Manatee County
FLORIDA

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2021

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*The **Manatee County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Master Plan** is the direct result of a collaborative effort between the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department and the Planning and Infrastructure staff. We extend our sincere appreciation to the residents, business owners, elected officials, and stakeholders who participated in the planning process and guided the development of this plan. Everyone's time, input, and energy are greatly appreciated.*

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Introduction 1

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1 MANATEE COUNTY OVERVIEW

Manatee County, located on Florida's west coast, is a diverse community in its population and its habitat. The County is home to a wide variety of environments which range from coastal communities and barrier islands in the west to urban communities in the central portion of the county, eventually giving way to suburban and rural areas to the east. Manatee County is home to the cities of Bradenton, Palmetto, Holmes Beach, Anna Maria, Bradenton Beach and portions of Long Boat Key. It is also home to a number of unincorporated communities (Rural Population Centers) including Cortez, Duette, Myakka, Oneco, Parrish, and Samoset. Manatee County contains significant natural resources including the Manatee River, Braden River, and Lake Manatee. The county boasts a diverse economy supporting its population including Port Manatee, Tropicana, Pierce Manufacturing, Manatee School Board, Manatee Memorial Hospital, and the Pittsburgh Pirates.

Manatee County operates over 70 park locations encompassing approximately 30,214 acres ranging from regional parks (Bennett Park, Coquina Beach Park), preserves (Duette, Robinson, Perico Preserve), and district parks (G.T. Bray, Buffalo Creek), to local parks (Blackstone, Pride Community Park, Whitfield Park), in addition to over 80 miles of trails. Within the county are private sporting venues and training facilities including the IMG Academy Sports Complex.

Manatee County's location in the region can be viewed as an asset. It's a community that has excellent access to highways (Interstate 75, Interstate 275, U.S. 41, U.S. 301), is served by a international airport – Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ), and provides its residents and visitors a wide range of environments and amenities including miles of beaches along the Gulf of Mexico, large preserves, and access to the Manatee River, Braden River, Sarasota Bay and the Intra-coastal Waterway.

The County is generally segmented into four quadrants with Interstate 75 serving as the divider running north-south, while the Manatee River serves as the County's east-west dividing line. The more urbanized areas are generally west of Interstate 75 while many of the suburban and rural areas are located east of the interstate, including Lakewood Ranch, a large-scale master planned community adjacent to Interstate 75. The southwest quadrant includes the County's urban core and is home to a majority of the population. This quadrant is generally built out, albeit there are multiple large scale developments which could support additional population much like Lakewood Ranch in the southeast.

Manatee County is home to over 387,000 persons with a median age of 49.4. This number has grown by over 64,000 persons since 2010 and is expected to reach 519,200 by 2040. (*US Census Bureau; Bureau of Economic and Business Research*). The County's leadership realizes that a growing population with ever-changing demographics requires a unique review of its parks and natural resources to ensure the level of service residents have come to expect is sustained for future generations. A growing population creates more opportunities to enhance the quality of life but also places increased demand on many facets of the County's services and infrastructure, including parks and preserves.

Based on these and other factors, Manatee County has taken the progressive step to prepare a Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan that aims to identify public facility needs as well as opportunities for continued success. This Plan looks not only at the short term but provides a visionary look at the needs in the future.

2 THE BENEFITS OF PARKS & TRAILS

Park and recreation facilities provide essential health and wellness opportunities for all populations for Manatee County's residents and visitors. Recreational facilities and opportunities, both active and passive, can encourage healthy lifestyles which in turn can lead to reduced (negative) health related issues, increased property values and a reduction in crime. An efficient, effective Parks, Recreation and Open Space system can support and promote healthy behaviors, improve community safety, provide spaces where people can live, work and play, and also provide for positive environmental and fiscal impacts on the community.

