City Council update
March 16, 2021
PROCESS

AWARENESS PHASE  (May 2020–Feb 2021)
• Desktop Review + Mapping
• Park Inventory
• Stakeholder Identification + Public Engagement Strategy
• Public Meeting + Survey
• Analysis
• Needs Assessment

EXPLORATION PHASE  (Feb–Mar 2021)
• Concepts Development
• Stakeholder Input
• Concepts Refinement
• Stakeholder Input
• Public Meeting

VISION PHASE  (April–June 2021)
• Preferred Concept
• Preliminary Master Plan
• Stakeholder Input
• Public Meeting
• Finalize Master Plan
COMMUNITY SURVEY - WHAT WE HEARD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
A community survey conducted in December 2020 gathered input about the Middletown park system. It focused on current park use, recreation needs, and aspirations. To learn more about the project, visit https://www.cityofmiddletown.org/541/Parks-Master-Plan.

Who took the survey?
- Live in Middletown: 78%
- Don’t live in Middletown: 22%
- 90.8% White/Caucasian
- 4.1% Black or African American
- 3.7% Two or More Races
- 1.4% American Indian or Alaskan Native

230 participants provided valuable input using online and hard copy surveys.

Age Groups Represented in Survey Responses
- <5: 55
- 6-9: 64
- 10-14: 65
- 15-19: 55
- 20-24: 40
- 25-34: 74
- 35-44: 106
- 45-54: 72
- 55-64: 88
- 65-74: 69
- 75+: 12

CHALLENGES / OPPORTUNITIES
- Safety and security are a top priority
- Improved restroom maintenance is needed.
- Park facilities need to be upgraded so they are safe, universally accessible, and exciting.
- Facilities need to appeal to users of all ages and abilities.
- Examples: permanent restrooms; trails; updated and accessible playgrounds; shelters.

ASPIRATIONS
- Natural (hiking), paved multi-use, and blueway (water) trails are desired.
- System-wide connectivity to community assets (schools, downtown, river)
- Enhanced playgrounds and athletic courts/fields
- Examples: nature play, aquatics, dog park, and landscape diversity.
- Desire for festivals/concerts, sport leagues, children’s events, and outdoor skills classes.

STRENGTHS
- Middletown has a large parks system
- Well-distributed in the community
- Range of activities available
- Well-maintained park grounds (mowed landscape and parking areas).

What amenities draw you to Middletown parks? (top 5 shown)
- Walking/Hiking Trails: 44%
- Playground: 42%
- Events: 32%
- Ponds: 32%

What would you like to see in Middletown parks? What’s missing? (top 7 shown)
- 33 Safety/Lighting/Maintenance (19%)
- 31 Restrooms (18%)
- 18 Trails (10.3%)
- 18 Aquatics (10.3%)
- 17 Playgrounds (9.8%)
- 15 Dog Park (8.6%)

How will survey content be used?
The feedback, in addition to other stakeholder input and conclusions from a rigorous site/context analysis, will help inform the next phase of this master planning process, where the project team will test a range of ideas and share with the community for the second round of input.
SYSTEM-WIDE BASIC NEEDS, GAPS, ASPIRATIONS

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- 17 Playgrounds (9.8%)
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- 17 Programming (9.8%)
SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY: Parkways

Source: USGS, Middletown, Tri-State Trails, Butler County, Warren County
SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY: Boulevards

Source: USGS, Middletown, Tri-State Trails, Butler County, Warren County

Equitable Access & Connectivity: Parkways
SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY: Parkways & Boulevards

Source: USGS, Middletown, Tri-State Trails, Butler County, Warren County

Equitable Access & Connectivity: Parkways
SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY: Blueways

Source: USGS, Middletown, Tri-State Trails, Butler County, Warren County
SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- Blueways
- Greenway / Parkways / Trails
- Parks
- Gateway Opportunity
- Existing/Future River Access

Source: USGS, Middletown, Tri-State Trails, Warren County

Equitable Access & Connectivity: Greenprint
SITE OPPORTUNITIES: SMITH PARK

Initial Observations / Suggestions for Exploration:

1. Art fence opportunity.
2. Enhance habitat / vegetation around lake.
3. Uncover and celebrate canal with a focus on the park entry and museum. Hub with plaza, shelter, and parking in the Middleton Park style.
5. Consider improvements to parking areas (pavement).
6. Create accessible paths to shelters and restroom facilities (system-wide) in the Middletown Park style and coordinate new shelter locations with sports fields.
7. Expanded skate park with restrooms
8. Enhance lakeside shelters to improve revenue generating potential.
10. Hydraulic strategies to maintain pond level and potentially connect to canal stormwater feature to manage.
11. New parking area.
12. Teen activity area w/shelter; adventure play, climbing structure, zip lines, etc.
13. Clear brush, add lighting to make GMRT connection safer.
14. Existing event bus route.
15. Blueway Trail Along Canal
16. Expanded splash pad and additional playground improvements.
17. Enhance park ped entrance, connect to internal trail system.
19. Add pedestrian crosswalk to connect Canal Museum to public sidewalks.
EXPLORATION PHASE

- Share survey summary
  - Website
  - Advisory Groups
  - General Communications list & survey participants

- School Survey
- City Council update - 3/16
- Steering Committee Mtg. #2 - 3/23
- Public Meeting - 3/26-4/2