

COUNTY OF BEAVER

PARK PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT DONATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy defines the types of allowable park physical improvement donations, the procedures to approve them, and the conditions and timelines under which they are allowed to remain within Beaver County parks.

PURPOSE OF PARK PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT DONATIONS

Beaver County's parks are developed, maintained and operated for the benefit of the general public. As with other public infrastructure, resources needed to run the park system are limited and donations from private entities, sometimes in the form of memorials, offer a way to make improvements that may not be implemented with existing resources. Park physical improvements donations often have two components:

- 1) Park Physical Improvement
- 2) Donor Recognition Component

The "Donor Recognition Component" of a park physical improvement donation should be incidental to the "Park Physical Improvement." The "Park Physical Improvement" should fulfill an identified need in our park system while the "Donor Recognition Component" should not detract from the public enjoyment of the installation or surrounding park. As delineated in this policy, opportunities for physical improvement donations may be limited in a given park and the physical improvement, like other park infrastructure, have a limited useful life. Therefore, it may not be possible to accept physical improvement donations in some locations and it is understood that approved installations will be removed when they are no longer serviceable or conflict with other park system needs.

DEFINITIONS

- 1) ***Dedications:*** To remember or honor a particular person, organization or entity. A dedication means that the facility or equipment may bear a plaque or marker stating the dedication to the person, organization or entity. Facility or equipment include, but are not limited to:

Art Installations	Gazebo
Book	Picnic Shelter
Distinctive portion of facility	Playground
Fountain	Playing Field
Furnishing	Retaining Wall
Garden	Section of Greenway or Trail

- 2) **Memorial:** An object that is dedicated to preserve a memory of a person, pet, group, association, event, or occasion. Potential objects may include, but are not limited to:

Commemorative Art	Commemorative Markers
Commemorative Bench	Commemorative Monuments
Commemorative Garden or Tree	

POLICY

Memorials should further satisfy at least one of the following:

- 1) To honor/recognize deceased loved one/pet, outstanding citizens who have been deceased for a least one year.
- 2) To enhance the aesthetics of the park/area in which the memorial is located. To ensure consistency in park design, memorial benches must be within the scope of the park or the County's Master Plan. No concrete, granite, or stone benches are allowed for park memorials.
- 3) To serve a functional purpose for the park/area in which the memorial is located.
- 4) To contribute to the environment of the area immediately surrounding the memorial.

Dedications will only be considered where they satisfy at least one of the following criteria:

- 1) Person of outstanding civic service to Beaver County
- 2) Significant historic places or events for national, state or local significance
- 3) Significant financial contribution or material to the mission of Beaver County
- 4) Documented community support through a catalog program

The placement of memorials will take into account the number of existing memorials, artworks or other objects in the vicinity of the proposed new dedication or memorial.

Existing memorials or plaques cannot be employed as precedent for future approvals.

This policy does not involve naming of buildings or facilities.

This policy is not about public art, unless the art is commemorative.

Placement of dedication markers, plaques and memorials shall:

- Conserves the natural, heritage and cultural character and environment of the County's public facilities and open space. While appropriate dedication markers, plaques, and memorials may enrich an area, public facility, and open space they are recognized as precious commodities. Therefore, monuments, memorials, markers and plaques will be carefully reviewed to balance these public benefits to protect the greater good.
- Not present a safety risk now or in the future.

For the purposes of this policy, park physical improvement donations have been divided into three categories: *Standard Benches and Trees*, *Other Park Physical Improvement Donations* and *Park Donation Recognition Areas*. The policy governing each category is as follows.

Standard Benches and Trees

- Under the direction of the Public Works Director, staff will establish a standard, model of bench and donor recognition plaque which suits the needs of the park system and is readily available.
- Staff, specific to each park, shall identify allowable locations and the number of standard park bench locations to ensure that only benches needed to enhance the park are installed and that they do not detract from the intended park experience.
- Allowable tree species and locations shall be consistent with the nature of the specific park and shall be in a location where the tree will thrive.
- The Public Works Director and the Parks & Recreation Director will work together in determining the standards to be used for benches and trees as outlined in this policy.
- Donors will be provided with a copy of this policy at the time they pick-up or download the Parks Physical Improvement Donation Application and prior to submitting their application to the County.