Public Health Benefits

"Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they exercise more. Regular physical activity has been shown to increase health and reduce the risk of a wide range of diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes. Physical activity also relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety, improves mood, and enhances psychological well-being. Beyond the benefits of exercise, a growing body of research shows that contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health."[1]

"Despite the importance of exercise, only 25 percent of American adults engage in the recommended levels of physical activity, and 29 percent engage in no leisure-time physical activity. The sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy diet of Americans have produced an epidemic of obesity."[1] In Manatee County 23 percent of adults are sedentary and 62 percent of residents are overweight or obese according to the 2015 Manatee County Community Health Assessment (CHA). *"The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called for the creation of more parks and playgrounds to help fight this epidemic."*[1]

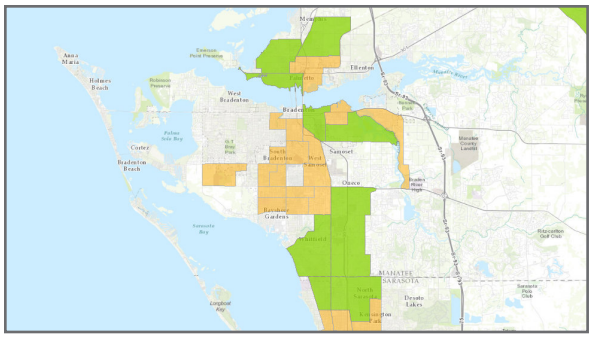
Childhood obesity has become a major public health problem. The obesity rate has doubled for children and tripled for adolescents since 1980 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Childhood Obesity, 2005). Obesity contributes to approximately 300,000 annual deaths on average. The lack of physical activity is a significant factor in the growing obesity epidemic. Daily walking and biking used to be an integral part of kid's lives. Today, however, only 13 percent of children walk to school down from 48 percent in 1969 (USDOT, National Household Travel Survey, 2009). It should be noted that following focused investments in the Safe Routes to School program, data show that the decline in rates of walking and bicycling to school has stabilized. In addition, physical activity trend data for children indicate that one-third of adolescents are not getting recommended levels of exercise and 10 percent are completely inactive (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Childhood Obesity, 2005). In Manatee County only 22% of middle and high school students surveyed were physically active at least 60 minutes 7 days a week (Manatee County Community Health Assessment , 2015). People who reported using trails at least once a week were twice as likely to meet physical activity recommendations than people who reported rarely or never using trails according to a study published by the American Journal of Preventive Medicine (Librett et. al., Characteristics of Physical Activity Levels Among Trail Users, 2006).

Social Benefits

Parks also produce important social and community development benefits. They make neighborhoods, including inner city neighborhoods and economically depressed areas more livable; they offer recreational

1. The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space - Trust for Public Land (TPL)

opportunities for at-risk youth, low-income children, and low-income families; and they provide places in low-income neighborhoods where people can feel a sense of community. Access to public parks and recreational facilities has been strongly linked to reductions in crime and reduced juvenile delinquency. Parks can also offer information and services that help inform residents of healthy food options and the importance of nutrition. Community gardens increase residents' sense of community ownership and stewardship, provide a focus for neighborhood activities, expose inner-city youth to nature, connect people from diverse cultures, reduce crime by cleaning up vacant lots, and build community leaders. These types of areas can also help reduce food deserts. Food deserts are defined as parts of the country vapid of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food providers. Food providers are typically found in neighborhoods with limited food options and poor transportation.



Low-income census tracts where a significant number or share of residents is more than 1 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.

Low-income census tracts where a significant number or share of residents is more than 1/2 mile (urban) or 10 miles (rural) from the nearest supermarket.

Environmental Benefits

"Green space in urban areas provides substantial environmental benefits. Trees reduce air pollution and water pollution, they help keep urban areas cooler, and they are a more effective and less expensive way to manage stormwater runoff than building systems of concrete sewers and drainage ditches." Parks and preserves provide much needed habitat for wildlife and provide bio-diversity. Duette Preserve is home to one of the region's largest scrub jay habitats, a species that is listed on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as a threatened species.

Crime Reduction Benefits

Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces not only contribute to an active, healthy lifestyle, these community assets also contribute to reductions in crime and increases in property values. In a 2014 Study, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) noted, specific to after school programs, *"Participation in extracurricular activities is correlated with higher self-esteem, academic achievement and lower delinquency."*

A 2015 study (Structured Recreation Programming Can Help Reduce Juvenile Crime, 2015), noted,

"In the unsupervised time between when school ends and parents return from work, children are far more likely to commit crime, engage in risky behaviors or be victims of crime. Studies have shown that the most essential requisite for programs to reduce delinquency is that they provide structured, supervised activities to youth."

Furthermore and consistent with the NRPA 2014 Study, this study noted, *"Studies on active, structured recreation focused on youth have shown strong relationships to positive outcomes. Youths who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely than non-participants to have higher self-esteem, greater academic achievement and lower incidences of delinquency."*

Because the types of leisure in which youth participate have profound impacts on social development, active and adult-supervised recreation programming available through park agencies are positioned perfectly to equip youth with the tools that develop positive social and cognitive skills, self confidence and a sense of community.

Economic Benefits

Trails build strong, economically vital communities. Trails, according to a National Association of Homebuilders study cited by the New York Times, are the number one amenity potential homeowners cite when they are looking at moving into a new community. Trails provide communities with a valuable amenity that translates into increased housing values. In Indianapolis, for example, the increased property value associated with proximity to trails was estimated at more than $140 million (Lindsey et. al., Public Choices and Property Values: Evidence from Greenways in Indianapolis, 2003).

Trails build local businesses. Bicycle tourists, a growing, affluent segment of the tourist market, contribute significantly to local businesses that are well-connected to trails. Along the Virginia Creeper Trail in southwest Virginia, visitors spend $1.59 million annually providing an estimated 27 new full-time jobs (Bowker et. al., Virginia Creeper Trail: An Analysis of Use, Economic Impacts, Visitors' Characteristics, and Preferences, 2004).

Economics of Parks

(Florida Case Studies)

There are numerous studies and analyses that quantify the economic benefits of parks in a community. Two such studies are summarized below.

- A 2003 study of almost 7,000 single family homes in Leon County, Florida showed that homes within 200 feet of a park were worth an estimated $6,015 increase in value. Homes between 200 and 1,320 feet of the park increased in value by an average of $1,773. In more densely populated areas (over 2,500 people per square mile) the premiums for property within 200 feet of the park rose to approximately $14,000.

- In Tallahassee, Florida homes within 200 feet of Myers Park, a 47-acre natural park, sold for $24,600 more than comparable homes farther away. Homes bordering Maclay State Gardens Park had a premium of $47,000. Those within 200 feet showed a premium of $21,000. The total properties within 200 miles of Maclay State Gardens Park added over $6 million to the property tax base.

Property Value Benefits

Property Values are another part of the equation. Multiple studies, including Measuring the Impact of Parks on Property Values (Nicholls), identify the fiscal benefits of Parks on a community. Studies vary based on geographic location and types of parks facilities; however, most communities experienced increased property values ranging between a low of 2-3 percent to over 10 percent where the properties are within one-half mile of the park or adjacent; respectively. A significant portion of the key research tend to arrive at a similar point, proximity to the park facility (or greenway) are a key factor in property values in that the closer to the facility the higher the property values tend to be. The Trust for Public Land's 2009 analysis, "Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System" expanded beyond just the property value and health benefits of parks, they also identified increases in out-of-town (visitor) spending (tourism), community cohesion, and Environmental Savings through reductions in the costs of managing stormwater and also removal of air pollution.

