

Walker Township Parks & Recreation
SPONSORSHIP AND DONATION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive and uniform process for donors to:

- provide parklands for future development
- improve public recreation programs

The donations may be in the form of volunteering, donated services, cash donations, endowments, gifts of land, or estate gifts. Private donations for Township park and program operations have been and will continue to be an important component of improved services in the township. Donated services or funds may be used to:

- Provide volunteer opportunities for park projects and program operations;
- Improve the quality of the park or recreation experience;
- Provide additional parklands or enhanced park facilities;
- Increase the number of people participating by providing necessary site / program amenities and equipment;
- Reduce the need for tax funds used to build, operate, or maintain facilities and programs.

Specifically, this policy will apply to the following contribution categories of the “Gifts-For-Parks” program:

- I. Volunteering to provide labor for a park improvement, maintenance project, program operation, or cosponsoring a special event or program;
- II. Donation of funds for youth recreation scholarships, a special event, or for the operation of a recreation program;
- III. Donations of funds for park or program amenities, including endowments;
- IV. Donations of funds or services for major projects or improvements at township owned parks.

While this policy provides for the appropriate and specified recognition of donors, the donations are not intended to provide an avenue to commercial advertising or promotions at the facilities. Most residents appreciate the fact that local parks and recreation facilities provide relief from commercial advertising. Therefore the donation-recognition methods will maintain that philosophy by demonstrating subtle appreciation for donations from the community, while providing a differentiation between recognition and advertising.

In the future, certain recreational facilities may warrant display advertising to help offset development and/or operational costs. For example, this approach may be appropriate for a sports complex, or a site where the emphasis is largely on the activity, and not on the environment.

Typically, most donors request and appreciate some form of recognition, in a short-term manner (via a publication) or a permanent manner (on or near the donated item). These forms of recognition promote positive awareness which may result in goodwill to the donor; they also build community awareness of the Gift-For-Parks program. A standard recognition method is specified for each category of gift. The Township will also respect the wishes of those donors who may desire anonymity.

Only those donations for tangible items (or for a professional service related to the construction or installation of a tangible item) will be eligible for on-site recognition; that recognition will remain in place during the service life of the item. When, in the opinion of the Township Park & Recreation Board, the donated item has exceeded its service life and has been removed from active use, there is no guarantee of any continued recognition for the gift received.

In the case of a donation for an intangible item or service (i.e., performance, volunteer program leadership, donating program supplies, assisting with park maintenance), the township will provide short-term recognition.

Donations of land or park facilities that may be required as part of or as a result of any land development or subdivision plans are excluded from any consideration as a Gifts-For-Parks donation, except as may be officially authorized by the township.

In all cases, it is understood that the Township will not provide any goods or services to the donor as a result of a donation; all items and services will be offered to benefit the general public. Further, a donation to the Township is eligible as a federal tax deduction; donors should confirm this with their tax advisor. The Township maintains a 501(c)3 designation with the Internal Revenue Service so as to fully comply with the grant eligibility requirements of some donor organizations (i.e., foundations).

The details of each Gift Category are detailed below, with the appropriate payment and recognition procedure for each:

I. Volunteering to provide labor (donation of services) for a park improvement, maintenance project, program operation, or cosponsoring a special event or program.

This can be a one-time project, or an ongoing program. The Park & Rec Board will work with the group to define and plan the project or program. The donors will provide manpower, but may also assist in providing some of the necessary materials, supplies, and tools for the project.

Category I Recognition Process:

The donor name and the donated service will be advertised/listed as appropriate.

II. Donation of funds for a Special Event, or for the operation of a recreation program.

This category involves donated funds, and may also include the donation of volunteered services (Category I) to accomplish the desired task. A budget will be developed for the program where the donor may also provide some or all of the necessary costs (materials, supplies, and tools) for the project.

Category II Recognition Process:

(1) The group name will be included as an event cosponsor in advance publicity.

III. Donations of funds, including the creation of endowments, for park or program amenities: park benches, kiosks, park fixtures, pet stations, bleachers, backstops, trails & boardwalks, public art objects, bird blinds, senior center or pool items, etc.

