

Attachment #1

Council Meeting Update

(Wednesday, February 9, 2022)

According to the most recent reports, there have been 6707 positive COVID-19 cases reported in Chester since the beginning of the pandemic. The number of weekly reported cases has decreased to 68 cases.

50% of Chester residents are fully vaccinated and 60% have received at least one vaccine.

The school-age population (age 10-19) continues to be a challenge, only 1 in 4 youth are fully vaccinated in the city. 31% of the youth population has received at least one vaccine.

We want to continue to encourage everyone 5 and older to get vaccinated and anyone who is eligible to get their booster shot.

Vaccines and boosters are free and available to everyone.

COVID PCR testing is available at Everest Urgent Care and Keystone First Wellness Center.

We currently have vaccines and booster shots available at ChesPenn, Keystone First Wellness Center, and Everest Urgent Care. Vaccines and boosters are also available at your local pharmacy.

On February 17 we will be having a health fair with vaccines and boosters shots in the community room of City hall.

For more information please go to chestercovidinfo.org

Finally, March is prostate cancer month and we want to encourage all men to visit their primary care provider to get screened.

Thank you and happy Black History Month

Attachment #2

The state of Chester's Parks and Recreation

By Stefan Roots – Chester City Councilman

January 20, 2022

(published in the Delaware County Daily Times on February 3, 2022)

The citizens of Chester would love to enjoy our city parks and playgrounds more than they currently do. Like people from other towns, Chester folks want safe, clean, and beautiful parks and recreation facilities to play with their children, spend time with their friends, exercise, play sports, enjoy nature, dance, have a cookout, or just relax.

Our 4.7 square mile city has 247 acres of parkland. The city has six major parks, 23 neighborhood play areas, and boat access to the Delaware River. Memorial Park has a swimming pool. Eight schools have recreation facilities and there's two quasi-public recreation centers in Chester: the Chester Senior Center and the Boys & Girls Club.

Parks and playgrounds should be a point of local pride, a source of health and wellness, stimulate the economy, and enhance the quality of life. Generally, access to parks and recreation opportunities proves to be strongly linked to reductions in crime and reducing juvenile delinquency.

Quality parks and recreation are a key driver in attracting and retaining businesses and jobs. Parks and recreation is one of the most important factors in assessing how livable communities are. Successful cities have parks and recreation system that serve as a point of local pride.

Here in Chester, revitalization of parks and recreation can only begin when we develop a practical and achievable strategy to overcome years of deferred maintenance which has resulted in a need for extensive improvements in our city parks.

Most parks are within a ten-minute walk for citizens. The majority of the recreation sites are small neighborhood parks. The five largest parks make up nearly half the total acreage of city parks. Existing parks have a mix of recreational facilities including baseball, softball, soccer and football fields. Game courts include basketball, tennis and street hockey. Picnic facilities and sitting areas are located in the parks. Except in a few parks, many of these amenities are in bad shape.

Support facilities at one time included restrooms, lighting and drinking fountains, but they are no longer functional in Chester's parks. Lighting was removed from all parks except Memorial.

As Director of Public Property and Recreation for the City of Chester, I'm focusing my efforts to start from scratch and create a management system with policies and procedures the department will operate from. I will look to established parks and rec organizations for guidance and will likely duplicate successful aspects of other programs that will immediately work in Chester. Within the next month, I will assess and document each park's needs and determine the urgency and costs to make the parks safe and functional.

Until Chester City finances get under control, parks and recreation will continue to be underfunded. There is virtually no recreation budget other than for the swimming pool and the summer hot lunch

Attachment # 2 Continued

program. With over 9,000 children and youth under 18 mostly living in poverty, recreation is a vital public service that must be provided. While people of all ages need recreation, the most pressing need in this community is recreational services for children and youth.

Parks and recreation is good for individuals and good for cities. Public parks and recreation save lives and change lives! As the new Director of Public Property and Recreation, I am determined to empower Chester City to usher in a new way to manage parks and recreation that builds relationships and increases resources by partnering with successful cities, generous donors, the local business community, and committed citizens.

Together, we will create a sustainable parks and recreation system that will improve the image of Chester City and be something the citizens will be proud to maintain, protect and enjoy.

If you'd like to help me recreate Chester City's parks and rec, contact me at sroots@chestercity.com. I'd love to hear from you.