



Parks & Recreation Department

Annual Report

2024 :::::





Parks & Rec Department

Our Work is Where McCandless Plays!

The Town of McCandless's Parks & Recreation Department was formally established in 2023 with the creation of the Parks & Recreation Coordinator position. This position is responsible for overseeing operations pertaining to parks, open space, recreation, buildings, and structures to develop and administer recreation programs, services, and community events for Town residents.





Other responsibilities:

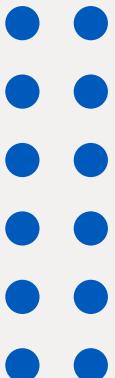
- Maintain the online system (Civic Rec) for rec program reservations and payments.
- Act as liaison between the Town and youth and adult sport organizations.
- Plan and implement new and existing recreation programs and special events including Community Day and Winterfest.
- Seek sponsorships and in-kind donations to offset the cost of Community events.
- Respond to, and address, public inquiries and complaints related to rec programs and park facilities.
- Act as the employee liaison to the Activities Advisory Committee (ad hoc).
- Coordinate and recruit volunteers to assist in Community events and parks projects.



Town Parks

Devlin, Potter, Wall, Vincentian and Vestal

The Town's 5 parks and additional trails are maintained by the Town of McCandless Public Works Department with up to 4 dedicated laborers during the peak season. They are responsible for landscaping, upkeep, and maintenance of pavilions and facilities.



Completed Park Projects in 2024

- New playground equipment and surfacing was installed by DPW crews at Vestal and Wall Parks. The sand box, sun shade, benches, and picnic tables were installed at the entrance of the Lorrain Rogers soccer fields this summer completing the playground complex.
- Wind screens and new benches were installed on the Pickleball courts (purchased after feedback from players).
- Signage for the Fitness Court including a QR code for the app was printed and installed by the Sign Dept.



- Edged and cleaned flower beds at the HCC and Counsel Park.
- Trees trimmed and stump removed at Wall Park.
- Backfilled the sidewalk behind home plate.
- The pavilions at Wall and Devlin were painted.
- Stream bank improvements at Vestal.
- New foul ball poles installed at Wall.
- Planted Winterfest pine trees.
- Backfilled sidewalk along Grubbs Rd. behind



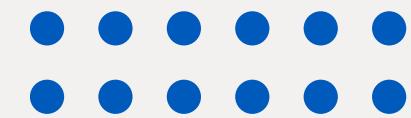


Devlin

9955 Grubbs Road

Devlin Park is a heavily used, multifaceted facility offering 2 tennis, 4 pickleball, basketball, and sand volleyball courts, a large playground, baseball field, a rental pavilion with power and restrooms, as well as bridge access to Pine Creek.

The baseball field is used by the McCandless Athletic Association and adult leagues. The lights on the field make the field a popular destination for the adult leagues for use in the summer evenings.



Lorrain Rogers

Aufman Lane

Located across the bridge from the Devlin Park complex, the Lorrain Rogers soccer fields are used by NA Soccer Club and Beadling Youth Soccer. At the entrance of the soccer field is the newly completed playground, great for smaller children. The playground area includes a sand box, benches, and picnic tables.

The UPMC sponsored Fitness Court is frequently in use and offers an app for users to maximize and track their performance.





Wall

7830 Sloop Road

With 3 baseball fields, the Wall Park complex is used by Ingomar Franklin Park Little League. The park also features a rental pavilion, 2 playgrounds, tennis courts, and a basketball/street hockey court.

Brandt Trail

Running through the woods of Wall Park is Brandt Trail. This trail was blazed in 2023 with assistance from DPW, MTSA and volunteers. With a trailhead at Wall Park and another at Glen Manor Road, this trail is 0.93 miles long.





Vestal

Vestal Park Lane

With 5 baseball fields, a playground, a walking trail, and a large concession stand, Vestal is the largest Town Park. Vestal is the primary home of Ingomar Franklin Park Little League organization.

Northrop Trail

This small path leads from the baseball fields along Pine Creek and ends at Oakridge Drive. Jim Northrop has been maintaining parts of this trail for years and it's a lovely stroll through the woods any time of year.

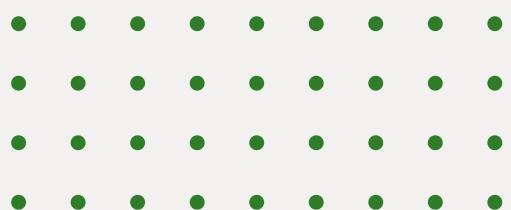




Vincentian

8059 Peebles Road

The use of this park is on a lease between the Town of McCandless, the McCandless Athletic Association and the owners of the property, the Vincentian Sisters. Signed for 100 years in 1983, the Town and MCAA have shared responsibilities for maintaining this complex. The MCAA holds exclusive rights of use of the baseball fields. The Park has 2 baseball fields, 2 t-ball fields, 1 softball field, 2 concession stands and a playground.





Potter

Harmony Road

Potter Park, a 10-acre space, is a beautiful passive park with a 1-acre pond and two walking trails. The Town has intentionally left this park undeveloped, keeping it as a nature preserve.

In recent years, Boy Scout groups have installed used fishing line receptacles, benches, and an informational sign, as well as walking planks completing the path around the pond.





Recreation Programs

Participant and resident feedback informed our programming. Residents and members of our community helped plan, implement, and suggest programming that benefits the Town. After each yoga, pickleball and tennis clinic, a survey was sent out to participants to gauge their satisfaction with the offered program.





Pickleball Clinics & Round Robin

Devlin Pickleball Courts July, August, September, October dates

McCandless resident Dana Kantz led multiple sessions of introductory level pickleball clinics in 2024. With marketing and word of mouth, clinics reached their peak of attendance in September with **46** participants that month. Overall, **144** people (residents and non-residents) took part in clinics put on by the Town.

After each session, a survey was sent to gauge our performance. Participant feedback informed our programming and led us to add an organized Round Robin for **16** people as well as an Intro Part 2 Clinic in October.

The feedback from frequent players of all levels has been extremely positive regarding the quality of our courts. Courts were resurfaced 2 years ago and at that time, the pickleball courts were added. An online registration system allows residents to reserve courts for \$10 an hour.

Participant Feedback



It was great. Instructor also great. Overall a 10 out of 10.

I was excited that the township offered this program as I have wanted to play for some time but wasn't sure how/wear to get classes from.

The instructor was friendly, helpful and knowledgeable.

Great class! ...class format was great (teach then do!)



Tennis Clinic

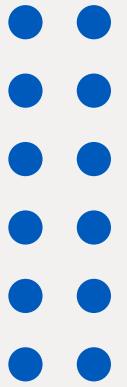
Devlin Tennis Courts
Saturday, September 28th



Feedback from McCandless resident and US Tennis Association Member Jim Block led us to hold the first Learn to Play Tennis Clinic at Devlin Park. **Ten** people attended a 2-hour clinic with equipment, coaching, and additional marketing provided by the USTA.

The USTA wants to introduce the game of tennis to people of all ages and feel that as more players of different racket sports play together, both sports can thrive.

We plan to offer more clinics in the spring and summer of 2025, possibly adding new levels to continue to develop player's skills.



Yoga in the Park

Devlin Pavilion
Saturday Mornings
August, September and October

Yoga under the Devlin Pavilion was brought back in August after multiple resident requests. Yoga was taught by McCandless resident, Carolyn Spear, and sub, Charissa Ragosta.

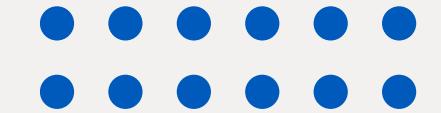
Thirty-two members of the community participated in yoga classes through early fall. Participation waned in October because of cold, damp weather. We plan to offer Yoga in Devlin in the spring and summer in 2025.