This gift category includes targeted donations for specific park amenities or projects. The donor inquires to the Park & Rec Board regarding the proposed item or project. The Park & Rec Board will

research the costs involved with the purchase, delivery, and installation of the item, and relays this information to the potential donor. Any item to be purchased must comply with a specification approved by the township and in conformance with other similar items in the park. Upon payment of the requested donation amount, an official receipt is issued to the donor and the item is ordered using the official purchasing process. The donor is advised upon installation.

In the case of an endowment, the donor should obtain the appropriate information from the Park & Rec Board to direct the annual proceeds to the appropriate Authority-designated.

Category III Recognition Process:

- (1) The donation is published in one issue of the Township Newsletter.
- (2) A recognition tag is prepared and furnished by the township. Specific guidelines have been developed for uniform wording on the plaques.

IV. Donations of funds or services for major projects or improvements at township owned parks such as facility construction, picnic pavilions, play areas, athletic fields, sport areas, etc. (paid to the municipality).

Capital improvements at each municipal park are the responsibility of the township. As a result, donations for major items (pavilions, sport fields, play structures, etc.) are accepted with the following guidelines:

- The potential donor should inquire with the Park & Rec Board about the proposed donation they are under no obligation to accept a donation offer.
- Donations of funds to the township that are to be used to purchase a specified item that has no existing municipal equivalent will be reviewed and discussed with the donor. The donor and the Township must agree on the appropriateness of each item, including its size, type of materials or manner of construction. In addition, the durability and maintenance requirements of each item will be evaluated. This part of the planning process is especially important since a small additional investment may greatly reduce ongoing maintenance costs while increasing the service life of the donated item.
- The municipality may request the donor to:
 - (1) pay the donation amount to the township in advance so that the municipality may specify and order the desired items;
 - (2) make the purchase of the item, as specified by the township, through the township's customary and usual suppliers; or,
 - (3) complete a township approved project.

The township may request that the donation amount include any related professional services (architectural and engineering), permits, shipping costs, and/or installation costs.

Donations may be accepted by the township at any time by action of the respective Board. Donation offers may be brought forward on their own volition or may be offered in response to a request or suggestion by the township or other affiliated authority. In all cases, only the Board (of elected officials) may officially accept a donation of tangible property. Other affiliated municipal entities may provide recommendations regarding a proposed donation prior to official action on the proposal.

Category IV Recognition Process:

In view of the many project possibilities and the substantial costs associated with a major park project an appropriate and uniform recognition process should be determined. This process may include various levels of recognition depending on the amount donated, ranging from officially naming the specific facility inside the park to the placement of an attractive and durable sign at the donated feature. In all cases, the emphasis will remain on recognition of the donor rather than advertising for the donor. The following guidelines are recommended:

- (1) A donor must request recognition for an accepted donation; the municipality will not provide un-requested recognition of donated items.
- (2) Only tangible items will be eligible for recognition and such recognition will remain in place during the useful service life of the item. At the point where the donated item has completed its useful life and has been removed from active use by the township, there is no guarantee or promise of any continued recognition for the gift received.
- (3) If official action is taken by the elected officials to name the donated feature or facility in honor of the donor, the duration of the name may be noted at the time of such designation. Most likely that duration will coincide with the estimated service life of the facility.
- (4) Once a recognition process is adopted by the township, any exception to this process will be provided only on a case-by-case basis by resolution of the elected officials of the township.
- (5) Plaque inscriptions are generally limited to the following statements:

(Optional item name or description)

In Honor of (or In Memory of) . . . (legal name)

(Optional line of description)

Presented by (donor name or group) on (date of installation)

Any exception to this format may only be granted by action of the township.

- (6) If the size of the donation, combined with fact that the donation includes all aspects of the costs associated with the facility improvement (i.e., purchase, shipping, installation, permits, architectural or engineering services), the Board of Supervisors will consider naming the item in honor of the donor. Such designation will be provided by resolution of the Board of Supervisors. If such official action is taken by the Board of Supervisors, the duration of the name may be noted at the time of such designation. It is most likely that the duration will coincide with the estimated service life of the facility.

This policy was developed for Walker Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania