

2023



# Safe Routes to Parks Action Plan Shenandoah, Pennsylvania



# Table of Contents

**About this Plan**..... 3

**Engage: Involving the Community**..... 4

    Shenandoah Community Description ..... 4

    Community Themes and Vision ..... 4

    Safe Routes to Parks Support Team ..... 6

    Safe Routes to Parks Two-Day Workshop..... 8

**Assess: The State of Park Access in Our Community** ..... 9

    Summary of Existing Infrastructure..... 9

    Community-Identified Challenges and Assets..... 11

    Summary of Existing Plans, Programs, and Policies ..... 13

    Collision History and Data Summary ..... 15

**Plan: Goals for Improving Safe Routes to Parks** ..... 16

**Implement: Creating Safe Routes to Parks**..... 18

    Safe Routes to Parks Implementation Table..... 18

    Safe Routes to Parks Early Action ..... 22

**Sustain: Keep the Work Going** ..... 26

    Establishing a Safe Routes to Parks Coalition ..... 26

**Appendices** ..... 28

    Appendix A - Workshop Attendance ..... 28

    Appendix B - Safe Routes to Parks Survey Results ..... 29

    Appendix C - Safe Routes to Parks Walk Audit..... 30

    Appendix D - Policy Scan ..... 31

# About this Plan

The following action plan provides a roadmap for future work to increase park access and improve walkability in the Borough of Shenandoah. Schuylkill County's VISION led the development of this work through participating in the Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities 2023 cohort. Schuylkill County's VISION will continue to play a supportive role in advancing these community-identified goals, working closely with local government, key partners, and community members towards shared ownership of this work plan.

## Background and why now

In 2023, Shenandoah was one of four Pennsylvania communities selected by national nonprofit Safe Routes Partnership to participate in the Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities Program. This opportunity jumpstarted a community planning process to identify goals for improving biking and walking to local parks and greenspaces in Shenandoah. This initiative has been led by the local non-profit organization Schuylkill County's VISION in partnership with the Borough of Shenandoah and community partners.

For the last several years, there has been growing community interest in improving walkability in Shenandoah. Since 2015, Schuylkill County's VISION has been working with Shenandoah and community partners to improve health via Healthy Shenandoah, a coalition promoting improved nutrition and increased physical activity. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the coalition organized regular walking groups along designated routes that connected to local parks. These regular walks opened up conversations about the need for improvements to make walking safer and more comfortable to encourage more physical activity among residents. While the pandemic brought this work to a standstill, community interest and need did not wane, and participating in the Safe Routes to Parks process reinvigorated community partners to pick up where they had left off.

## How this plan was developed

Schuylkill County's VISION has played a primary role in this planning process, initiating a community survey on park access in March 2023 and convening community members for in-person planning workshops in May 2023. During the workshops, community members began to shape their vision for park access, define preliminary goals based on the available data, and identify the next steps for action. Since the workshops, community members have taken initial steps toward realizing their goals and sustaining this initiative.

This plan includes five sections:

- The **Engage** section includes a description of partners and the community engagement process to date.
- The **Assess** section includes a description of current conditions related to park access with a focus on Vine Street Park, Bicentennial Park, and Girard Park. This section also includes existing policies, plans, programs, infrastructure, assets, and challenges that were identified.
- The **Plan** outlines community-identified Safe Routes to Parks' goals and why they are priorities.
- The **Implementation** section includes action-focused tables to specify how the community is actively reaching its goals. Included is a description of early improvement action(s) that have helped build momentum for future work.
- The **Sustain** section contains plans for how the community plans to keep this work moving forward after the Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program's conclusion in September 2023.



# Engage: Involving Community

## Shenandoah Community Description

Shenandoah is a rural borough located in northern Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. It enjoys a rich history as a once-booming coal town. With a current population of 4,247 residents, Shenandoah has a small-town feel; it is impossible to walk down the street to a local park and not run into someone you know. The community is composed of a mix of multi-generational families with longstanding roots here and recent transplants who now call Shenandoah home.

Eastern European traditions shaped the town's historic identity as evident from still thriving family businesses like Mrs. T's Pierogies and kielbasa sausage from Kowalonek's Kielbasy Shop. Yet, in recent decades, changing demographic shifts have ushered in a convergence of various cultural backgrounds. As an example of this growing diversity, community members point to Shenandoah's annual Kielbasi Festival and Heritage celebration, one of the region's largest community events that now also features Latino-based folkloric dances. Residents also point to the integration of bilingual services offered at the borough hall and local businesses as indicative of a growing Spanish-speaking community.

Shenandoah is no stranger to change, and over the last several decades has weathered the impacts of declining economic conditions as coal was no longer a key industry. From 1940 to 2018, Shenandoah's population declined by 75 percent. Based on the 2015 U.S. Census Bureau data and the federal guidelines for poverty, 35.9 percent of individuals in Shenandoah live at or below the poverty line, and 31 percent of the population identifies as nonwhite. These demographic indicators qualify the community as an Environmental Justice Area by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Environmental Justice Areas are defined as areas with any census tract where 20 percent or more individuals live at or below the federal poverty line, and/or 30 percent or more of the population identify as non-white. With shifting demographics and pressing community concerns, this community context underscores the importance of engaging community members in shaping the community conditions that can improve the quality of life for all residents.

## Community Themes and Value

During the two-day Safe Routes to Parks workshop held in May 2023 in Shenandoah, workshop participants were invited to share their memories and aspirations as they related to their experiences using parks and getting to parks using a model-building exercise called "Place-It." Participants were prompted to create two models: to build a model of a memorable experience they had in a park and to build their ideal walking or rolling route to a park. After each build, participants shared their model, describing their memory or aspiration. Based on these individual perspectives, the group identified common themes and values that threaded their stories together.

*We define "connectivity" as the physical connections that get people safely to and from parks, and the social connections that bind us as a community.*

**Workshop Day 1 - Shared community theme and value based on the Place-It activity.**



These common themes included:

- Parks as places for young children and families to have fun and spend time together
- Parks as places to congregate and gather
- Embracing the generational differences of what parks should and could look like
- A desire to safely and conveniently get to and from parks by bike and foot

An overarching value, underpinning this theme: We define “connectivity” as the physical connections that get people safely to and from parks, and the social connections that bind us as a community.



**Figure 1 (left): Workshop Day 1 - Participants using model-building to discuss their vision for park access; Figure 2 (right): Workshop Day 1 - One of the models created by a workshop participant using found objects; Figure 3 (bottom): Workshop Day 2 - Participants created a “community quilt” as a way to discuss community strengths, values, and vision.**

## Safe Routes to Parks Partners and Support Team

An identified list of individuals, organizations, and agencies who play important support roles because of their roles in the borough and adjacent agencies can be found in the table below (Table 1 Safe Routes to Parks Partners). These individuals were also invited to participate in an in-person Safe Routes to Parks workshop.