The American Planning Association sums up the benefits of Parks and Recreation Facilities to a community in their briefing, "How Cities use parks for Economic Development". *"Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits to our cities. They are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in home-buyers and workers, and attract retirees. At the bottom line, parks are a good financial investment for a community."*

Walking and Bicycling

Active transportation is travel powered by human energy with walking and biking the most common examples (Rails-to-Trails Conservancy 2007). To encourage more walking and biking, communities must create active transportation systems that consist of seamless networks of accessible trails, sidewalks and on-road bike facilities. According to the 2015 Community Health Assessment only 2% of workers in Manatee County walk or ride a bicycle to work. At a time when nearly half of all trips made in the urbanized area are three miles or less (USDOT, National Household Travel Survey, 2009), and the clear majority of these short trips taken by automobile, the practicality and wisdom of making biking and walking mainstream transportation options are undeniable. Especially when connected with transit, a new host of mobility choices are made available through active transportation. Active transportation must grow to meet the nation's mobility needs while fostering vibrant healthy places. Specific implementation strategies for projects in the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan are needed to elevate greenway trails, biking, and walking as local transportation priorities and present a strong case for increased investment in trails, biking and walking.

3 PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

Parks are fixed assets, but the recreation needs of the population are ever evolving. The citizens of Manatee County have participated in a variety of public workshops in the past 15 years. These projects included the evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan, *Imagine Manatee, How Will We Grow?, the Urban Land Institute's Panel Report,* and recent millennial oriented outreach events including *iSeeManatee* and the *Millennial Convention (MCon)*.

Participants have been passionate about recreation, open space, and opportunities for both indoor and outdoor activity. **The Manatee County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (PROS Master Plan)** will look at the changes that have been occurring, reach out to the public, and develop a plan for the next 15 years that will allow the County to develop and maximize its recreation and open space assets.

The PROS Master Plan will focus primarily on County maintained parks and preserves. While federal, state, city, and private parks all play significant roles in meeting residents' recreation needs, their upkeep, programming, quality and quantity are not determined by the County.

This plan is made up of five (5) key phases, also known as **"Steps to Success"** listed on page 13, which build towards the ultimate (final) master plan. These steps outline the public process undertaken in the development of this master plan and build on the goals identified herein. The general Goals of this plan include:

- Engage the community, leadership, and stakeholders in a meaningful and creative public input process to build a shared vision for parks, recreation, and open spaces that supports the economic and community goals of the County.
- Utilize a wide variety of data sources and best practices to identify trends and patterns of use and how to address unmet (future) needs in the County.
- Determine unique Level of Service Standards for the County to project appropriate and prudent actions regarding program services, parks, open space, amenities, trails, and natural resources.
- Shape financial and operational preparedness through innovative and "next" practices in revenue generation to achieve the strategic objectives, recommended actions, and implementation strategies outlined in the plan.
- Align with national (recommended) standards of conservation, social equity, and health and wellness through "next" practices in order for the County to achieve the strategic objectives and recommended actions, goals, and implementation strategies outlined in the plan.

Steps to Success

Phase 1

Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment

- Review and analyze relevant surveys, studies, planning documents, and geographic information systems (GIS) mapping data.
- Review and analysis of growth projections, land use guidelines, and desired growth patterns as they effect existing and proposed parks.
- Park visits to develop an inventory of park amenities, assess conditions, and gain an understanding of Land maintenance practices.
- Analysis of County demographics.
- Conduct a comparative analysis of the existing County Levels of Service (LOS) compared with surrounding counties and national benchmarks.
- County parks operation and maintenance assessment.
- Stakeholder Interviews.
- Recreational Lifestyle analysis using projected demographic and market segmentation data.
- Existing conditions and needs assessment analysis.

Phase 2

Public Input & Prioritization

- Conduct County outreach meetings to solicit feedback.
- Develop an online survey for use by the County to solicit feedback.
- Assist the County in developing a web-based site to provide information regarding project updates and schedules and to solicit feedback.
- Complete a presentation to the County Commission regarding the findings from the existing conditions and needs assessment phase.

Phase 3

Parks Vision

- Facilitate a parks workshop to develop guiding principles, recommended LOS standards, and long range strategies.
- Develop strategies for park improvements and priorities.
- Prepare an opinion of probable costs to implement each of the improvement elements identified on the Parks and Recreation Vision Map and Summary Document.
- Develop vision summary documents including a Conceptual Parks Master Plan.