Nature Trail Walk at Vestal's Northrop Trail

Sunday, September 29



Longtime Town volunteer and McCandless resident, Dawn Miller, led an engaging and informative walk along Vestal's Northrop Trail, discussing the flora and fauna found in our parks. She pointed out which were native and which were invasive plants and introduced the trail to a group of **10** people, most of whom had never visited that section of the park. Dawn also brought goodie bags for the young kids on the walk to collect acorns, leaves, and sticks.

When the weather permits in the spring and summer of 2025, we will plan more nature walks through Northrop Trail, Brandt Trail, and to Potter Park.



Community Events

Community events in McCandless are meant to create a sense of belonging, show pride in our community, and engage the public in a positive way.

- Earlier in 2024, the Town hosted an Easter Egg Hunt with over 300 children in attendance.
- The Town celebrates Community Day on the second Saturday of September. This year's 23rd celebration harkened back to pre-COVID days in attractions offered and large crowds in attendance. Surveys were available during Community Day to solicit feedback from residents about the event.
- Since it's start in 2021, Winterfest has quickly become a favorite for McCandless families. This year was well attended with very positive feedback from members of the community.

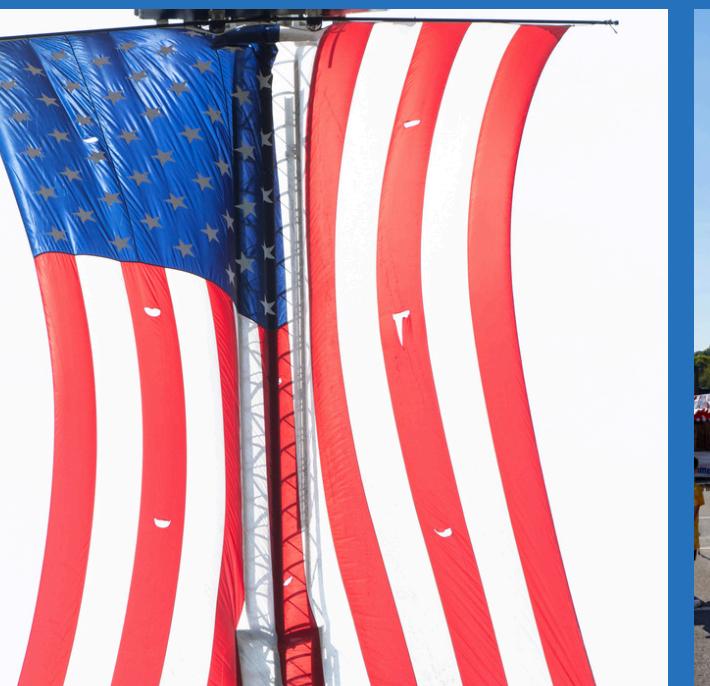


Community Day

Saturday, September 14th, 2024

2024's Community Day was one for the books! Hosack Elementary's 5th Grade Choir and the North Allegheny Marching Band opened the event with the National Anthem and a stunning performance. **Ten** food trucks offered a variety of food options. Mostly all attractions were free and open to the public, including a balloon artist, air brush tattooing, rides, the Jr. Firefighter Challenge, ax throwing, and more. **Twenty-five** booths were rented in the rear parking lot, and the 56 East Band played for 2 hours! Fireworks were accompanied by the Allegheny Brass Band and brought the successful evening to a close.

An estimated **1,000** people attended the festivities. The Pittsburgh Regional Transit generously allowed us to use the Blazier Dr. Park and Ride as additional parking. Special thanks goes to the DPW, Police, Fire, staff, and volunteers with assisting in making the event a success.



Winterfest

Saturday, December 7th, 2024

The weather could not have been better to celebrate the 4th annual Winterfest! It was cold but clear and a perfect night for fireworks. The event was attended by an estimated **700** members of the community, many were families with small children. The activities included a photo booth which gave each participant a photo strip with "Winterfest 2024" on the bottom, Elsa and Anna, Santa arriving on a fire truck, train rides, John's Funky Inflatables, and many crafts and winter themed activities.

DPW garage transformed into a winter wonderland and crews put up holiday lights outside in Devlin Park and Town Hall for the occasion. The HCC hosted a kid's story time with a Northland Librarian and the ever popular Name the Plow contest which chose 10 names to be used for the 2025 season.



Come & Join Us!
AT
WINTERFEST



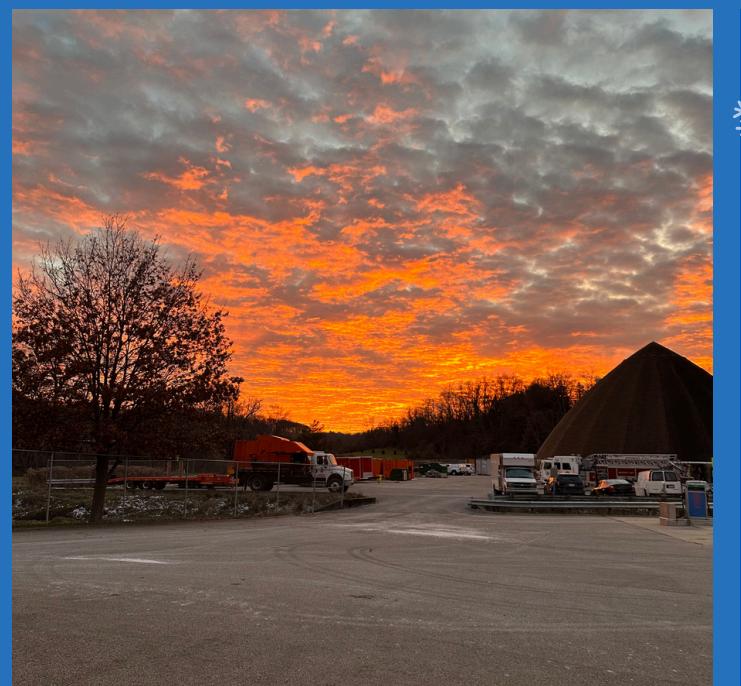
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7
4-7pm
Town of McCandless DPW Garage/HCC

This year, we're partnering with the North Hills Community Outreach to help our neighbors in need. Please bring an item to Winterfest for their food pantry!

**SNOW GAMES | BONFIRE & SMORES | FOOD TRUCKS
CREATIVE CRAFTS | CHARACTER APPEARANCES
HOT CHOCOLATE | NAME THE PLOW CONTEST | FIREWORKS
HOLIDAY LIGHT DISPLAY | STORY TIME AT THE HCC**

 For more details and a list of the most needed/requested items at the pantry, visit our website at www.townofmccandless.org.

 North Hills COMMUNITY OUTREACH
People Helping People



Social Media Posts

This Saturday!
YOGA FOR BEGINNERS
 in Devlin Park
 9955 Grubbs Rd.
 Wexford, PA

REGISTER NOW :
www.townofmcgandless.org








ice carving!
lights!
s'mores!

WINTERFEST!
 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7 FROM 4-7PM

fun!
Name the plow!
fire trucks!




Media Mentions

TRIB LIVE

Back | Text Size: - +

<https://triblive.com/local/mccandless-winterfest-returns-to-town-hall/>

McCandless Winterfest returns to town hall

TRIB NATALIE BENEVIAT | Wednesday, November 6, 2024 3:30 p.m. LIVE



COURTESY OF TOWN OF MCCANDLESS

Santa Claus arrives courtesy of Ingomar Volunteer Fire Company during Winterfest 2023 in McCandless.

If you ever started a sentence with "that would be a good name for a snow plow," then the fourth annual Town of McCandless Winterfest is for you.

The snow-plow-naming contest will be held for up to 10 trucks at the Dec. 7 event, along with a night of lights, treats, Santa and fireworks.

The event will be held from 4 to 7 p.m., returning to town hall grounds on Grubbs Road.

TRIB HAMPTON JOURNAL

Get Verified

Clinics round out seasonal pickleball play in McCandless

NATALIE BENEVIAT TRIBLIVE

THU, OCT 3, 2024 • 01:30 PM

SHARE REACT



Mary Randolph (left) of Valencia plays pickleball with Gena Finley of Pine on Oct. 3 at Devlin Park in McCandless.

TRIB LIVE

Back | Text Size: - +

<https://triblive.com/local/plenty-of-places-for-pickleball-around-north-allegeny-area/>

Plenty of places for pickleball around North Allegheny area

TRIB NATALIE BENEVIAT | Wednesday, March 13, 2024 4:30 p.m. LIVE



Mark Seftas of Moon Township plays pickleball at North Park on March 13.

NATALIE BENEVIAT | FOR TRIBLIVE

The growing popularity of the racquet sport pickleball has increased demand for places to play in the North Allegheny area.

Last spring, McCandless opened pickleball courts at Devlin Park, off Grubbs Road. Former tennis courts were resurfaced and modified the previous fall for pickleball play, according to John Bojarski, Town of McCandless public information officer.

TRIB LIVE

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<https://triblive.com/hampton/mccandless-gears-up-for-annual-community-day/>

McCandless gears up for annual Community Day

TRIB NATALIE BENEVIAT | Tuesday, August 20, 2024 8:00 a.m. LIVE



COURTESY THE TOWN OF MCCANDLESS

The community enjoying the McCandless Community Day in 2023. The 2024 McCandless Community Day is being held on Sept. 14.

The 2024 McCandless Community Day, being held Sept. 14 at Town Hall parking lot off of Grubbs Road, will bring its popular Frank J. Farina Jr. Memorial Car Cruise closer to the main event.

The car cruise, a long-time staple to the annual community day, returns to its original location at the Ashton Commons parking lot on Cooper Drive.