**Table 1: Safe Routes to Parks Partners**

Partners	Main Contact Information	Role	Connection to Neighborhood/Community/Issue Area
Borough of Shenandoah	Tony Sajone Email: shen@ptd.net	Borough Manager	Community resident and borough manager. Attended Safe Routes to Parks Workshop.
Borough of Shenandoah	Leo Pietkiewicz Email: lpietkiewicz@jeldwen.com	Borough Vice President	Local Community leadership
Borough of Shenandoah	Joe Boris Email: jsboris@msn.com	Borough Council	Community resident and council member
Community Member	Rita Anczarski Email: ritabaldino@comcast.net	Community Member	A former life-long resident of Shenandoah and active community member. Owns former rail depot and applying for state funds to develop playground.
Downtown Shenandoah, Inc.	Susan Williams Email: swilliams@downtownshenandoahinc.com	Executive Director	Focus on economic development, and tourism, including façade and streetscape improvements. Attended Safe Routes to Parks Workshop.
Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance	Daniel Yelito Email: dyelito@nepa-alliance.org	Transportation Services Manager	Regional planning organization
Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development	Ted Ritsick Email: thritsick@pa.gov	Local Government Policy Specialist	Provides planning support for local governments. Attended Safe Routes to Parks workshop.
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	Charles Richards Email: crichards@pa.gov	District 5 Bike and Pedestrian Planner	Regional planner for state Department of Transportation
Pennsylvania Downtown Center	Sam Pearson Email: sampearson@padowntown.org	Healthy Communities Program Manager	Coordinates Pennsylvania Walk Works program for Pennsylvania's Department of Health. Supports and resources communities for active transportation planning



**Table 1: Safe Routes to Parks Partners (continued)**

Partners	Main Contact Information	Role	Connection to Neighborhood/Community/Issue Area
Schuylkill County	Susan Smith Email: ssmith@co.schuylkill.pa.us	Planning Director	Planning support for Schuylkill County communities. Attended Safe Routes to Parks Workshop
Schuylkill County	Gary Hess Email: ghess@co.schuylkill.pa.us	County Commissioner	Elected county official. Attended Safe Routes to Parks Workshop.
Schuylkill County	Boots Heatherington Email: bheatherington@co.schuylkill.pa.us	County Commissioner	Elected county official
Schuylkill County	George Halcovage Email: ghalcovage@co.schuylkill.pa.us	County Commissioner	Elected county official
Schuylkill County Chamber of Commerce	Renee del Valle Buchanan Email: rbuchanan@schuylkillchamber.com	Member Relations Director	Long-time resident and involved in various community initiatives. Attended Safe Routes to Parks Workshop.
Schuylkill County's VISION	Mandy Fitzpatrick Email: mfitzpatrick@schuylkillvision.com	Executive Director	Convening Safe Routes to Parks initiative in Shenandoah.
Senator David Argall	Seth Hubler Email: shubler@pasen.gov	Constituent Relations	Local senator and liaison attended Safe Routes to Parks workshop.
Shenandoah Valley School District	Brian Waite Email: waitb@svbluedevels.org	Superintendent	School superintendent interested in Safe Routes to Parks initiative.



## Safe Routes to Parks Two-Day Workshop

As part of the Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program, Safe Routes Partnership facilitated an in-person action plan workshop with Schuylkill County's VISION and community partners. The workshop was held in the Borough of Shenandoah's Town Hall over the course of two days, May 23 and 24, 2023. A core group of ten people participated (see workshop attendees in Appendix A). All sessions were open to the community and were promoted via social media and printed flyers.

During the workshop, however, what became clearly important to growing the Safe Routes to Parks team was addressing the current gap in bilingual representation. This need became evident during the workshop when during the walk audit, a Spanish-speaking resident inquired about the group and expressed a desire to get involved in the local Safe Routes to Parks work. Participants noted that there were not any local workshop participants who were bilingual. With that in mind, participants brainstormed additional partners to include with the intention to better engage Spanish-speaking residents as well as ideas to engage partners (see Figure 4).

### Community Engagement Brainstorm

- Local business owners
- Elected officials
- Parent Teacher Organizations
- Community leaders
- Church Bulletins
- Block Party
- Borough Council Officials
- Community members that frequent the parks
- Non-profit Organizations
- Schools via Community Service
- Parks and Recreation Committee (reestablish)
- Schools
- Day Care Centers
- Churches
- Service Orientated organizations like Lions Club, Rotary Club
- Residents
- School Administration
- PennDOT
- Hosting a town hall meeting in the park
- Senior Citizen
- Shenandoah Chamber of Commerce

**Figure 4: Workshop participants' responses to Day 1, Our Vision for Safe Routes to Parks**





# Assess: The State of Park Access in Our Community

This section includes a description of current conditions related to park access with a focus on Vine Street Park, Bicentennial Park, and Girard Parks. This section also includes existing policies, plans, programs, infrastructure, assets, and challenges that were identified via community engagement activities and available data.

## Summary of Existing Infrastructure

The first day of the Safe Routes to Parks workshop began with an informal lunch and community walking tour of local parks including Girard, Vine Street, and Bicentennial Park with Tony Sajone, Borough of Shenandoah Manager, Mandy Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of Schuylkill County's VISION, Ted Ritsick, Local Government Specialist at Pennsylvania Department of Economic and Community Development, and Rita Anczarski, community member. Below is a summary of the observations and discussion for each park.

### Girard Park

Starting with Girard Park, Tony Sajone described recent investments in the park including the installation of ADA-accessible walkways and surveillance cameras and an upgraded basketball court. Families frequently use park amenities like the basketball courts and playground area with swings. Nestled behind the park is a heavily wooded area that has some informal walking paths and acts as a natural barrier from Ring Boulevard (PA-924), a high-traffic corridor that connects residents to Shenandoah Heights. Despite it being located on a main thoroughfare, the park has a “cozy” feeling as it is nestled within a large tree canopy and with ample buffer between park amenities and the surrounding streets. With a small parking lot and a locally operated café, there is a mix of residents that both drive to the park and arrive by foot. The park entrance is marked with a memorial plaza and a tribute to local coal miners. Security cameras were recently installed, acting as mostly a deterrent to undesirable behavior and less as a response to reported public safety concerns. The park signs indicate it is closed at dusk and with minimal lighting, park users are discouraged from using the park after sunset. Directly across the street is the Borough Town Hall and public library. The park falls on the jurisdictional boundary between Shenandoah and Shenandoah Heights, so while the borough is primarily responsible for the upkeep of the designated park area and recreation structures, the informal trails in the wooded area that border the northern edge of the park are actually outside of their jurisdiction.



**Figure 5: Girard Park Site Visit, Workshop Day 1**



## Vine Street Park

Continuing the community walking tour to Vine Street Park, there was a stark difference in park amenities and connectivity. Vine Street Park is nestled into the neighborhood and is a smaller, pocket park with two basketball courts, a swing set, and two small sculpted animals meant to be ridden on. During the tour, the group noted missing swings that had been removed during the winter season but never rehung, as well as signs of aging park infrastructure like missing basketball hoops and faded play structures. Even though the park is within the neighborhood, it faces only garage doors, providing less natural surveillance or “eyes on the street.” The neighborhood street

along the park is wide for a neighborhood street, riddled with potholes, and lacks connected sidewalks. There is an informal goat trail through the fence of trees that students use as a shortcut to walk to/from the school. At school dismissal, the group observed older teens gathering at the park and locals had commented that Vine Street Park had a reputation for being the site of adolescent fights. There is no lighting in the park and similar to Girard, signs are posted that the park is closed at dusk. Lloyd Street, which connects to Vine Street Park, has sidewalks that are of various materials (asphalt, brick, concrete) and are mostly in poor condition and lack ADA accessibility like curb cuts. This residential street has low traffic volume and the group observed that walking in the street, close to the curb felt relatively comfortable with so few cars driving by.