Phase 4

Implementation Strategy

- Conduct an Implementation Workshop with key county officials to discuss alternative funding and implementation strategies.
- Develop an Implementation Strategies and Opportunities Plan including plans for acquisition of new property as well as maintenance and renovation of existing property, partnerships with Manatee County School District, health and wellness initiatives, financial strategy, and recommended changes to the County's Land Development Regulations.

Phase 5

Parks Master Plan

- Summary of documents from Phase 1-4.
- Presentation of draft Parks Master Plan to the County Commission.
- Creation of a final master plan document as well as related documents.

Existing Conditions 2

1 - Introduction

2 - Parks & Natural Resources Department

3 - Programs

4 - Facilities Overview

5 - Demographics

6 - Key Findings

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine all facets of the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department to obtain a clear understanding of the current state of the department. Through a systematic of research and geospatial/ demographic analysis, a clear picture is formed. Taking inventory is a necessary step in any planning effort and the Existing Conditions chapter will set the stage for a Needs Assessment, a formal inspection of the department, taking place in the next chapter.

Key Findings

Through a careful examination of current conditions, it is apparent the existing parks and natural resources system is a strength of the County. There are challenges, however, and external conditions may exacerbate those challenges. These conditions are the quickly growing population and its dynamic nature. The demographics are skewing towards an older, wealthier median and the center of population is quickly moving East. The Parks and Natural Resources Department must make best use of the funds available to capitalize on opportunities and respond to evolving desires like bike trails and greenways. A review of the key findings, listed below, can be found on *page 38.*

- **Strong Existing Parks and Natural Resources System**
- **Improve upon existing, add strategically**
- **Shifting population = shifting needs**
- **Department must keep up with existing growth**
- **Regional Trail Growth**

The Department

The Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department consists of seven program areas - Administration Leadership Team, Resource Management, Ecological & Marine Services, Environmental Protection and Mining Regulation & Services, Recreation, Agriculture & Extension, and Programming Education & Volunteer, the roles of which will be explored later in this chapter. The Parks and Natural Resources Department is made up of 103 full-/part-time and 98 seasonal staff, interns, and/or other professional services as needed responsible for a wide range of programs and facilities.

Within the department there are two primary groups responsible for park operations, those that focus on the active parks (e.g., G.T. Bray Park, Lakewood Ranch Park, Buffalo Creek Park, etc.) and those that work in the preserves (e.g. Emerson Point, Robinson Preserve, Duette Preserve, etc.). This does not include the Property Management's - Parks/Grounds Maintenance Division which provides the department with ongoing maintenance of many of the County's parks, beaches, and public facilities. The department's Recreation Division provides an array of wellness and fitness programs along with youth and adult athletic league programs including basketball, softball, volleyball and flag football. The Recreation Division is also responsible for operating the County's aquatic centers (G.T. Bray, Willie J. "Bro" Clemons Jr. Pool at East Bradenton Park and the John H. Marble Pool) as well as two stand-alone "splash pads" at Lincoln Park and Pride Community Park. The Resource Management Division is responsible for maintaining and restoring the County's conservation properties, including the County's marine environments (artificial reefs, aids to navigation, and manatee protection) amounting to nearly 30,000 acres of natural lands. The roles and responsibilities of each division are explored further in the diagram on *page 18*. Together these groups work to provide recreation and open space experiences to the residents and visitors of Manatee County.

2 OUR DEPARTMENT

Although the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan will focus mainly on the Resource Management and Recreation programs, it is important to understand the full breadth of the Parks and Natural Resources Department. The roles and responsibilities of each of the Department's seven main programs are listed below. See page 22 "Additional Programs" specific to the Property Management - Grounds Maintenance Division.

Parks and Natural Resources Department

Administration Leadership Team

The Parks and Natural Resources Department's Administrative Leadership Team ensures the office provides support to all customers with expert knowledge in various areas of expertise that's required to run a department successfully and keeping it moving in the right direction. This team consists of the director, administrative and fiscal services support, and a human resources liaison and contracts manager.