- The donor shall make application to the Parks & Recreation Department for either a standard bench or tree:
 - Standard bench – the donor shall be responsible for the delivered cost of the bench as well as the concrete slab under the bench. The donation application will include payment to the County for the cost of the concrete slab installation. Once the application is approved by staff, the donor will purchase the bench directly from the County-approved vendor, and the bench will be delivered to the County. The County will then coordinate the installation of the bench and concrete slab under the bench.
 - Tree – the donor shall be responsible for the delivered cost of the tree. The donation application will include payment to the County for the delivered cost of the tree. Once the application is approved, the County will purchase the tree with the funds provided and cover all costs associated with planting the tree.
- For standard benches, the donor shall be responsible for engraving the standard recognition plaque. The County will install the plaque once engraved.
- Photos, pictures or depictions of the recognition subject are prohibited on the bench recognition plaque.
- Logos, symbols or graphics are limited to no more than 50% of the total space on the bench recognition plaque.
- Language included on the bench recognition plaque is subject to the following restrictions:
 - Shall not directly or indirectly endorse or promote unlawful activity.
 - Shall not directly or indirectly endorse or promote age-restricted products such as alcohol or tobacco products, or other products generally considered detrimental to health, welfare or safety of children.
 - Shall not directly or indirectly endorse or promote sexually explicit language/signs or graphics, including signs that describe sexual conduct in a patently offensive manner.
 - Shall not directly advertise market or promote a business, organization or charitable cause by including a sales pitch, phone number, website address, social media address or QR code.
 - Shall not proselytize a particular point of view enhancing or inhibiting a religion or contain political viewpoints or materials that would entangle the County.
 - Shall not contain violent or defamatory explicit language or pictures.
 - Shall not directly or indirectly indicate that the participation of persons is unwelcome, objectionable or not solicited because of age, color, creed,

disability, gender identity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

- Memorialize/honor a person/pet that is not deceased.
 - All language is subject to approval of the Beaver County Board of Commissioners
- All plaques are intended to recognize a person, or a group of people, or an event, and the language/engraving on the plaque shall reflect that intent. All other types of proposed park physical improvement donations will be reviewed on an individual basis (see Other Park Physical Improvement Donations section below). No plaques will be placed at tree installations.
- The County will take normal care to protect and maintain benches and trees. Benches and trees will be removed at the County's sole discretion for, including but not limited to, the following reasons:
 - If they conflict with other needed park improvement.
 - If they are vandalized beyond reasonable repair.
 - If they have exceeded their useful service life or no longer meet the character of the park or Park Master Plan.
- The County will attempt to contact the donor via US mail based on the information provided on the Parks Physical Improvement Donation Application to inform them of the pending removal or relocation of their donated bench or tree. This notice shall be effective upon mailing. Donor will be given 10 days' notice prior to removal or relocation unless immediate removal or relocation is required due to safety concerns. The Department of Public Works will hold removed materials for 90 days for pickup after notification has been sent. If it is determined to be in the best interest of the park system, the donor may be afforded the opportunity to repair or replace the bench or tree at their expense.
- The County is not obligated to repair or replace the bench or tree.
- The donation will be formally accepted by the Board of Commissioners.
- Thank you letters will be sent to donors.
- Upon installation, the bench or tree becomes the property of the County.
- Occasionally, members of the public will donate small to medium sized amenities or fixtures such as Eagle Scout projects. The acceptance of these donations shall follow the same policy guidelines as listed above for Standard Benches and Trees.
- Benches and trees that were installed prior to the approval date of this policy may remain in the park under the terms of this policy. Existing benches and trees will be removed, refurbished, modified or replaced in the manner provided for in this policy.

Other Park Physical Improvement Donations

- All other types of proposed park physical improvement donations will be reviewed on an individual basis. The following items will be considered when reviewing such proposals:
 - The extent to which the park function of the donation proposal satisfies identified needs with Beaver County's park system.
 - Integration, both visually and functionally, of the donation proposed into the park.
 - Whether the proposed park physical improvement donation is at a site identified in the County's Master Plan of locations for potential physical improvement donation in selected County parks, which serve as a guide to individuals requesting park physical improvement donations.
 - The balance between the donor recognition component of the donation and the park physical improvement. To be approved, the donor recognition component must be incidental to the park physical improvement, and should not detract from the public's enjoyment of the installation, nor the surrounding park.
 - Physical improvement donations are not to be large or ostentatious, nor of a design that places the focus on the donor recognition component versus the park physical improvement.
 - The park physical improvement and associated recognition component shall not give the appearance of an edifice or monument that would typically be found in a cemetery. The following types of park physical improvement donations are not acceptable:
 - Polished granite-type markers that are similar in style to grave markers, gravestones or other cemetery monuments
 - Photos, pictures or depictions of the recognition subject
 - In most cases, the donor recognition component of the proposal will be limited to two (2) square feet of area (e.g. 12" x 24" or 17" x 17") and will be placed in a non-visually prominent location within the installation.
 - Graphics on the recognition component must be related to the park or architectural aspect of the donation and will not directly reference or depict the subject of the donation.
 - Logos, symbols or graphics are limited to no more than 50% of the total space on the donor recognition component.
 - Audio/video displays are prohibited.

- Language included on the physical improvement donation is subject to the following restrictions:
 - Shall not directly or indirectly endorse or promote unlawful activity.
 - Shall not directly or indirectly endorse or promote age-restricted products such as alcohol or tobacco products, or other products generally considered detrimental to health, welfare or safety of children.
 - Shall not directly or indirectly endorse or promote sexually explicit language/signs or graphics, including signs that describe sexual conduct in a patently offensive manner.
 - Shall not directly advertise market or promote a business, organization or charitable cause by including a sales pitch, phone number, website address, social media address or QR code.
 - Shall not proselytize a particular point of view enhancing or inhibiting a religion or contain political viewpoints or materials that would entangle the County.
 - Shall not contain violent or defamatory explicit language or pictures.
 - Shall not directly or indirectly indicate that the participation of persons is unwelcome, objectionable or not solicited because of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
 - Shall not memorialize/honor a person/pet that is not deceased.
 - Shall be a donation to recognize a person, group or people or an event, and the language/engraving on the plaque shall reflect that intent. All other language will be reviewed on an individual basis.
 - All language is subject to approval of the Beaver County Board of Commissioners
- An agreement will be drafted between the donor and the County that includes the following:
 - Clear description of the proposed installation
 - Outline of financial obligations (in most cases, the entire financial burden will lie with the donor).
 - Recognition of no tax benefit to the donor in donating to the County
 - Clarification of maintenance responsibilities (in most cases, any maintenance requirements beyond what is currently provided by the County will be the donor's responsibility).
 - Outline of the conditions and timeframe for the eventual removal of the installation.

- The proposal, along with a report and recommendation from staff, will be presented to The Park and Recreation Advisory Board for review and for their recommendation regarding approval to the Board of Commissioners.
- Final approval and acceptance of the park physical improvement donation and the associated agreement by the Board of Commissioners is required.
- The County will take normal care to protect and maintain park physical improvement donations. Park physical improvement donations will be removed at the County's sole discretion for, including but not limited to, the following reasons:
 - If they conflict with other needed park improvement.
 - If they are vandalized beyond reasonable repair.
 - If they have exceeded their useful service life or no longer meet the character of the park or Park Master Plan.
- The County will attempt to contact the donor to inform them of the pending removal of their park physical improvement. If it is determined to be in the best interest of the park system, the donor may be afforded the opportunity to repair, replace or take possession of the memorial at the donor's expense.
- The County is not obligated to repair or replace the park physical improvement donation.
- The donation will be formally accepted by the Board of Commissioners.
- Thank you letters will be sent to donors.
- Upon installation, the memorial becomes the property of the County.
- Park physical improvement donations that were installed prior to the approval date of this policy may remain in the park under the terms of this policy. Existing park physical improvement donations will be removed, refurbished, modified or replaced in the manner provided for in this policy as a non-conforming physical improvement donation. At such time that the non-conforming park physical improvement donations, in sole discretion of the County, have exceeded their useful life, are vandalized beyond reasonable repair, conflict with other park improvements, or no longer meet the character of the park or Park Master Plan, the donated improvements will be removed. Any "grandfathered in" improvements that are requested to be refurbished, modified or replaced must comply with the current Park Physical Improvement Donation Policy.