**Figure 6: Vine Street Park Site Visit, Workshop Day 1**

## Bicentennial Park

Because of its relative distance, the group drove and met at Bicentennial Park. The park is located south of Centre Street, a state-owned highway that bisects the community. Because of its location in the community and proximity to the high-trafficked corridor, walking to this park does not feel particularly convenient or pleasant. The park itself is on Herald Road, which serves as a connector between Centre Street and Highway 924. The road lacks a designated walking area or sidewalk, so people walking would need to share the road with traffic. During the site visit, the road seemed relatively quiet, but it is worth noting that Mrs. T's Pierogies factory has two separate facilities on either end of the roadway, sandwiching the park. So, in addition to park visitors, there may be some traffic produced by those sites of business. Because of their location and general community presence, Mrs. T's Pierogies has been identified as a key partner for any conversations or plans for improvements to the park or route leading to it.



**Figure 7: Bicentennial Park Site Visit, Workshop Day 1, underutilized court**



The park itself collectively has a high volume of visitors relative to the other two local parks. Its amenities include a baseball diamond and sports field, and it is the predominant park space that hosts organized sporting events and community gatherings. Similar to the other parks, the site visit team noted that the swings had been removed and yet to be replaced. Also noted were dated play structures like metal slides. While the park abuts a wooded area with an informal path leading to it, the park itself lacks trees and the benefits of shade-producing tree canopy.



**Figure 8: Bicentennial Park Site Visit - Workshop Day 1, swings that had been removed during the winter and not yet replaced.**

## Community-Identified Challenges and Assets

### *Shenandoah Safe Routes to Parks Community Survey*

Between April 2 and May 20, 2023, Schuylkill County's VISION conducted a community survey to understand park access issues.

The survey was offered in both English and Spanish. Respondents were entered into a gift card raffle to incentivize their participation. Promotion of the survey happened both at in-person events including the annual Easter Egg Hunt at Bicentennial Park and the Help Harvest Mobile Food Pantry as well as through social media platforms and community flyers posted at the Borough Hall. See Appendix B for Survey Results.

### *Community Walk Audit*

On the second day of the Safe Routes to Parks Workshop, attendees participated in a community walk audit of Girard and Vine Street Parks. A brief presentation by Safe Routes Partnership staff trained attendees on what to look for during the walk. (See Appendix C for Walking Route and Audit Tool)



**Figure 9: Workshop Day 1 Photo of Centre Street taken during the Vine Street Park site visit. Lack of sidewalks and in the distance, groups of students crossing midblock during school dismissal without any marked or signaled crossing**

**Table 2: State of Park Access Summary Table**

The findings from the walk audit and community survey have been organized in the table below. Barriers were added from an additional discussion on Day 2 of the workshop, Charting the Path for Action. Strengths and challenges are the current circumstances that community members are experiencing when trying to access parks and greenspaces. Opportunities are openings to address challenges and build on strengths. Barriers are the obstacles that could hinder future work.

NOW	FUTURE
<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p><b>MAIN STREET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-maintained sidewalks</li> <li>ADA curb ramps and audible signal crossing</li> <li>Planters and beautification efforts on Main Street</li> <li>Greenspace and memorial area</li> </ul> <p><b>GIRARD PARK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree canopy and shade</li> <li>Gazebo for gathering</li> <li>Clearly marked entrances with memorial &amp; seating area</li> <li>Weekday evening use for pickup basketball</li> <li>Café</li> </ul> <p><b>CENTRE STREET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observed families walking</li> <li>Sidewalk condition</li> <li>Spotted a wayfinding sign to Vine Street park</li> </ul> <p><b>VINE STREET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Park is a pocket park and accessible for youth &amp; nearby schools</li> </ul> <p><b>PEOPLE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a “walking community” and walking down the street people see others they know</li> <li>The power of a group to do a walk audit – elicited engagement on the street!</li> </ul>	<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vine Street Park – Noted alleyway and goat trail clearly used as a shortcut for walking to/from the school through the park</li> <li>Meeting bilingual residents during the walk audit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance of Spanish outreach</li> <li>Take advantage of interested residents who are bilingual and further involved them</li> </ul> </li> <li>Need for more family engagement</li> <li>Reinstalling swings at Vine Street Park and Bicentennial Park</li> <li>Using Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside / Safe Routes to School funds to address safety needs like sidewalks and safe crossing</li> <li>Refurbish benches at Girard Park</li> <li>Address rogue walkway at Girard Park that leads to the street</li> <li>Use history walks to engage others</li> <li>Walk Works newsletter – subscribe for resources</li> </ul> <p><b>SUGGESTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY SURVEY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing ADA access</li> <li>Adding public restrooms</li> <li>Having trash cans</li> <li>Added seating, greenery, and lighting</li> <li>Updated playground and park equipment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Challenges</b></p> <p><b>MAIN STREET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intersection at Washington Street – geometry allows for speeding cars and long crossing distance</li> <li>Front in angled parking</li> <li>Abandoned bank driveway used as cut through</li> <li>Lack of ADA curb from borough hall</li> </ul> <p><b>CENTRE STREET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tripping hazards like stumps of metal posts</li> <li>High volume of traffic and speed</li> <li>Students crossing midblock</li> <li>Tree wells with no trees</li> <li>Chestnut Street – Unmarked crossed is dangerous and site of fatal crash of a child walking</li> <li>Bus stops lack shade or benches</li> <li>Some dilapidated building structures</li> </ul> <p><b>VINE STREET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor roadway conditions</li> <li>Lack of sidewalk</li> <li>Few eyes on Vine Street Park and missing swings</li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY SURVEY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Terrain is uneven</li> <li>Parks are difficult to get to</li> <li>Don't know about the parks</li> <li>Not kid-friendly</li> <li>The parks are out of the way</li> <li>Trash and litter</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local government involvement</li> <li>Safe routes more accessible</li> <li>Engagement and language barriers</li> <li>Priority of money to dispense</li> <li>Naysayers</li> <li>Language barriers</li> <li>Funding allocation</li> <li>Lack of funding for maintenance, building repair</li> <li>Amount of work needed</li> <li>Engagement of people</li> <li>Capacity and follow through</li> </ul>



## Summary of Existing Plans, Programs, and Policies

Existing plans for Schuylkill County outline broad goals for improving parks, greenways, and trails as well as planning considerations for non-motorized transportation. Below is a brief summary of each of those plans is below.

### *Schuylkill County Plans*

Below is an outline of community plans for the broader county. See Appendix D for a more detailed policy scan and specific goals that support Safe Routes to Parks in these plans.

- a. [Schuylkill County's Open Space and Greenway Plan 2006](#): Completed in 2006, this plan includes an inventory of open space, trails, parks, and greenways throughout the county. Plan goals include protecting existing open space in Schuylkill County and adding to it to establish an open space and greenway system; increase recreational opportunities for county residents and visitors; expand the existing county trail network; enhance the tourism industry; protect environmentally sensitive areas of the county; protect culturally significant areas of the county; and preserve scenic and historic transportation corridors.
- b. [Schuylkill County's Comprehensive Plan 2006](#): This is a comprehensive plan for the county. The plan works in tandem with Schuylkill County's Open Space and Greenway Plan, expanding on goals to support the development of local parks as well as considerations for non-motorized transportation as part of the county's growth management plan.
- c. [Schuylkill County's Community Health Needs Assessment 2022](#): This is a county-wide assessment that provides community health data for Schuylkill County. The analysis indicates overall poor health outcomes and high social vulnerability relative to other Pennsylvania counties. Schuylkill County's VISION partners with Lehigh Valley Health Network to assist with nutrition and physical activity priorities outlined in this assessment and to lead the effort to shift towards more policy, systems, and environmental change for sustainable health impacts in rural communities.
- d. [Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance Long-Range Transportation Plan 2045 \(adopted 2020\)](#): The NEPA Metropolitan Planning Organization includes four counties: Pike, Monroe, Carbon, and Schuylkill. This plan serves as the guiding document for the Transportation Improvement Program administered at the regional level to direct transportation funds. The document outlines planning implications based on available data and analysis. This includes planning implications for roadway safety, environmental justice, and active transportation.