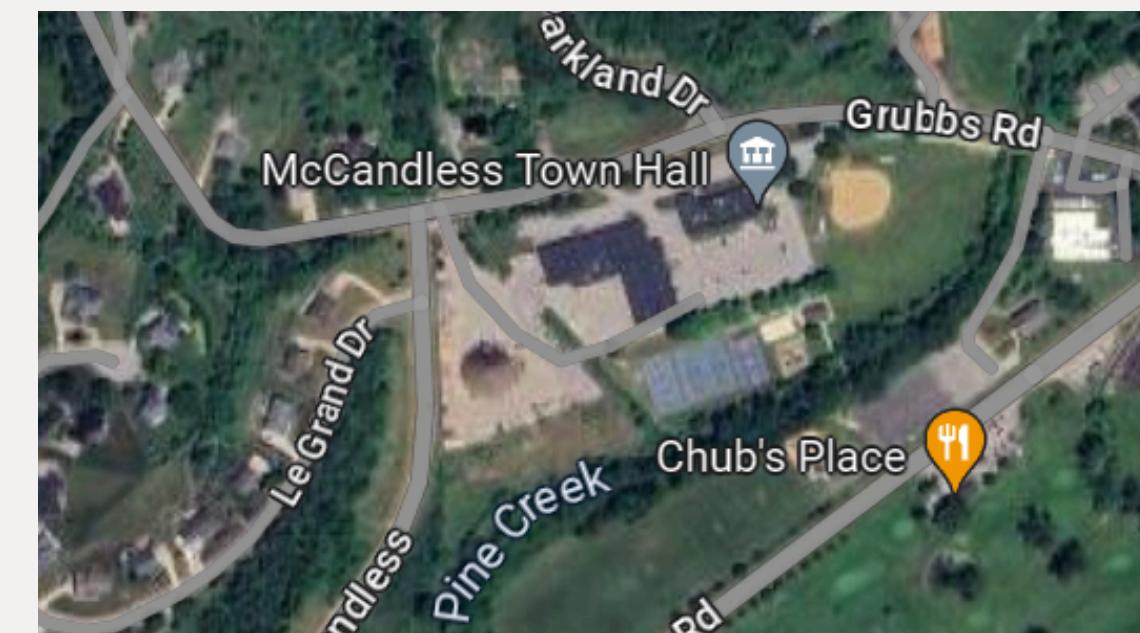
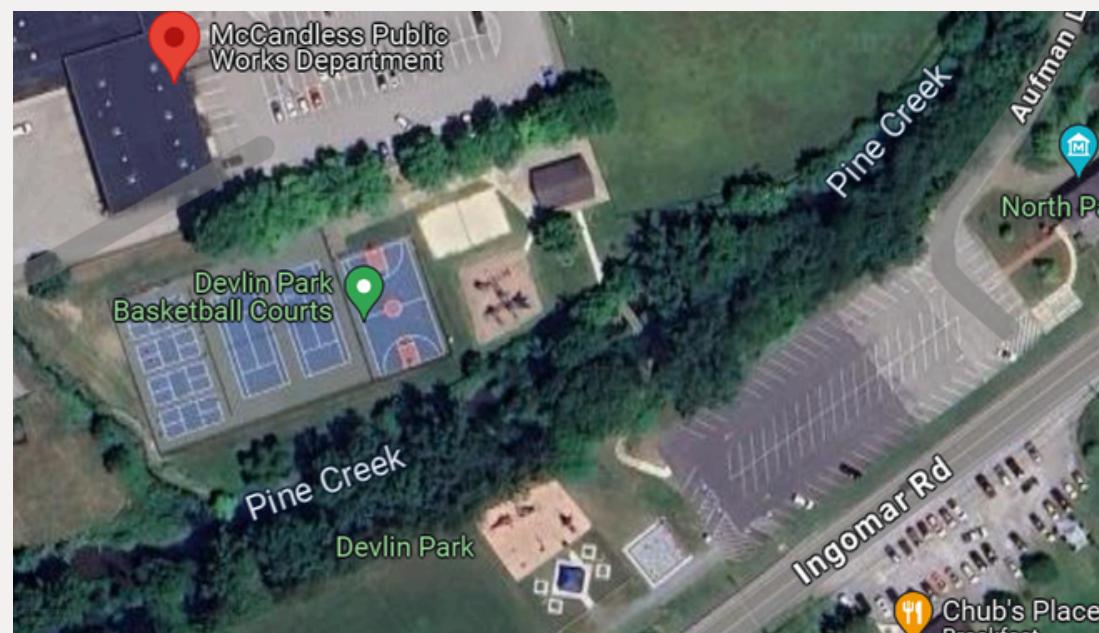
Car cruise lovers can access both the community day celebration and the car cruise via a sidewalk, said Abby Lucostic, parks and recreation coordinator for McCandless.

Parks Comprehensive Plan

In mid 2024, Pashek + MTR was awarded the contract to conduct a Master Site Development plan for the Town's 5 Parks. This process aims to:

- Bring officials, staff, community members, and stakeholders together to create a plan to better use our parks.
- Provide active and passive recreation activities for Town residents.
- Better meet the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.
- Improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to McCandless through these proposed changes.

This multi step process of study, creating a steering committee, holding focus groups, involving community engagement, and finally releasing a comprehensive report will take the better part of 2025 to complete. We are excited to formally start the whole process in January and see what will be revealed through the study.





A look to 2025

2025 is already shaping up to be busy in the Parks and Recreation Department. Having both major community events under my belt in 2024, I have a better idea of what I can do to improve and build upon the successes of this year in 2025.

I'd also like to bring back and build up smaller community recreation programs like Treasures in the Trunk, cookie decorating classes, guided hikes through the parks, and more.