Park Donation Recognition Areas

- The Board of Commissioners may designate a County Park or a defined section of a County park as a "park donation recognition area."

- “Park donation recognition areas” shall be intended to recognize a prominent or historic person, a significant event or a notable group of people, such as a veterans’ memorial.
- “Park donation recognition areas” are not cemeteries and the remains of humans, pets, etc. are not permitted to be interred in a County park.
- Designated “park donation recognition areas” would permit the installation of large structures, fountains, statues, plazas, flag poles, audio/visual displays, markers and gardens.
- “Park donation recognition areas” shall be public spaces designed and developed primarily by the County’s Park & Recreation Department as a component of the County’s park system.
- While the County may choose to partner with individuals or groups to develop and maintain “park donation recognition areas,” these are County park facilities and not privately-donated facilities.
- The County shall have full authority as to the location, design, amenities, operations and maintenance of “park donation recognition areas.”

PROCEDURE

Memorial requests are initiated by completing a Parks Physical Improvement Donation Application (see attached) which is available online at www.BeaverCountyPA.gov or by picking one up at the Brady’s Run Recreation Center.

Applications will be forwarded on the Director of Parks & Recreation. The Parks & Recreation Director will make decisions based on the areas defined within “park donation recognition areas” on park physical improvement donations/memorial requests for items that are considered to be typical park amenities (e.g. benches and trees).

Applications for park physical improvement donations that are not considered to be typical park amenities shall be referred to the Park and Recreation Advisory Board with staff recommendation and submitted by recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

All costs associated with the proposed memorial or dedication, including planning, design, construction, utilities and routine maintenance for a minimum of ten years shall be the sole responsibility of the person(s) or organization(s) requesting the memorial or dedication.

- Full funding for the memorial or dedication shall be paid prior to the start of planning, design, and construction. The estimated cost of routine maintenance for a minimum of ten years may be deposited in an escrow account. Escrow accounts shall not be required for catalog programs.
- Donors will be required to sign a statement acknowledging that the County is under no obligation to absorb future costs to maintain or to replace stolen, vandalized, irreparably damaged or destroyed dedication or memorial installations.
- The County may consider contributing funds to a dedication or memorial only when the dedication or memorial is for a purpose that has broadly affected the community.
- In the event that a dedication or memorial installation is damaged, and in the event the original applicant chooses not to fund repairs/replacement, or the original applicant is no longer in existence, the Board of Commissioners may resolve to either repair or remove the dedication or memorial.

In all cases involving memorials and dedications, only the memorial or dedication itself may be named. The facility name shall remain unchanged.

The location, design and configuration of a proposed memorial or dedication shall be in keeping with the facility purpose and usage and shall not interfere with the public's use of the facility.

The type, size, font, and placement of plaques, monuments and signs installed or placed at County facilities shall be at the sole discretion of the County.



**Beaver County
Parks Physical Improvement
Donation
Application**

DATE SUBMITTED: _____

ORGANIZATION NAME: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ **PHONE:** _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

EMAIL: _____

PURPOSE OF MEMORIAL: _____

PROPOSED LOCATION: _____

DATE OF DEATH OF PERSON/PET TO BE MEMORIALIZED: _____

PROPOSED IDENTIFICATION/INSCRIPTION (No more than 5 lines):

Please submit application to:

Parks & Recreation Director

121 Bradys Run Road

Beaver Falls, PA 15010

(Over)

I agree to all provision outlined in the Parks Physical Improvement Donation Policy.

Applicant signature

Department use only:

Reviewed and approved

Reviewed and referred to Park & Recreation Advisory Board

Director of Parks & Recreation signature

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: _____