## WalkWorks Program in Shenandoah

Schuylkill County has been designated as a priority county by the Pennsylvania Department of Health under its State Physical Activity and Nutrition Program (SPAN). Priority counties are those identified through evaluation of childhood and adult obesity, the prevalence of leisure-time physical inactivity, access to exercise opportunities, vehicle crashes involving pedestrians, percent of SNAP recipients, and race. See the [full map here](#).

Because of this designation, for the last seven years, Shenandoah has received additional resources through the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s WalkWorks program. Initially, this support helped Shenandoah organize regular walking groups along three different routes that were mostly along Centre and Main Streets. These walks highlighted for community members the need for improvements to those connections including addressing safety concerns along Centre Street, a state-designated highway, and the most direct route to one of the major parks, Bicentennial. The routes still exist but the walking groups have not been active since 2019.



Figure 10: Photo from WalkWorks hosted regular walking groups



Figure 11: Walk Works route highlighting a connection to Bicentennial Park



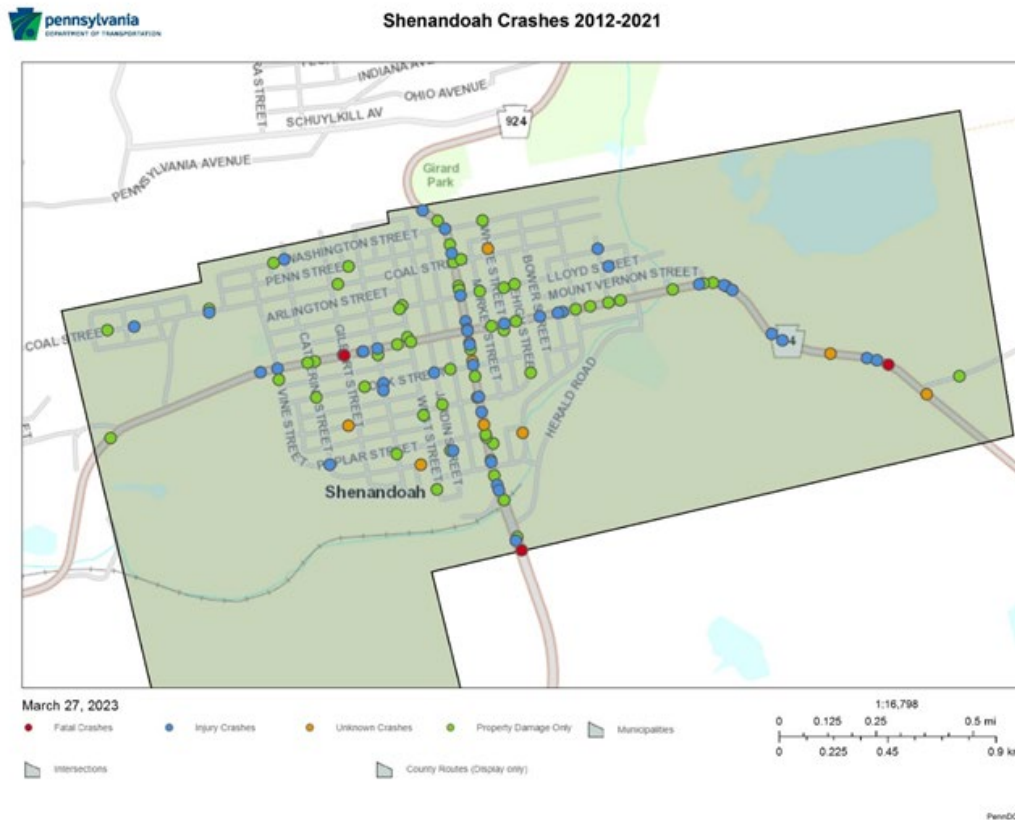
## Collision History and Data Summary

Crash data provided by Pennsylvania’s Department of Transportation over the last decade indicate that the concentration of all crashes that include vehicles as well as crashes involving a pedestrian or bicyclist occur on Centre Street (State Highway 54) and Main Street (State Highway 924). These are major transportation routes through Shenandoah. Rows of homes and apartments abut either side of Centre Street. Main Street is a commercial corridor lined with local businesses.

Depending on the origin of the destination, it is highly likely that someone walking to these parks would need to traverse or walk along one of these state highways. Park locations are mapped below in Figure 12. Girard Park sits along Ringtown Blvd which converts to Main Street (State Highway 924); Bicentennial Park is just south of Centre Street (State Highway 54) and Vine Street Park is just north of Centre Street.



**Figure 12: Three main parks in Shenandoah are located near and/or along routes that are state highways**



**Figure 13 Data illustrating all crashes over a ten-year period**



# Plan: Goals for Improving Safe Routes to Parks

The following goals were identified based on assessment activities completed to date. It is worth underscoring that a primary goal of this plan is to further engage residents in its development.

## Goal 1: Grow engagement efforts to include families and Spanish-speaking residents.

It was evident to Safe Routes to Parks workshop attendees, the opportunity to grow community representation in the planning process. There is a significant proportion of residents including youth and families who use the parks regularly and many observed walking to and from parks and other community destinations. Furthermore, during the walk audit, Spanish-speaking residents asked about the activity and expressed their interest in participating in the planning process and support for the route and park improvements, further cementing a need for further bilingual engagement and outreach.

## Goal 2: Address pedestrian safety and comfort on Centre Street.

The most alarming safety concerns during the workshop and walk audit were noted along Centre Street. Portions of the street lack sidewalks and curb cuts. Bus stops lack seating or shade. Workshop participants pointed out an intersection and unmarked crossing at (Centre Street and Chestnut Street) where a child was hit and killed crossing the street. The most pressing issue was observed during school dismissal as groups of students crossed Centre Street midblock with no signal or marked crossing to alert drivers.

### What Does Success Look Like?

- Success would be clean parks with increased use for all
- Seeing children enjoy themselves
- Sidewalks and walking paths
- Adopt-a-park/ buy-in
- Volunteers
- Safe, cleaner, more accessible walk/bikeways and parks and rec spaces that people want to use
- A safe, accessible, welcoming park and park access initiative that the public knows about, engages in and guides (pride)
- Crosswalks, sidewalks, wider sidewalks, lighting, signage
- Small wins that lead to larger projects

*Figure 14: Workshop Participants' responses to Day 2, Charting the Path for Action*





### Goal 3: Increase access to and improvements in Vine Street Park.

While Vine Street is a smaller, neighborhood park with presumably less frequent activity than the larger community parks in the area, it precisely because of its location and use, it has received less attention for maintenance over the years. During the site visit, workshop participants noted a lack of park lighting and a need for maintenance of courts and play structures. It was also clear that youth from the school traverse through Vine Street Parks as a shortcut, as evidenced by the goat trail path leading from the school grounds to the back of the park. Activating the park and doing maintenance and upgrades could increase its appeal as a neighborhood park.

### Goal 4: Re-establishing the Borough's Parks Committee

During the workshop, participants identified former and current groups already leading aspects of Safe Routes to Parks' work. Weaving their work together by forming a committee with representation from each of these groups would ensure coordination and maximize their efforts in advancing Safe Routes to Parks' goals.

