Welcome!

- There are currently ten pocket parks in the Town of Rotterdam.
- The Parkland fund increases $600 for each new housing unit built.
- As of December 31, 2018, there is $192,171 in the Parkland fund.
Map of Parks in the Town of Rotterdam

Produced by the Fall 2018 SUPA PAF 101 class of Schalmont High School
• The Town of Rotterdam lacks a large public green space that promotes good health and enhances our community.
Our Current Situation

- Unattractive aesthetic of parks lead to low usage.
- Rotterdam residents lack safe places to exercise and enjoy the outdoors.
  - Can lead to negative health effects
- The structure of current parks does not promote communal gatherings.
Evidence

• The Town of Rotterdam’s 2020 Vision Plan states that the town wants to, “promote and enhance Rotterdam’s conservation areas”.
(Town of Rotterdam Parks Commission, 2015)

• Many residents are not aware of all of the parks available to them.

• According to Rotterdam Town Supervisor, “these areas continue to experience vandalism and poor treatment by its users”.
(S. Tommasone, October 19, 2018)

• In 2018, there was only one town event held in current Rotterdam parks.
(S. Tommasone, October 19, 2018)

• Being outside in parks allow children to express creativity without the constraint of being indoors.
(Risk, Challenge, and Adventure in the Early Years, 2018)
Evidence

- 26.1% of people in Rotterdam are obese compared to 25.5% of people nationwide.
  (Data USA, 2017; New York State Department of Health, 2016)

- Depression and anxiety rates are increasing.
  (NBC, 2016)

- People who live near natural spaces have significantly better mental health
  (National Recreation and Park Association)

- Older people with Alzheimer’s and dementia suffer without a park because the exposure to the sun and fresh air helps them with their illnesses.
  (The Journal of Soil and Water Conservation)
Causes

- Money collected for the Parkland Fund in order to build / maintain parks is available for use.
- Minimal signage and poor aesthetics lead to low awareness and usage of parks.

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Source: Town of Rotterdam
Policy Proposal

- The Rotterdam Town Board will direct Public Works to renovate Rotterdam’s ten existing parks under the supervision of the Parks and Recreation Department.
Effectiveness

Baseline: The amount of money going into the Parkland Fund increases as more housing units are built.

Benchmarks: The funds decrease steadily from 2019 for renovations/improvements to parks.

Source: Town of Rotterdam
Costs

- $100,000 from the Parkland Fund to renovate the parks, and more to maintain them.
- More park usage will result in an increase in supervision and maintenance of the parks’ equipment.
- Renovations and Construction may temporarily close parks & disrupt local residents.
Benefits

• A sense of community will increase.
• Increased usage of parks.
• New equipment will be better suited and safer for community use.
Thank you!

• The Rotterdam Town Board should consider renovating and maintaining the ten existing parks.
• A special thanks to Mr. Tommasone for presenting this problem to our class and allowing us to learn about our town and the government.
• Thank you to the members of the Rotterdam Town Board for listening to our presentation.
References


• Solly, K. Risk, Challenge, and Adventure in the Early Years. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
The town of Rotterdam lacks a large public green space that promotes good health and enhances our community.
Current Information

- The Recreation Site Acquisition and Improvement Fund also known as the Park Land Fund
  - Collected from developers.
  - Currently has $192,171 in the fund.
    - S. Tommasone, Town Supervisor

- The Town of Rotterdam currently has 10 pocket parks
Currently there are 10 small pocket parks.
Evidence

- Between 2010 and 2014 national overweight / obesity rates for children were roughly 14.5%
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018
- Between 2010 and 2016 obesity rates in Schenectady county fluctuated between 35.1% and 34.5%
  - Department of Health, 2017
Evidence

❖ “It is widely believed that one way to reduce obesity and promote healthy living among children is through increased physical activity”
❖ “Evidence suggests that built environments, such as sidewalks, parks, trails, and neighborhood safety are associated with increased [physical activity]”
  ❖ US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health
Evidence

❖ The number of new housing units built in the Town of Rotterdam decreased by 24% from 2015 to 2018.

