

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Department Heads Focus Group Meeting

June 6, 2018; 7:30 AM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. The parks in and around the Township are incredible
  - b. We have well-maintained parks
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. The two biggest park properties (Carter and Kingswood) probably have dozens of visitors/week whereas Cottell is smaller but probably has thousands of visitors/week
  - b. We have a logistical problem because we are scattered; therefore, we have some parks in the north (Fleckenstein) that is not as pristine as parks in the south because operationally, we are located in the south – this also creates a challenge for other Township departments (fire, police, public works, etc.)
  - c. The Carl E Rahe State Park is known to locals as a place for solicitation and it is dangerous; if that park does come to the Township, safety concerns need to be addressed because lighting is minimal and we have trouble with it during the day; it would need to be positively programmed with trail connectivity to make it a reality but there would also be increased O&M costs associated with taking it over
  - d. Connectivity over the river at the Kings Mills area – there is a vehicular bridge project currently being discussed, this could have pedestrian access as well
  - e. The Irwin-Simpson bridge is narrow and that needs to be addressed from a safety issue before pedestrians could safely cross it; it also connects to a park
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Programming in general needs to be available to all areas of the Township
  - b. Funding for maintenance of the parks needs to be maintained at a high level; if we acquire additional parks then funding has to be provided to keep it maintained
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Funding of the parks department for maintenance and program offerings
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
  - a. There is a safety issue with the Carle E Rahe State Park
  - b. We have to contract some maintenance activities to third parties so we need to make sure that we can maintain what we have

- c. For us to maintain the parks to the level that we want, and the fact that we outsource maintenance, it is scary to think about the actual costs to maintain our facilities because of how that would affect other Township departments
  - d. We have Procter and Gamble getting ready to employ high paying jobs and we know that we will have people that desire quality of life amenities and we need to make sure we can afford
- 6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
  - a. We need to look into field reservation fees – other cities, townships, etc. charge groups for field use so should we?
  - b. We need to look at revenue streams to support the system
- 7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
  - a. Funding sources are attached to every action in the Master Plan
- 8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
  - a. We need to make sure we hear the opinions that truly represent the Township population and demographic so we're just not listening to a select few with concentrated/special interests
  - b. There is currently no ROI for the Kingswood property because it was meant to be developed but it never has – it is a potential economic boost (revenue source) for the Township but it is just sitting there
  - c. Summit Park in Blue Ash, along with Washington Park in Cincinnati, is a good example of a park that is designed well with inclusiveness and connectivity in mind

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan Government/Business Focus Group Meeting

June 6, 2018, 11:30 AM

## Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. Good program offerings and it would be good to continue increasing these
  - b. Family programming and allowing them to do things together
  - c. The variety of parks gives people opportunities to make decisions as to what they want to do
  - d. Deerfield Township has a strong commitment to park upkeep/maintenance/responsiveness
  - e. There are opportunities for growth
  - f. The Township is willing to collaborate with neighboring townships for planning purposes
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Connectivity throughout the system
  - b. There are opportunities to connect neighborhood connections in addition to the Little Miami Trail to the Greater Miami Trail – local and regional opportunities
  - c. We need to utilize trails instead of bike lanes to create physical separation from traffic – there are many different types of users and trails facilitate more use
  - d. “Safe Route to Parks” concept – similar to “Safe Routes to Schools”
  - e. We need to create more of a “stay” for families – we have activities that people travel to but then they leave, we need more connected amenities and facilities to create longer lengths of stay
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Bicycle and trail safety/etiquette classes
  - b. More family-centric activities
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. There is no theater to serve the Mason-Deerfield area
  - b. A combination area that has a theater, outdoor space, and the ability to go get food, ice cream, drinks, etc.
  - c. Trail wayfinding system
  - d. Places for skateboarding