#### What Are Community Priorities?

- Reconvene Healthy Shenandoah or form Parks and Rec Committee
- Community involvement and improvement
- Make the community feel good about children having a safe place to play
- Lighting and cleaning up Vine Street
- Making parks in town more accessible
- Ensuring safe and accessible connections
- Safe walking. Safe driving. Safe parks. Safe park equipment.
- Ensuring safe and accessible connections in community
- Creating smaller goals to be completed

*Figure 15: Workshop Participants' responses to Day 2, Charting the Path for Action*

#### Who Else Needs To Be Involved?

- School
- Borough council and mayor
- Faith-based organizations
- Bilingual ambassadors
- School district / school board
  - › Role as a way to reach families / bilingual community
- PennDOT district planner
- A committee of borough council. We currently do not have a parks committee.
- Anyone and everyone
- Spanish communication – media and social media outlets
- Businesses

*Figure 16: Workshop Participants' responses to Day 2, Charting the Path for Action*



# Implement: Creating Safe Routes to Parks

## Safe Routes to Parks Implementation Table

During the Safe Routes to Parks workshop, participants identified both feasible action steps that can be completed in the interim, as well as longer-term goals to work towards.

For instance, what rose to the top for short-term action focused on improvements to Vine Street Park to make it a welcoming space for youth and families. It is also an important route connector for students walking home to and from school. Longer-term goals identified included working with multiple stakeholders to improve pedestrian safety and comfort on Centre Street. Several actions were identified with participants acknowledging that these will take more time and coordination.

The implementation table (Table 3) below breaks down each community-identified goal into specific action steps with a clear timeframe, a specific lead party responsible for implementation, and ideas for measuring success.

The timeframe for implementation is defined as follows:

- Short: 0-6 months
- Medium: 6-12 months
- Long: 1-2 years

### What Make Your Excited By This Opportunity?

- Determine what makes the community excited
- Safe routes more accessible
- Cleaning up existing parks and safer environment
- The county and Safe Routes Partnership involvement
- The opportunity to revitalize this community and improve quality of live
- Opportunities:
  - › Tree planning
  - › New combined routes
  - › Grant Applications
  - › Events to use the loop route
  - › Tree tender trainings
  - › Lots of people and kids already walking
  - › Leveraging additional resources (Walk Works):
    - » Walk with a Doc program
    - » Pilot Cycling w/o Age
    - » Balance Bikes
    - » Lehigh Valley Preventative Services
  - › Ability to connect with Main Street with community assets and neighborhoods
  - › Actual community change
  - › Activating existing community events – block party, 5k, bike rodeos

**Figure 17: Workshop Participants' responses to Day 2, Charting the Path for Action**



**Table 3: Shenandoah Safe Routes to Parks Implementation**

Goal 1: Grow engagement efforts to include families and Spanish-speaking residents						
Action	Time Frame	Lead Role	Supporting Roles	Resources	Costs (Money, Time, and Resources)	How Will We Measure Success?
Identify a bilingual liaison(s) to assist with outreach and engagement activities by partnering with entities serving Spanish-speaking residents	Short	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah, School district, Local non-profits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Borough hall clerk is bilingual and could potentially assist in outreach/disseminating information</li> <li>School district as partner to reach families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation from Spanish-speaking residents</li> <li>Cultivated partnerships like the school district who have translators and serve Spanish-speaking families.</li> </ul>
Identify already planned or upcoming community events or gathering spaces (ie. parks) to do engagement	Short	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah, School district, Local non-profits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in two events to collect further feedback on Safe Routes to Parks goals by October 31, 2023.</li> </ul>
Once a bilingual liaison is established, follow up with residents who identified interest during the walk audit	Short	Parks Committee	Renee del Valle Buchanan, Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing engagement with interested residents</li> </ul>
Host bilingual/Spanish walk audit with community members	Medium	Parks Committee	Schuylkill County's VISION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schuylkill County's VISION can assist with materials for walk audit</li> <li>Safe Routes to Parks Walk Audit Toolkits– <a href="#">English / Spanish</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> <li>Printing and promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete at least one walk audit with bilingual/ Spanish-speaking residents</li> <li>Include additional walk audit and assessment to Bicentennial Park</li> </ul>
Apply community engagement activities used during the Safe Routes to Parks workshop like Place-It, Community quilt, etc.	Short	Parks Committee	Schuylkill County's VISION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">A Place-It! Guide to Safe Routes</a></li> <li><a href="#">Safe Routes Community Engagement Cards</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed activities that build excitement and collect community input on park access</li> </ul>
Recruit a bilingual volunteer or staff to participate in the parks committee	Medium	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bilingual representation on established committee</li> </ul>
Establish a partnership with Mrs. T's Pierogies for sponsorship of community events and engagement	Medium	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs. T's Pierogies is an engaged and supportive partner</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Shenandoah Safe Routes to Parks Implementation**

Goal 2: Address pedestrian safety and comfort on Centre Street						
Action	Time Frame	Lead Role	Supporting Roles	Resources	Costs (Money, Time, and Resources)	How Will We Measure Success?
Convene meeting with PennDOT and School District to discuss concerns, solutions, and next steps	Short	Schuylkill County's VISION	Borough of Shenandoah, School District, PennDOT		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial meeting to make connections and identify next steps</li> </ul>
Participate in PennDOT's Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment	Short	Borough of Shenandoah; Schuylkill County Planning	Schuylkill County's VISION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highway Safety Improvement Funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community priorities for safety included in final assessment</li> </ul>
Complete sidewalks from Vine Street to the schools	Long	PennDOT & Borough of Shenandoah	School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds for Safe Routes to School</li> <li>DCED Multi-Modal Funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately 1300 feet of linear sidewalk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved walking conditions</li> </ul>
Improve midblock crossing in front of school	Long	PennDOT & Borough of Shenandoah	School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds for Safe Routes to School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependent on crossing treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration with Borough, PennDOT and School District to identify and implement solutions</li> </ul>
Develop a Safe Routes to School specific plan that connects students to/from school and parks	Long	School District & Borough of Shenandoah	PennDOT, WalkWorks, PA Department of Community and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds for Safe Routes to School</li> <li>WalkWorks Active Transportation Plan Grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time and coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A list of identified priorities to improve safety and comfort for students walking</li> </ul>
Add shelters at existing bus stops	Long	Schuylkill Transportation System and Borough	PennDOT & Borough of Shenandoah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DCED Multi-Modal Funds</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of two shelters at Ferguson Street on both sides of the street</li> </ul>
Enhance crossing at unmarked intersections (Chestnut Street is one location)	Long	PennDOT & Borough of Shenandoah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside funds for Safe Routes to School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer time / staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decreased crashes involving people walking</li> <li>Increased number of people walking</li> </ul>
Utilize existing tree wells to add trees	Medium	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependent on the type of vegetation and maintenance</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reutilizing or repurposing tree wells on West Centre Street</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Shenandoah Safe Routes to Parks Implementation**