❖ Public Works, Rotterdam, 2019
Evidence

❖ Parks create a significant rise in social connection in communities they are located in.
  ❖ The Rapidian
❖ “Families like to settle near parks so that there is a space for their children to get outdoors and exercise”
  ❖ S. Tommasone, Town Supervisor
Causes

❖ A new park has not been built in the Town of Rotterdam in decades which means the current parks are becoming old.
❖ Nearly all of Rotterdam’s parks are on the eastern side of town.
❖ Money is available in the Parkland fund for a new park
  ✦ S. Tommasone, Town Supervisor
Public Policy Proposal

The Rotterdam town board will require Public Works to contract with private companies to construct a fifty plus acre park in the western section of Rotterdam.
Benefits

❖ The park will provide the community a place that promotes personal safety and good health.
  - US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health
❖ People are more likely to settle near parks.
  - University of Wisconsin Milwaukee
❖ Parks bring in tourism for local businesses
❖ Parks increase property values by 5% 
  - Conservation Tools: Economic benefits of parks
Benefits

❖ Grants are available from organizations to improve/build parks
  ✦ United States Department of Agriculture Rural Developments:
    Community Faculty Direct Loan & Grant program
    ■ United States Department of Agriculture

❖ The Town of Rotterdam already owns 78 acres of usable land along the Mohawk River. This would eliminate the need to purchase land.
Costs

❖ Hiking Trails paved Estimated Range: $32,000 per Linear 1000’ at 8’ width
   ◆ Estimated maintenance weekly: 1-3 hours
   ◆ Estimated maintenance annually: $6,000-$8,000

❖ Hiking Trails gravel Estimated Range: $4,000- $6,000 per mile
   ◆ Estimated maintenance weekly: 1-2 hours
   ◆ Estimated maintenance Annually: $400- $1,000

❖ Baseball/Softball Fields Estimated Cost Range: $90,000 - $500,000
   ◆ Estimated Weekly Maintenance: 16 - 20 hours during season (26 weeks)
   ◆ Estimated Annual Operations & Maintenance Cost: $16,000 – $20,000

❖ Soccer/ Football Fields Estimated Cost Range: $60,000 - $95,000
   ◆ Estimated Weekly Maintenance: 12 –16 hours during season (26 weeks)
   ◆ Estimated Annual Maintenance Costs: $11,000 - $14,000

❖ Both Contain Turf
Costs

- Basketball Courts Costs Range: $30,000-$45,000
  - Maintenance requires weekly: .5-1 hours
  - Maintenance cost annually: $900-$1,000

- Tennis Courts Cost Range: $25,000-$55,000
  - Maintenance requires weekly (in season, 26 weeks): 1-2 hours
  - Maintenance cost annually: $800-$1,000

- Volleyball Court Estimated Cost Range: $6,000-$10,000
  - Maintenance weekly: .5-1 hours
  - Maintenance cost annually: $800-$1,000

- Playground Estimated Cost Range: $20,000-$30,000
  - Maintenance weekly: 2-3 hours
  - Maintenance cost annually: $1,400-$1,800

- Estimation for a Swimming Pool: $100,000-$200,000
  - Maintenance weekly: 30-40 hours
  - Maintenance annually: $16,000-$21,000
Costs

❖ Estimation for a General Park WITHOUT the prior amenities: $50,000-$70,000
  ❖ Maintain weekly: 17-21 hours
  ❖ Maintenance annually: $18,000- $22,000
    ■ Small Community Parks & Recreation Standards
Effectiveness

❖ Building a large park will increase the number of housing units built.

❖ Justification
- Developers typically like to build near points of interests like parks
- This graph follows the baseline trend but at a slower decline

Dept. of Public Works
Effectiveness

❖ More Housing units are projected to be built
   ■ More families are likely to settle in Rotterdam
   ■ Parkland fund will grow per unit
❖ Property values will rise
❖ Health of the town will improve
Feasibility

❖ The Town of Rotterdam should implement this policy because this policy will improve the health and economic opportunity of the town.
Thank you for assigning us this project and taking the time to listen to our research and policy proposal.
References


Department of Health. (2017 July). *Schenectady county percentage overweight or obese (85th percentile or higher) - students (with weight status information in swscrs) in elementary, middle and high school*. Retrieved December 3, 2018 from https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/general/g65_42.htm.