The department director leads six divisions and their programs. While each division operates under a division manager, the beach renourishment project has been managed by the director for the last 25 years. The Anna Maria Island beach renourishment project consists of 9-miles of sandy beach coastline which provides citizens abundant recreational activities while at the same time serves as a buffer to lessen the damages to private property, emergency evacuation routes and public property. Over time, these beaches require renourishment due to coastal storms and natural erosion which displace the sand. This renourishment effort takes coordination on the director's part to also participate with the State of Florida and the federal government through cost sharing as well as regular cleaning and maintenance under the county's beach raking permit. In addition, the director is responsible for the development of environmental grants from state and federal sources benefiting Manatee County and serves as the County Commissioner's congressional liaison working closely with the federal lobbyists in Washington D.C. that affect the future of Manatee County.

Remaining members of the Administrative Leadership Team share in office responsibilities including administrative day-to-day operations, all aspects of human resources support for the entire department, fiscal assistance preparing and managing the annual budget with the development of Capital Improvement Projects, processing invoices and travel reimbursements, and purchasing products/services/supplies for staff. Team staff also handle contracts and agreements with requirements set forth in those documents between the County and its vendors, and they apply for and track grants and funding received from various sources.

Resource Management

The Resource Management Division was established to conserve and protect natural and cultural resources under the ownership and/or management of Manatee County, while maintaining and

restoring the ecological integrity of the historic native ecosystems. This program manages

and maintains over 30,000 acres contained in 16 public preserves in the county. The Resource Management staff continually work to restore or enhance disturbed and degraded areas of our county conservation lands to their native condition by using natural processes of prescribed burns in combination with mechanical cutting and clearing. Invasive, non-native plant species which negatively alter natural plant communities are removed by select application of herbicide. Water resource protection is a primary factor in land management and land use decisions.

The Resource Management program endeavors to provide excellent visitor experiences and access to these beautiful natural areas by maintaining all facilities and a wide array of passive and active recreational amenities and programs including multi-use trails, paddle trails, canoe/kayak launches, boardwalks, observation towers, pavilions, and a recreational hunt program.

Ecological & Marine Services

The Ecological & Marine Services staff is tasked with such responsibilities as design and maintenance of the waterside components of county boat ramp facilities, inspection and repair/replacement of county owned aids to navigation, channel markers, as well as boating safety and manatee protection zones. Division staff responsibilities also include the investigation and removal of abandoned vessels, and deployment and maintenance of artificial reefs throughout county waters. Program staff work extensively with state and local regulatory and law enforcement personnel regarding issues involving county waters.

This division develops funding, partnerships design work, and provides project management for complex habitat restoration, creation, and mitigation projects for the county and provides science-based consultation for resource management activities.

Environmental Protection and Mining Regulation & Services

The Environmental Protection program protects our streams, rivers and bays through the implementation of numerous programs by regulating the land application of domestic wastewater residuals (the semisolid by-product of the sewage treatment process), maintaining the county's compliance with its state issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit which ensures our stormwater systems carry the cleanest water possible, reviewing proposed developments for their water quality impacts and collecting and analyzing water samples, and implementing management plans in support of numerous local, regional, state and federal water quality programs, including three National Estuary Programs and the USEPA Clean Water Act Program - Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL). Water resource data collected and evaluated by the division are used to develop watershed management strategies to ensure compliance with environmental regulations and provide the citizens with healthy, productive water bodies.

This program protects groundwater resources through Pollutant Storage Tanks (PST), Small Quantity Hazardous Waste Generators (SQG) and Water Well Construction Permitting activities. PST activities ensure that petroleum storage tanks (such as at gas stations) are properly constructed, installed, maintained and where necessary, removed in order to reduce the incidence of leaks or spills. SQG staff routinely inspect small businesses (such as vehicle repair shops), where small quantities of hazardous wastes are generated, to make sure these materials are handled and disposed of safely, thereby reducing environmental impacts and the risks of adverse health, safety and welfare conditions. The Water Well Construction Permitting

abandonment of water wells, and that the work is done only by licensed contractors and well-informed property owners. This oversight is critical to making clean water available to the consumer by protecting groundwater supplies from contamination caused by improper well drilling practices. This program also enforces the county fertilizer ordinance. Training and certification are provided to local landscapers on the proper use of fertilizers to reduce the potential nutrient-laden runoff into Manatee County waterways.