Goal 3: Increase access to and improvements in Vine Street Park						
Action	Time Frame	Lead Role	Supporting Roles	Resources	Costs (Money, Time, and Resources)	How Will We Measure Success?
Meet with DCNR District Planner to identify grant funds and resources	Short	Schuylkill County's VISION; Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteer / Staff Time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial meeting with district planner to establish connection</li> </ul>
Reinstall swings	Short	Borough of Shenandoah	Parks Committee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing a seasonal checklist to ensure swings get reinstalled every Spring</li> </ul>
Add lighting	Medium	Borough of Shenandoah	Parks Committee; PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with DCNR on grant funds for lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time</li> <li>Dependent on lighting costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved public safety with a well-lit park space</li> </ul>
Reinstall basketball nets	Short	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time</li> <li>Material costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full use of courts for recreation</li> </ul>
Repurpose one of the two courts. Work with the community to determine use.	Medium	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time</li> <li>Material costs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full use of courts for recreation</li> </ul>
Organize Community Work Day to Include brush clean up and beautification	Ongoing	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah; 462 Clean Up Crew		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and/or volunteer time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established maintenance schedule for brush clean up</li> </ul>
Engagement activities with partners and neighbors on park needs and desires for future improvements this can include a pop-up park and/or park activation, a survey disseminated by the school, a presentation to school PTO, door-to-door outreach, etc.	Short to Medium	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah; School District; Shenandoah Little League	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">A Place-It! Guide to Safe Routes</a></li> <li><a href="#">Safe Routes Community Engagement Cards</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and/or volunteer time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have identified how the park is used by families and youth</li> <li>Identified needs and desires for improved park</li> </ul>
Adding placemaking elements and art to engage the community and create a sense of place both in the park and on routes leading to the park	Long	Parks Committee	Borough of Shenandoah; PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and/or volunteer time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addition of elements such as: painted mural trash cans, permanent or temporary artistic signage that marks the park entrance and wayfinding to the park</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Shenandoah Safe Routes to Parks Implementation**

Goal 4: Reestablishing the Borough's Parks Committee						
Action	Time Frame	Lead Role	Supporting Roles	Resources	Costs (Money, Time, and Resources)	How Will We Measure Success?
Presentation to Borough Council to determine approval	Short	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)	Renee Buchanan (Schuylkill County Chamber of Commerce)		• Staff time	• Motion to reestablish Parks Committee
Meet with selected partners to gauge capacity and interest	Short	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)	Renee Buchanan (Schuylkill County Chamber of Commerce)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eric Beeker – chair of former parks committee</li> <li>• 462 Clean Up Crew</li> </ul>	• Staff and volunteer time	• Establishing partners who can commit time to participate
Establish a meeting schedule for regularly monthly meetings	Short	Parks Committee	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)		• Staff and volunteer time	• Establishing partners who can commit time to participate
Review Safe Routes to Parks Action Plan and refine workplan and priorities	Short	Parks Committee	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)		• Staff and volunteer time	• Finalized action plan to present to borough council
Present Safe Routes to Parks Action Plan to Borough Council	Short	Parks Committee	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)		• Staff and volunteer time	• Adoption of action plan goals
Recruit new members with a focus on ensuring bilingual representation	Ongoing	Parks Committee	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)		• Staff and volunteer time	• Bilingual representation on the Parks Committee
Establish ongoing bilingual communications via social media and other networks	Ongoing	Mandy Fitzpatrick (Schuylkill County's VISION)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing social media platforms and following for Healthy Shenandoah coalition</li> <li>• Bilingual liaison and community partners to assist with translation</li> </ul>	• Staff and volunteer time	

## Safe Routes to Parks Early Actions

Workshop participants identified key partners and tasks to continue to advance their community goals.

Since the workshop, the following early actions have been completed:

- Presentation about Safe Routes to Parks and recap of the workshop session to the borough council (May 2023)
- Presentation to school board (May 31, 2023)
- Ongoing engagement and conversation with school superintendent
- Convening key stakeholders as part of the Parks Committee (July 27, 2023)
- Participation in PennDOT's VRU Safety Assessment (August 21, 2023)
- Planning and implementation of three pop-up park engagement activities to collect community feedback:
  - › August 16th (17th rain date), 2023: Ice Cream Social at Vine Street Park.
  - › October 3, 2023: Shenandoah Public Health and Safety Night on Washington Street (near Girard Park)
  - › TBD: Bicentennial Park pop-up event

Early actions currently being planned include:

- Conducting a pop-up event at Bicentennial to engage all ages. This will be either a standalone event or in partnership with an existing fall event. It can include but not limited to a temporary (for trial purposes) traffic garden or skateboard course; pickleball on old tennis court, bocce ball pit (school district is forming a league for 2024 season), other yard games (cornhole, yardzee, etc.); and game tables (chess, checkers, etc.).
- Working with Boy Scouts to repair benches at Girard and Bicentennial parks. Additionally, create a map of the dedication bricks and the Miner's Memorial. In a meeting it was

### 4-3-2-1 Path for Action Brainstorm Activity

#### Four Partners:

- School District
- PennDOT
- Regional Planning Organization – NEPA Alliance
- Borough Council

#### Three Values:

- Safety
- Connectivity
- Opportunity

#### Two Resources:

- 462 Clean-up Crew
- Healthy Shenandoah
- Eric Beeker (former chair of Parks Committee)
- Safe Routes to School/Parks
- News and Media: Sku News Shenandoah Sentinel, Spanish news outlets
- Walk Works
- DCED + NEPA Alliance
- State Rep. Argall's Office
- PennDOT Connects

#### One Action:

- Convene meeting with PennDOT/RPO/Planning
- Reach out to school district and attend school board meeting on May 31, 2023
- Find out next steps for Safe Routes to School Application
- Create Safe Routes to School Plan and/or engage PennDOT Connects
- Follow-up with Community Members
- Attend Borough council meeting

**Figure 18: Workshop Participants' responses to Day 2, Action Brainstorm – collective and individual response to the following prompt: identify four partners to reach out to, three values that guide this work, two resources to tap into, and one action that can be taken in the next three months**



mentioned that people purchased bricks and often ask how to find their specific brick, but it was never mapped out. A meeting is planned with the new regional Boy Scouts of America leader to discuss these and other possible projects.

- Working with Pennsylvania's Service Forester and the county's Shade Tree Commission to plot and plan shade tree installations at Bicentennial Park.
- Working with the borough to review and price repairs and improvements that funding will assist with making. This will include but is not limited to purchasing a slide to remove the damaged slide at Girard Park and possibly replace it, installing a basketball pole and net, as well as replacing the existing opposite court net on Vine Street basketball court, applying a fresh coat of paint on existing equipment, and adding permanent hopscotch or other pavement games on one of the Vine Street courts.
- Work with the school district on a Safe Routes billboard or yard sign campaign to remind drivers of active school zones along Centre Street connecting the school and Vine Street Park.

**Figure 19 (top right): Pop-Up event in Vine Street Park engages families in the neighborhood**

**Figure 20 (bottom left): Community members think and talk about how they would like to use the park**

**Figure 21 (bottom right): Community members provide input on what they would like to see in the parks**



## Pop-Up Event and Ice Cream Social at Vine Street Park

On August 16, 2023, Schuylkill County's Vision and the Parks Committee hosted an ice cream social in Vine Street Park. They estimate about 90 individuals attended, many of them were unsupervised youth and kids. Initially, attendance was slow, but committee volunteers spread the word quickly with door-to-door outreach. The Parks Committee set up a dot voting board offering ideas for park amenities in Vine Street Park to gauge current use and interest in other types of park features. Immediate outcomes of this early action included the engagement of Spanish-speaking families as the committee recruited a bilingual resident to help with engagement and translation; collaboration with the Parks Committee and School District who were in attendance and enthusiastic about being there; observing so many kids and youth riding their bikes in the community for recreation; and new ideas about park use including repurposing one of the two basketball courts. Organizers realized that the event conflicted with sports events happening at the same time at Bicentennial Park. With that in mind, they plan to do a subsequent pop-up event at Bicentennial Park in the coming months, knowing that the park has regular attendance by families because it hosts so many sporting events. A few photos from the event are below. [Click here to see more event photos.](#)





Table 4: Implementing Early Actions Table

Early Action: Pop-Up Engagement Series	
<b>Describe the action. What do you plan to do?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a series of pop-events to understand the needs of community members on park access</li> <li>2. Work with the school district on Safe Routes billboard/yard sign campaign to encourage safe driving behavior near the school and Vine Street Park</li> </ol>
<b>What group or agency is responsible or has the most influence over the outcome?</b>	One of the expected outcomes of these early actions is to strengthen the role of the parks committee and engage key partners like the Borough staff and school district.
<b>What groups or agencies should be aware or a part of the outcome?</b>	Shenandoah Borough manager and council members
<b>How will you engage residents during planning, implementation, and after the change has been made?</b>	Input will be collected during the pop-up engagement events using dot voting on priority amenities. The Parks Committee has also identified a bilingual volunteer to assist with outreach.
<b>What is the timeline?</b>	These early actions are anticipated to be completed by end of October 2023 or soon thereafter.
<b>How will you measure the impact of this change on people of color, low-income communities, and other marginalized populations?</b>	The intention is that these pop-up events will engage a diversity of audiences including youth and families.
<b>How will this generate momentum to further implement this plan/Safe Routes to Parks efforts? What steps should you take to ensure that it does?</b>	Early actions are planned to respond to community feedback including repairs to park structures, planting of trees and maintenance.



# Sustain: Keep the Work Going

This plan is a useful tool, but it's only the beginning of the Safe Routes to Parks efforts. This section contains ideas for ensuring that work continues.

## Establishing a Safe Routes to Parks Coalition

During the workshop, participants agreed that a defining challenge was the need for sustained community support and volunteer time to advance plan goals. Participants agreed that instead of reinventing a new coalition, reviving the former Parks committee and bringing in other groups to build on what had been an active community-led effort could help to reduce duplication of efforts and maximize impact.

There are three existing groups or initiatives that were identified that could serve as the backbone to continue the Safe Routes to Parks work as the Parks Committee in Shenandoah:


- **Healthy Shenandoah:** The community coalition had worked to promote health initiatives in Shenandoah and had participated in the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Walk Works program. As part of Walk Works, they organized and promoted regularly scheduled group walks along designated routes, several of which connected to the local parks. While this group has not met regularly since the pandemic, members of this former coalition are interested in Safe Routes to Parks. There is some existing infrastructure like logo and social media accounts that can be used for communication and promotion.
- **462 Clean-Up Crew:** The crew is a Facebook group consisting of Shenandoah Area residents, used to bring the residents to scheduled, recruit and participate in cleanups. The project stressing the need to be ongoing and assume efforts as often as possible by taking responsibility and maintaining cleanup efforts. The group was created in September 2021 and currently has 654 members. Group administrators can be reached via the group page and messenger.
- **Shenandoah Borough Parks Committee:** Through the Safe Routes project it has been recommended to borough council to convene a Parks Committee that consists of borough staff and council, Healthy Shenandoah and 462 Cleanup Crew members, and other interested community members to oversee the existing and any new parks/playgrounds in the borough. This committee would meet to make improvements, address issues, plan programming, and seek funding for improvements or expansions. The borough supports the committee formation but has not identified a lead contact.



Table 5: Sustaining Safe Routes to Parks Table


Sustaining Activities				
How will you sustain your efforts and expand to additional parks?	What actions will you take to keep this moving forward?	Who has influence over or is key in moving the sustaining activity forward?	What partners can support you in moving this sustaining activity forward?	What help do you need to move this sustaining activity forward (e.g., resources, technical assistance)?
<b>Policy change (creating new or updating existing policies)</b>	Adopting a Parks committee	Borough Council	Partner organizations	Support from the Borough (they have already voted to reinstate the committee)
<b>Funding needs (apply for grants, appropriate or reallocate budget funds)</b>	Apply for Transportation Alternative Funds – Safe Routes to School funds in two years (2025)	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (Ted Ritsick)</li> <li>• WalkWorks(Sam Pearson)</li> </ul>	Pre-planning assistance to identify specific solutions to midblock crossing on Centre Street
<b>Partnerships (Formal or informal agreements with partner groups to identify roles and responsibilities to move work forward; participate in, or assist with activities and initiatives of your partner coalition; partner training/skill development)</b>	Ongoing engagement of local organizations via the Parks Committee	Schuylkill County's VISION has been a convener to the coalition.	Shenandoah Borough	Continuing to provide bilingual outreach and engagement with Spanish-speaking families
<b>Community Champions</b>	Continue to engage the school district leadership	Parks Committee and Schuylkill County's VISION	School Superintendent	Continuing to find opportunities and early actions to weave Safe Routes to School and Parks together. Applying for TASA - Safe Routes to School funds
<b>Evaluation (continue to measure the impact before a change to the environment is implemented and after)</b>	Community engagement and surveys via the County's Community Health Needs Assessment	Schuylkill County's VISION	Shenandoah Borough	
<b>Other ideas?</b>	Convene meeting with Ted Ritsick (DCED) and Borough Manager Tony Sajone		Schuylkill County's VISION	DCED is a valuable resource in providing ongoing planning and technical assistance to the borough.

## Appendix A - Workshop Attendance


Safe Routes to Parks Workshop – Day One  
Shenandoah, PA - May 23, 2023

Name	Email address	Title	Organization
Susan Smith	ssmith@co.schuylkill.pa.us	Planning Director	Schuylkill County
MANDY STREIBER		E.D.	VISION
RITA ANEZARSKI	ritabaldino@comcast.net		community member
Renee DeValle Buchanan			Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce
Cary Hess			Schuylkill County Commissioner
Seth Hubler	shubler@psen.gov	Constituent Relations	Senator David G. Argall
Tony Siroc	shca@PTD.NET	Borough Mgr	Shenandoah Borough

Day 1 Attendance


Safe Routes to Parks Workshop – Day Two  
Shenandoah, PA - May 24, 2023

Name	Email address	Title	Organization
Samantha Pearson	samperson@pedwalkers.org	Healthy Communities Program Manager	Pennsylvania Downtown Center
Joe Boris	JBORIS@MSN.COM	<del>Board</del> Borough Council	Borough of Shenandoah
Ted Rotsck	throtsck@psen.gov	Planner	DCED
Seth Hubler	shubler@psen.gov	Constituent Relations	Senator Argall's Office
Renee DeValle Buchanan			Schuylkill Chamber
RITA ANEZARSKI	ritabaldino@comcast.net		Community member

Day 2 Attendance



## Appendix B - Safe Routes to Parks Survey Results



## Appendix C - Safe Routes to Parks Walk Audit

### SAFE ROUTES TO PARK WALK AUDIT

As we walk along the route on the map below, note the positive and negative aspects of your walk with a number written on the map. Write a brief description of the asset or issue to the right of the map.



#### Notes:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. \_\_\_\_\_
20. \_\_\_\_\_

#### What to Look For:

##### Sidewalks & Bike Lanes

- Is a sidewalk present? Is it wide enough?
- Is the sidewalk cracked, broken, or incomplete?
- Are there trip hazards or accessibility issues?
- Are there bike lanes?
- Would children be safe biking?
- Is it easy & safe to cross the street?

##### Safety

- Does walking feel safe from cars?
- Does it feel safe from crime & violence?
- Is traffic too fast?
- Is it well lit?

##### Park Features

- Is there direct, convenient access from street to enter or exit the park?
- Are there walking/bike paths that connect the park entrances/exits?
- Are there signs showing directions to the park or information about the park or park activities?

##### Neighborhood

- Are buildings well maintained?
- Are there vacant buildings?
- Are other people out walking?
- Are there playgrounds or parks?
- Are parks unsafe or unmaintained?