- e. Places for mountain biking, or at least something different
  - f. Destination playgrounds (all the way up to high school)
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
- a. None identified
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
- a. The ROYAL Theatre Group is conducting a capital campaign for \$8-10 million for a new theater and there could be a partnership with the parks system for a revenue-generating opportunity that is mutually beneficial; also, they are a 501(c)3 with a lot of corporate sponsors (40-50% of fundraising) that would be beneficial to the Township
  - b. The Kingswood property may be a good land lease opportunity for the theater and the Township (currently, it costs \$10,000/week to rent the high school auditorium which is expensive for such a small amount of time to have access to the auditorium)
  - c. Green Umbrella is a resource to utilize for grant opportunities and other funding that may not be attainable by the Township (Tri-State Trails) for pathways and connections. Green Umbrella is planning a Miami to Miami trail, connecting the Great Miami River to the Little Miami River. This new trail could travel through Deerfield Township and Mason, with a connection at Carter Park
  - d. Cincinnati Off-road Alliance is a good partner organization
7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
- a. We need to create places with experiences
  - b. Ensuring parks are quality of life amenities
8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
- a. Premier Health Bike Park in Lebanon, OH is a good example of a destination multi-faceted bike facility
  - b. Administrative building in Anderson Township, OH is a good example of a multi-use building that also provide opportunities for Farmer's Market and community gardens
  - c. We need to keep our local, homegrown talent here and that takes quality of life amenities

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## High School Students Focus Group Meeting

June 6, 2018, 9:30 AM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. Kingswood is nice because there's a lot of passive space and not a lot of programmed activity
  - b. Landen-Deerfield Park is a good size for softball fields
  - c. Like the mix of parks – there are nature parks, mix use parks, and sport parks
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Like the idea of not having so many subdivisions because that takes away from nature
  - b. Water access
  - c. Overall connectivity because the roads are dangerous and trail access can be limited unless you drive somewhere and then get on the trails
  - d. Overall perception of whether or not something is “aesthetically pleasing” will instantly make the experience better and will persuade people to take care of it more
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Kayaking, water activities
  - b. Markets in the parks
  - c. Concerts/shows in the parks
  - d. Special events in the parks – food trucks, lantern festivals, haunted trails during Halloween
  - e. Evening events at the park that align with eclipses, meteor showers, etc.
  - f. More designated natural swim areas or outdoor pools open later into the night for teens and adults
  - g. Opportunities to star gaze, catch fireflies – the simple things
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Big shelters (similar to the big glass shelter in Evendale, Shelter House) for reservations
  - b. There aren't any real facilities at Kingswood so use is limited
  - c. Sledding hills

- d. Amphitheaters
  - e. More trash and recycling receptacles (and even around trails)
  - f. More locations/spaces for social gathering, nature watching, creating art
  - g. More swings and slides (maybe more destination playgrounds for all ages – involves more physical activity features)
  - h. Art in the park (especially interactive)
  - i. Destination swimming pool that blends into the natural landscape, has lighting, sitting areas, and shade (could even be a “pay to play” facility)
  - j. Snack shops/food-beverage in the parks
  - k. Stacking of Hammocks, currently do this at Landen-Deerfield close to the amphitheater
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
- a. Landen wood trails can be a little rough with fallen trees/limbs
  - b. It would be nice if parks were open later into the evenings
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
- a. High school students need to have community service to graduate and there is an opportunity to have fun, creative events that will attract high school volunteers
7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
- a. Open the parks at night for special events such as star gazing, fire fly catching, etc.
8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
- a. High schoolers see so much technology everyday so it’s hard to be impressed with technology, so something that is aesthetically pleasing/scenic/beautiful really matters
  - b. Save Kingswood – open space with facilities that people can utilize if bad weather is around; a place that people can escape to and forget about reality

Which parks do you use?

- Landen-Deerfield – for softball and other recreational sports as well as hiking trails and the amphitheater
- Nisbet Park in Loveland
- Carter Park for mountain biking

Park uses

- Pokémon go
- Softball
- Hang out with friends

- Cross country practice at Kingswood
- Farmer's Market

What do you like about the parks?

- Quiet, serenity
- Woods trails, shaded, close to ice cream shop
- Trails to walk and talk with friends

Transportation to parks

- Most walk because of proximity
- Some drive because of the activity they need to go to like cross country or softball practice

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Q1 Neighborhoods Focus Group Meeting

June 5, 2018, 3:00 PM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. The higher use parks are well-maintained
  - b. Good relationships with sports groups
  - c. There are different experiences at each park so there is an understanding of what is going on at each
  - d. Deerfield tends to look at a longer vision and not just the short-term
  - e. The parks are sensitive to the neighbors – there are berms and buffers
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Programming needs to be better balanced throughout the system (ex. Fleckenstein Park does not really have anything going on during the day; people usually go there at night for baseball)
  - b. Fleckenstein and Robert Parks may be a bit underutilized
  - c. There are some parks that are lesser known than others (ex. Schappacher Park)
  - d. Access to water within the parks – the ability for kids to go fishing
  - e. Better parking
  - f. Plans for Kingswood Park (utilize the pond for events, gathering spaces, fishing, etc.)
  - g. Attention to tree and shrub succession
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. More formalized programming in the Q1 area
  - b. “Play 360” program in the parks
  - c. Food trucks, special events
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Cricket fields
  - b. Lacrosse fields

- c. Low impact games (ex. Bocce ball, cornhole, fitness path, etc.) and age segregation activities that are more social and maybe not at the busier parks
  - d. Amphitheater or some sort of outdoor performance space
  - e. Rentable facilities (indoor and outdoor space)
- 5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
  - a. Evaluate the pros and cons of operating the three small pocket parks because our resources may be better spent somewhere else
- 6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
  - a. Children's hospital
  - b. Proctor & Gamble
- 7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
  - a. Park offering diversity
  - b. We need a central gathering place (look into Kingswood for this)
  - c. Better park awareness across the Township – where the parks are and what they have
- 8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
  - a. Park priorities are determined and a sequenced structure is put in place that describes the update process to the existing parks (and the actual updates) and the full outlook of O&M costs
  - b. There's a nature playground going in somewhere?

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Q2 Neighborhoods Focus Group Meeting

June 5, 2018, 5:00 PM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. Deerfield Township is always accessible – whether it's about answering questions, helping us host events, etc.
  - b. Carter Park is maintained well, is always in good shape, and has a lot of usage but not enough people know it's there
  - c. Cottell Park is always busy, too
  - d. The parks are easy to leverage because we constantly go by them
  - e. New programming opportunities such as archery
  - f. Website is good and pretty intuitive to use
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Parking limitations at Carter Park
  - b. Marketing and services awareness for what the system has and where it is
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Ability for pick-up play/social opportunities for teenagers (like basketball as this is not dispersed equitably)
  - b. For kids – the day camp programs are received very well
  - c. Sport programs
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Community center
  - b. Amenities for small kids like a splash pad
  - c. Amphitheater for outdoor events
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
  - a. No real complaints
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?

- a. GatesAir, Inc.
- 7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
  - a. Parking
- 8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
  - a. There are 627 homes in Q2 Neighborhood – there is an “old” and “new” town

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Q3 Neighborhoods Focus Group Meeting

June 5, 2018, 7:00 PM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. The community has a positive opinion of the parks
  - b. Responsive parks department – upkeep and maintenance
  - c. Have ventured into innovative technologies (ex. electronic locks)
  - d. Have stayed on top of trends and are proactive
  - e. Wide array of amenities and opportunities throughout the Township (access)
  - f. Incredible fiscal responsibility – they do not waste money, but that also means we operate lean
  - g. Summer camps are well-received
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. They are short staffed
  - b. We don't have a "nature lovers" park anywhere in the Township
  - c. Define the Township, Warren/Hamilton County, State, and Mason park system roles/niches/markets
  - d. Connectivity via pathways system and not just sidewalks, but they have to be safe routes (especially referencing the roads that have fast speed limits)
  - e. Advertising on baseball field fences takes away from the aesthetics (existing partnership with MYO – Mason Youth Organization)
  - f. Fleckenstein Park is underutilized and people think is a Mason park
  - g. Connectivity to the main bike trail because a lot of places are cut off from it
  - h. Better parking at dog park
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Opportunities for mud runs and nature-based programs
  - b. Lacrosse fields
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?

- a. Pedestrian bridge over the road that cuts through Kingswood
  - b. A central gathering space
  - c. Amphitheater
  - d. Rentable, synthetic field
  - e. Ice rink/sheets of ice
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
  - a.
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
  - a. Potentially working with Warren County Parks to help develop Kingswood
7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
  - a. Awareness of all the parks – we have so many, but people don't know about them
8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
  - a. There may/should be an opportunity next to Cottell Park that is in a family trust and it has to be farmed
  - b. The school owns property and the neighborhood next door is very restrictive and so it's keeping the school at bay (can't grow)

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Q4 Neighborhoods Focus Group Meeting

June 6, 2018, 5:00 PM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. Deerfield Township staff do an awful lot and they do a great job with a very small staff
  - b. The parks are well-maintained
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Connectivity and walkability
  - b. We need to create experiences in Deerfield – this is an important concept for planning
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Concerts and events in the parks
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Outdoor amphitheater
  - b. An entertainment venue
  - c. A community gathering area
  - d. Some sort of indoor building that could help facilitate winter Farmer’s Markets, civic groups, etc. while also providing shelter during bad weather times during the rest of the year
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
  - a. None at this time
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
  - a. Corporate sponsorships – P&G, Anthem, Etc.
7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
  - a. A place where families can get out into greenspace together
  - b. An integration among work, play, and life
  - c. We don’t need a whole bunch of development in Deerfield because we have expensive houses, condos, etc. – what we need is to maintain the “freshness” of the Township

8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?

a. What if the Parks and recreation Department was a District, what are the implications?

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Senior Community Focus Group Meeting

June 5, 2018 11:30 AM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. Park cleanliness and overall upkeep/maintenance
  - b. Safety
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Prepared for a senior generation that wants to be outdoors instead of indoors (and will be more active in general)
  - b. Ability to notify emergency services from within the parks
  - c. Park connectivity among the system
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. Fishing activities in the parks
  - b. More activities for seniors in the evenings and on the weekends in parks and at community centers because seniors are staying in their jobs longer and don't have middays and midweeks open like the previous generation of seniors did
  - c. More activities to activate the parks (movies, concerts, etc.) and make them multigenerational
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Senior exercise equipment
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
  - a. Not really, everything is maintained pretty well
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
  - a. Check into Title 3 of the Older Americans Act funding sources at the state and federal level
7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
  - a. Ensuring the balance remains between active and passive because everybody has different interests (and crowding threshold)
  - b. Ensuring the parks maintain security features moving forward (lighting and police presence/consistent checking)

8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
  - a. There is a major sports development on 741 that needs to be taken into consideration during this planning effort (Otterbein?)

# Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation Master Plan

## Team Sports Focus Group Meeting

June 6, 2018, 3:00 PM

### Discussion Questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that we need to build on for the next five to ten years?
  - a. They are dedicated to their park system
  - b. The Township empowers user groups to get the fields ready when we need them – we have volunteers that can mobilize to get things prepared
  - c. The Township works well with user groups
  - d. The community has a sense of pride in maintaining the park system
  - e. The Fleckenstein playground seems to be well-used
  - f. They rotate Movie in the Parks between the parks
2. What are general perceptions of the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system that need improvement?
  - a. Ensuring we maintain our existing facilities and amenities – otherwise, we do not need to build new
  - b. Activities for all ages
  - c. Fleckenstein Park could be activated more; enhanced in general because the parks in the southern part of the Township seem to get more attention
  - d. There are a lot of youth sport tournaments that take a lot of field coordination – there is not one place that is big enough to hold everything as a one stop shop
  - e. More attention to park egress and ingress along with providing more parking to meet demands (Landen-Deerfield and Cottell Park need better egress)
  - f. We do not necessarily need more parks, we need to increase utilization of what we have
  - g. More attention to geospatial layout and supporting infrastructure (e.g., roadways) of the parks because our Township is so spread out
3. What are the key programs and services that need to be addressed in this plan
  - a. More active programming for 50+ age group, not traditional card games, etc.
4. What recreation facilities and/or amenities are most needed in Deerfield Township?
  - a. Pickleball – it is one of the fastest growing sports/activities around and it's for all ages
  - b. Field lighting to extend play into the evenings

- c. Synthetic fields – maybe even just infields for baseball because it would extend playability and would allow practices to start earlier in the year
  - d. We need more available parking at the active parks
  - e. We need more trees
  - f. We need more benches/sitting areas dispersed within parks
  - g. More restroom facilities dispersed within parks
  - h. More all-age facilities
5. Are there operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed in this plan?
- a. We need to have a Total Cost of Facility Ownership (TCFO) mindset to taking care of our existing system
  - b. Little to no rest for play fields (diamonds and rectangular)
6. Are there any community partners and/or funding opportunities that would benefit the Township?
- a. None identified
7. If you could change one thing about the Deerfield Parks and Recreation system over the next five years, what would it be?
- a. Deerfield Township has one of the top 5 park systems in the region
8. Do you have any other questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions?
- a. Do we have enough park land?
  - b. Should we develop Kingswood? Does it make more sense to not have that property as a park? Or should it be a park?