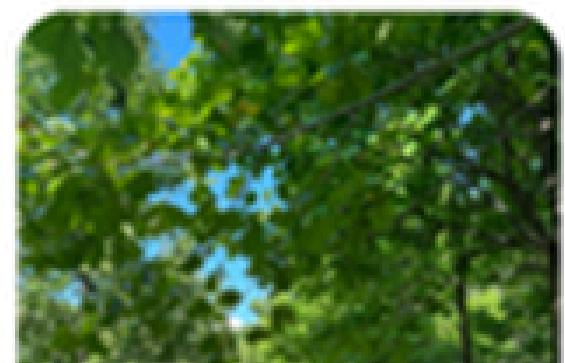
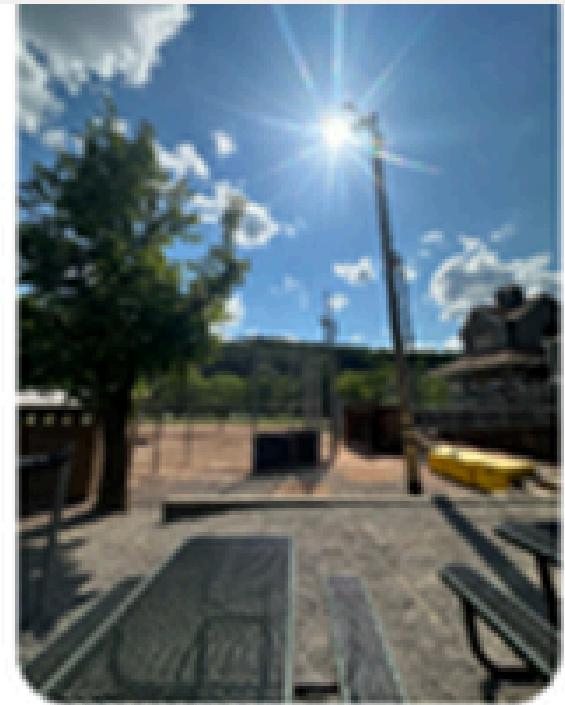
The Parks Study will certainly give us new direction for physical changes to the Town's Parks. In early 2025, a sidewalk will be installed adding a direct entrance onto the pickleball courts in Devlin Park. After feedback from both tennis and pickleball players sharing the main entrance and therefore interrupting tennis play, plans were made to make this adjustment, making the parks more functional for users.



More to Come

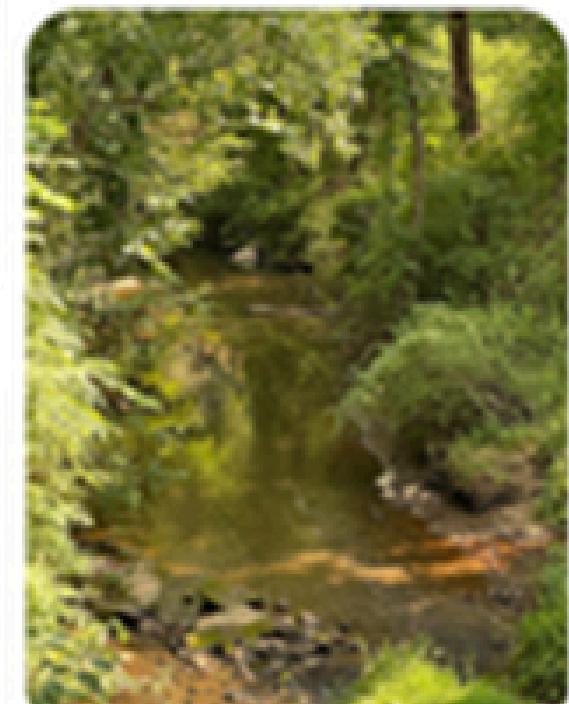
New ideas for 2025:

- Discounted park tickets to the zoo, Kennywood, etc.
- Recycling plastic into Trex Benches program
- The McCandless Experience – win a ride to school in a DPW dump truck, ToM Police car, and more
- Movies at Vestal Field
- Collection Bins at Town Hall for various local charities
- Rain Garden Workshop
- Memorial Day on Memorial Drive
- Easter Egg Hunt returns!
- Planning for the 175th Anniversary in 2026
- ...and much more!



PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

**Our work is where
McCandless plays!**



Website

www.townofmccandless.org

Email

alucostic@townofmccandless.org

Phone

412-364-0616 x124