Appendix D: Policy Scan

Name of Policy/Plan	Adopting Agency	Language, Page, Link	Relevance to Safe Routes to Parks
<p><b>Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance Long-Range Transportation Plan 2045</b> (adopted 2020)</p>	<p>Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance</p>	<p><a href="https://www.nepa-alliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/NEPA-LRTP-FINAL-5-4-2020.pdf">https://www.nepa-alliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/NEPA-LRTP-FINAL-5-4-2020.pdf</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEPA MPO region includes four counties: Pike, Monroe, Carbon, Schuylkill.</li> <li>• <b>Planning Implications based on socio-demographic shifts in the region:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› “A growing, aging population will require more public transportation services, and a highway system that is more predictable to use, with greater reflectivity, maintenance and protection of traffic in work zones, and improved signage, to name a few categories of improvements.</li> <li>› Identification of environmental justice (EJ) populations will enable the MPO to use that data to inform its investment strategies and project selection, even as it evaluates the benefits and burdens of its proposed programs on these population groups.” p. 8</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Planning Implications based on socio-economic shifts in the region:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› “Regional employment in the Transportation and Warehousing industry has seen an exponential increase over the last several years. This brings with it an increase in truck traffic on the region’s major thoroughfares. The MPO will consider interchange design and operation, access management, and truck parking opportunities.</li> <li>› Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance is a predominant industry (by total employment) for the four counties. With school districts and higher education institutions as major employers, considerations for safe and efficient routes to schools and universities are vital.</li> <li>› Projected population growth implies more students traveling to school by bus, car, bicycle, or on foot. Outreach to school districts and higher education institutions such as East Stroudsburg University and Northampton Community College will be needed to further understand the transportation needs of students, faculty, and staff.” p. 10</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Planning implications for Environmental Justice Analysis:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› “The Environmental Justice “Benefits &amp; Burdens” Analysis identifies where high concentrations of minority, poverty, and other traditionally underserved populations reside in the NEPA MPO region and evaluates the relative benefit or burden placed on them by the transportation system.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Funding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Environmental Justice designated areas for planning and investment dollars</li> <li>› NEPA prioritizes disadvantaged communities into its Transportation Improvement Program project cycle</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Safe Routes and Infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Increased truck traffic on major routes –implications along increased traffic on state routes in rural communities and safe routes</li> <li>› Points to Safe Routes to School without explicitly naming.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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<p><b>Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance Long-Range Transportation Plan 2045</b> (adopted 2020)</p>	<p>Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› To ensure a complete and meaningful analysis, outreach to EJ communities and representatives will assist in identifying potential barriers and understanding the cultures, languages, and local demographic changes that are present in the region.</li> <li>› By following guidelines provided by PennDOT and FHWA, NEPA incorporated this data on disadvantaged communities into its TIP development cycles. Addressing observed disparities will foster an equitable distribution of transportation benefits and burdens as the region becomes increasingly more diverse.</li> <li>› NEPA will continue to complete a comprehensive environmental justice analysis to prevent low-income and minority populations from experiencing a disproportionately high impact of burdens related to transportation system projects and policies.” p. 14</li> <li>• <b>Planning Implications for Active Transportation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› “NEPA will continue to address high traffic speeds, bicycle lanes and facilities, driver and bicyclist education, and roadway and shoulder maintenance to improve safety and foster a more livable, healthy, and cost-efficient region. “ p. 38</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Funding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Environmental Justice designated areas for planning and investment dollars</li> <li>› NEPA prioritizes disadvantaged communities into its Transportation Improvement Program project cycle</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Safe Routes and Infrastructure:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Increased truck traffic on major routes –implications along increased traffic on state routes in rural communities and safe routes</li> <li>› Points to Safe Routes to School without explicitly naming.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><a href="#"><u>Schuylkill County's Open Space and Greenway Plan 2006</u></a></p>	<p>Schuylkill County Planning &amp; Zoning Commission</p>	<p><b>GOAL: Increase recreational opportunities for county residents and visitors. P. 95</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective: Provide an adequate supply and mix of parks, playgrounds, and other recreation facilities, both active and passive, to serve the existing and projected populations of Schuylkill County.</li> <li>• Objective: Promote the development of new recreation facilities at strategic locations throughout the open space and greenway system.</li> <li>• Objective: Provide public facilities in the most efficient, cost-effective manner, taking into account community needs and environmental factors.</li> </ul>	



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<a href="#">Schuylkill County's Open Space and Greenway Plan 2006</a>	Schuylkill County Planning & Zoning Commission	<p><b>GOAL: Increase recreational opportunities for county residents and visitors. P. 95</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective: Provide an adequate supply and mix of parks, playgrounds, and other recreation facilities, both active and passive, to serve the existing and projected populations of Schuylkill County.</li> <li>Objective: Promote the development of new recreation facilities at strategic locations throughout the open space and greenway system.</li> <li>Objective: Provide public facilities in the most efficient, cost-effective manner, taking into account community needs and environmental factors.</li> </ul> <p>“Development of the county-wide open space network will build upon the existing county trail system for walking, hiking, and cycling; will permit pedestrian and bicycle access to a variety of destinations, including adjacent and nearby communities, other residential developments, schools, special natural features, shopping, and specific sites for recreational facilities; and will provide appropriate buffers between high volume traffic arteries and residential areas. Development of trails in conjunction with roadway improvement projects should be encouraged...” p. 116</p> <p><b>Open Space and Greenway Plan Policies:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a county-wide network of open space and greenways.</li> <li>Implement recommendations of the Schuylkill County Open Space and Greenways Plan including providing support to local municipalities in planning for open space in their communities.</li> <li>Coordinate efforts with partner organizations to preserve and promote the open space network at the regional and state levels. p. 127</li> </ol>	
<a href="#">Schuylkill County's Comprehensive Plan 2006</a>	Schuylkill County Planning & Zoning Commission	<p><b>GOAL: Ensure that development occurs in an efficient and logical manner, and in ways that minimize short- and long-term costs to the public and private sectors.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective: Establish a county-wide open space and greenway system to be implemented in concert with other development actions during the planning period.</li> </ul>	

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<a href="#">Schuylkill County's Comprehensive Plan 2006</a>	Schuylkill County Planning & Zoning Commission	<p><b>GOAL: Achieve a safe, efficient, mostly congestion-free circulation system that will best serve business, tourism related, institutional, and personal trips. p. 118</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective: Identify opportunities to expand the existing county trail network as part of transportation improvement projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>GOAL: Consider the long-range potential for reducing reliance on the automobile. P. 119</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective: Consider low cost physical improvements to new roads and roads undergoing upgradings to accommodate bicyclists.</li> </ul> <p><b>GOAL: Provide public services, facilities, and utilities in the most efficient, cost-effective manner, taking into account community needs and environmental factors. P. 120</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective: Provide an adequate supply and mix of parks, playgrounds, and other recreation facilities, both active and passive, to serve the existing and projected populations of Schuylkill County.</li> </ul> <p>“Non-Vehicular Circulation: The provision for safe and convenient movement of pedestrians and bicyclists is an important element of the plan. It is recommended that within boroughs, villages and Pottsville, sidewalks or other forms of all-weather pedestrian paths be provided in locations where pedestrian travel may reasonably be expected to occur or where it is to be encouraged. These improvements can be incorporated into local streetscape improvement projects. Between growth areas, on selected highways and rural roads, shoulders should be installed wide enough to provide for pedestrians and bicycles. Bicycle and pedestrian paths should be considered integral with major new residential developments and as part of the interconnected county-wide open space system.” P. 137</p>	