The Mining Regulation & Services program administers the County's Phosphate Mining and Reclamation Code and provides oversight on major earthmoving projects with a primary focus on phosphate mining and shell pit or borrow pit operations. The Phosphate Mining Code provides that mining activities are carried out in the most environmentally sensitive way possible and that reclamation restores the post-mining landscape to productive, beneficial use.

Additionally, the Environmental Protection program assists other county departments by providing monitoring services for wetland mitigation sites, evaluating compliance of regulated and non-regulated petroleum storage systems, and providing assistance in developing and reviewing environmental site assessments.

Recreation

The Recreation Division oversees the operations of over 40 active parks, partners in the design and development of new parks and amenities, and is responsible for all county park playgrounds, recreational programs and activities, including the operation of the G.T. Bray Recreation Center. This 50,000 square foot recreational complex includes a gym, aquatics facility, tennis center, fitness center, child watch, teen/game room, tennis, pickleball, and racquetball courts, a 50-meter pool, recreation/learn-to-swim pool, splash pad and kiddie pool. It also houses multipurpose rooms for youth programs, exercise and fitness classes, personal training sessions, rentals for birthday parties, social gatherings, a catering prep area and Wi-Fi. Front desk staff is responsible for processing payments for all programs and services offered, racquet repairs and stringing services, and maintaining the clay tennis courts three times per day. Staff also coordinate all county park and preserve pavilion rentals.

Athletics staff coordinate with youth and adult sports organizations serving 1,000 plus teams on over 70 athletic fields. Recreation athletic staff are also responsible for the Youth Camp Program, which includes the Summer Blast Camp, Teen Camp, specialty, and holiday camps that provide participants with a variety of supervised recreational activities and field trips. The aquatic staff manages three pool facilities at G.T. Bray, East Bradenton and John H. Marble Parks, which offer swim lessons and lifeguard training. Also managed by aquatics staff are two splash pads at Pride Park and Lincoln Park. Manatee County also partners with Sarasota County to offer the Gulf Coast Games for Life offering 20-plus sporting events to seniors ages 50 and above.

In August 2011, a franchise license agreement was signed with Pope Golf, LLC. to operate and maintain the Manatee County Golf Course and Buffalo Creek Golf Course. Both golf courses are regulation par 72 courses and operate as daily fee golf courses open for play to the general public with discounted rates for Manatee County residents. Franchise revenues are paid to the county based on a percentage of gross revenues. Manatee County also receives revenue through franchise license agreements with United Park Services, Inc to operate county owned concessions at Manatee and Coquina beaches, with Florida Boat Tours, Inc. to operate concessions at Jiggs Landing, and other vendors to operate the Coquina Beach Market and offer ice vending machines at boat ramps.

Agriculture & Extension Services

The Agriculture & Extension Services Division program provides research-based information through educational programming and application of best management practices on farms and in urban settings. These programs through partnerships with the Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences (IFAS), University of Florida Extension Services, and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Services enable citizens to solve problems and to capitalize on opportunities via increased agriculture production, energy and water conservation, in response to environmental issues and concerns, and provide leadership in the conservation and enhancement of natural resources. Citizen advisory committees assist in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the educational

Resource Conservation Services enable citizens to solve problems and to capitalize on opportunities via increased agriculture production, energy and water conservation, in response to environmental issues and concerns, and provide leadership in the conservation and enhancement of natural resources. Citizen advisory committees assist in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the educational emphasis for each subject matter area.

Master Gardeners provide citizens educational programs on how they can have beautiful landscapes that can save time, energy and money while protecting our future. Water Conservation staff provide university-based information to residents so they may learn to reduce their usage of drinking-quality water for irrigation while maintaining attractive, healthy landscapes. The division's Marine Extension program is a university-based program of research and education to promote the sustainable use of our marine and coastal resources. