages by mail surveys inserted into property tax bills. This was especially effective given the large number of second homes in the township. The Committee and public input centered on improvement and development of the existing Yankee Springs Township Park.

The Committee met on a regular basis to develop the original Yankee Springs Township Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan. Suggestions included the development of athletic facilities, improvement of access to the park in terms of parking and footpaths, playground and security features. The original Public Hearing was held on January 24, 2002, publicized in the *Penassee Globe* and the *Hastings Reminder* newspapers.

The Committee has continued to meet on a seasonal and as-needed basis since its inception for the purpose of receiving public comment, making recommendations, and overseeing the development.

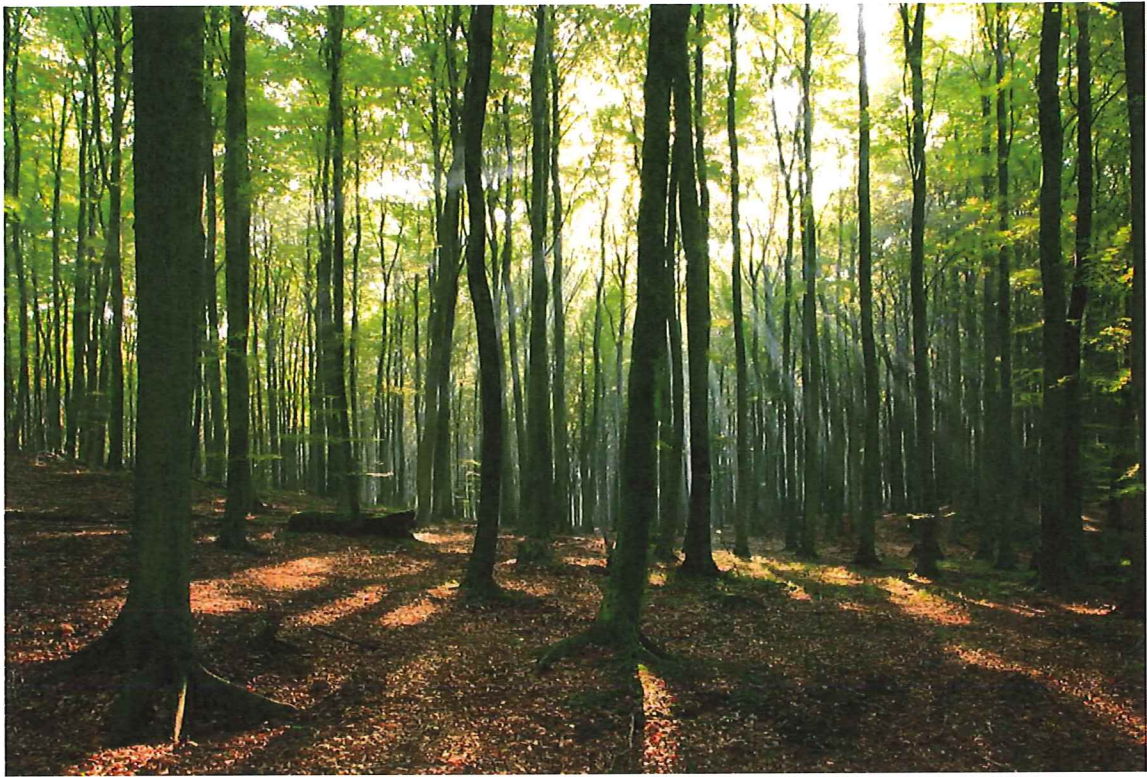
Description of Methods Used to Solicit Public Input - 2016

For the purpose of updating the Parks and Recreation Five Year Plan, the Committee surveyed the residents again in September 2016.

The draft of this 2018-2023 Parks and Recreation Plan was provided for general public review for thirty days from Feb 12, 2018 in the Township Offices. (see *Appendix 6 for printed newspaper notice*). Citizen comments were summarized and incorporated into the Plan (see *Appendices 7 & 8*).

On -----, at the Township's Regular Board Meeting, the Parks and Recreation Five-Year Plan was presented and adopted by resolution of the Board (see *Appendices-9-10-11 for published meeting notice, agenda, minutes of the meeting, and Resolution of the Board to Adopt.*)

On -----, a copy of the adopted Parks & Recreation Five Year Plan was transmitted to the Barry County Planning & Zoning Department for their information. (*Appendix 12*). It is intended that this Five Year Plan shall become a part of the Yankee Springs Township Land Use Plan and will be updated on a regular basis as a part of that document.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – FY2018 - 2023

Demographic Characteristics of Yankee Springs Township

Table 1 shows that population growth in the Township far exceeded growth in the County between 1990 and 2000, but fell below expectations in 2010 due to the recession and bursting of the "housing-bubble". Using a fairly conservative figure of 5% as a future growth rate, Table 1 below shows the increase in population to 2040. Given the historically high growth rate in the past (43.2% between 1990 and 2000) and the anticipated end of the current recession, it is highly possible that the projected growth rate could well exceed 5%.

Table 1
POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
Yankee Springs Growth Rate	2,947	4,219	4,065	4,268	4,481	4,706
Barry County Growth Rate	50,057	56,755	59,173	62,132	65,238	68,500

Source: US Census Bureau 2010

Population projections are important because they help to establish the basis for the rest of the Parks and Recreation Plan. How can we plan if we do not know for whom we are planning? Will there be more people or fewer people? What will their needs be? Do we need more land for recreation? Do we need more room for children's playgrounds and sports? What is the impact of the "graying" of our Township and how can we fulfill the needs of our seniors?

Average household size will likely continue to decrease and more residents will live in apartments or duplexes. This means that having outdoor recreation space will become even more important in the future. Availability of outdoor spaces increases the health and welfare of the community.

Age is an important demographic component to examine due to the service needs of the population at either end of the age spectrum. Table 2 presents pertinent age information comparing Yankee Springs Township to Barry County.

Table 2
AGE CHARACTERISTICS: SPECIFIED AGE GROUPS

	Yankee Springs Township			Barry County		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Median Age	36.6	37.3	43.6	33.8	36.9	41.2
Percent Under 5	7.7%	6.8%	5.5%	7.4%	6.6%	6.0%
Percent Under 18	24.4%	26.1%	19.7%	28.1%	27.2%	24.4%
Percent 65 & Over	13.6%	12.1%	15.6%	11.9%	11.8%	14.6%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

Table 2 shows that Yankee Springs Township is older on average than the County and grew significantly older during the 1990's and 2000's, according to the median age of 43.6 years. The fact that the Township is older than the County is likely attributable to the lakes and recreation area being an attractive retirement area. However, seniors tend to live alone as many are widows and widowers. Isolation from other people is a serious concern for our older residents. Therefore, the recreation plan needs to provide opportunities for seniors to socialize with the rest of the community through interaction.

The increase in the median age may also indicate that Yankee Springs is losing its young people, families in particular, which is not a desirable trend. We need to increase our parks and recreational facilities to attract and retain younger families.

The bulk of the population in the Township is in the 35-55 age group, which is consistent with the County and National age structure. The percentage of children under 18 and young families has slightly decreased within the Township. With only a slightly decreased number of families the need for recreational areas has not decreased.

By making parks available for exercise and sports, the Township will do its part in supporting the Federal and State government's initiatives to fight childhood obesity. Active children are healthy children.

Household characteristics also describe the character of the community. Table 3 describes the households in Yankee Springs Township and Barry County.

Table 3
HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

	YANKEE SPRINGS TOWNSHIP					BARRY COUNTY		
	1990	2000	%Chng From 1990	2010	% Chng From 2000	2000	2010	% Chng From 2000
Avg Household Size	2.67	2.68	0.4%	2.47	-0.09	2.59	2.67	3%
Total Households	1,105	1,628	47.3%	1,648	+0.012	21,035	22,551	7.2%
Family Households	931 (84.3%)	1,254 (77.0%)	34.7%	1,219 (73.8)	-2.8	15,994 (76%)	16,587 (73%)	3.7%
Married Couple Family Households	807 (73.0%)	1,069 (65.7%)	32.5%	1,043 (63%)	-2.4	13,481 (64.1%)	13,570 (60.2%)	.66%
Female Headed Households	60 (5.4%)	113 (6.9%)	88.3%	109 (6.6)	-3.9	1,612 (7.7%)	1,939 (8.6%)	25%
Nonfamily Households	174 (15.7%)	374 (23.0%)	114.9%	429 (26%)	+14.8	5,041 (24%)	5,964 (26.5%)	18%
Householder Living Alone	157 (14.2%)	295 (18.1%)	87.9%	352 (21%)	+19.3	4,104 (19.5%)	4,894 (21.7%)	19.3%
Living Alone 65 & Older	26 (2.4%)	96 (5.9%)	269.2%	131 (8%)	+0.37	1,613 (7.7%)	2,001 (8.9%)	24.1%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000, &2010, SF3.

Most of the statistics show that Yankee Springs Township is following the trends of slight decline that are being seen in most communities. There were insignificant decrease in the number of female-headed households and an increase in seniors living alone. The numbers are somewhat deceiving due to the small sample size, but these are populations that sometimes require special assistance such as child care, health care, and recreation.

With the changes that occurred between 2000 and 2010, the household characteristics in Yankee Springs have become similar to Barry County. The exception is Married Couples and Family Households which have declined somewhat significantly in Yankee Springs. Even though the share of family households decreased in the 2000's, the Family Household represented three-quarters of the households, indicating that there are still a large number of families in the Township. The increase in household size is comparable to most communities suffering from recession, foreclosures and relocations.

Table 4
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

	Yankee Springs Township	Barry County
1989	\$48,373	\$40,891
1999	\$52,661	\$46,820
Percent change (1999 dollars)	8.9%	14.5%
2010	\$68,050	\$52,061
Percent change 1999-2000	29%	11.2%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 & 2000, SF3.

While an increase of 29% in Household Income is substantial, it may also indicate that Yankee Springs is losing families in the lower income brackets. Residential occupation information such as this gives a clear indication of the type of jobs in which people of the community are currently engaged. It also shows the skill sets that are available to potential employers as they look to potentially locate into area. However, it should be noted that a majority of the labor force work in the Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, or Lansing metropolitan areas, and not in the county or township.

Table 5
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION --2010
Percentages in GREEN indicate significant increase; RED indicates significant decrease

	Yankee Springs Township		Barry County	
	Residents	Percent	Residents	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	28	1.6	772	2.9%
Construction	136	8.0%	1,844	6.8%
Manufacturing	301	17.7%	6,604	24.5%
Wholesale trade	103	6.0%	841	3.1%
Retail trade	141	8.6%	2,777	10.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	182	10.7%	900	3.3%
Information	0	0%	308	1.1%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	115	6.7%	1,622	6.0%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	223	13.1%	1,922	7.1%
Educational, health and social services	297	17.4%	5,258	19.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	88	5.2%	1,776	6.6%
Other services	62	3.6%	1,436	5.3%
Public administration	23	1.3%	931	3.4%

Table 6
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

2000	Yankee Springs		Barry County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population 25 & Over	2,786	x	37,132	x
High School Graduate or Higher	2,477	88.9%	32,217	86.8%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	440	15.8%	5,472	14.7%
2010	X	X	X	x
Population 25 & Over	2,926	x	40,325	x
High School Graduate Or Higher	2,690	91%	36,534	90.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	630	21.5%	6,815	16.9%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000, 2010 SF3.

Both the Township and County are fairly well educated. They both have a high rate of High School graduation, each higher than the State average (88.4%). The percent with a Bachelor's degree or higher is not insignificant; however, it is lower than the State average (25.3%) but is growing. Currently, the larger cities of Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Lansing are draining the county of residents with higher education levels. An attractive community with parks and recreational activities may serve to retain current and attract new residents with higher educational levels.

Currently, the average commute to work is 29 minutes as the residents leave to work in the metropolitan centers. The Township is working to attract new companies so that jobs will become available locally for the residents as the costs of transportation increase. In order to attract employers, the workforce must be well-skilled and educated. To attract and retain those well-skilled and educated workers, the community must be an attractive place in which to reside and raise a family. An attractive community has places for families to socialize, recreate, and enjoy the natural surroundings in its Parks and Recreation Plans.

Vision, Goals and Objectives – Accomplishments from 2008-17

The **goal** of the Yankee Springs Township Board is to improve and conclude construction of its Township Community Park for its residents and visitors. The Board **envisions** a Community Park where children and adults can socialize and participate in athletic activities, families can enjoy picnic meals, and residents can enjoy health benefits from both the athletics as well as a system of paved walking paths. An added benefit will be the occasional opportunity to watch wildlife and enjoy the beauty of the park's naturalized plantings, woods and wetland.

To this end, the proposed **objectives** for this Five Year Plan include:

- Build a picnic shelter, to provide shade and protection from the weather -- **completed**
- Complete the soccer field, ball diamond and basketball/tennis court. **Multi-sport tennis, basketball and pickleball court completed.**
- Install a handicap-accessible water fountain and restroom facilities
- Install security fencing to provide a safer environment for children
- Plant additional trees and shrubs to provide shade for park users and food, nesting and shelter for birds and small animals - **ongoing**
- Purchase of additional playground equipment
- Explore the possibilities for special events in the park, such as art shows, concerts, parties, farmers' markets, etc. -- **ongoing**

We anticipate the Community Park will have all the improvements made by 2019-2020. From that point forward, only maintenance and upkeep will be necessary to keep the park operational. The focus can then be shifted to assessing the needs for more recreational facilities for the growing population, such as walking paths and a connective trailway system.

TOWNSHIP PARK ACTION PLAN – Parker Drive. **FY 2018/19 – FY 2022/23**

The Township Park Action Plan specifies improvements for each fiscal year. Major projects over the next five years include renovation of the soccer and ball fields, new restroom facilities, handicap-accessible playground equipment, security fencing, and a water feature such as a zero-depth splash pad.

FY 2018 – 2019 \$30,000

- Run electricity to picnic shelter
- Purchase and install additional playground equipment – focus on handicap-accessible play equipment
- Purchase and install charcoal grills for cooking
- Plant additional tree and shrubs
- Signage identifying purpose and plants
- Shelters – birdhouses and brushpiles
- Small equipment storage building

FY 2019 -2020 \$50,000

- Apply for \$100,000 – 50/50 matching grant in early 2019
- Re-coat asphalt walking path (8 years old)
- Enlarge parking area based on park use
- Plant additional tree and shrubs
- Host 3 events in the park
- Develop small nature preserve on southeast corner of park

FY 2020 – 2021 \$50,000

- Purchase and install additional playground equipment
- Maintain and operate park for future use.
- Host 3 special events in park
- Plant additional tree and shrubs

FY 2021-2022 \$20,000

- Re-coat and re-stripe multi-purpose court (7 years old)
- Addition of water feature such as a zero-depth splash pad
- Host 3 special events in park
- Plant additional tree and shrubs

FY 2022-2023 \$25,000

- Various projects and maintenance as needed.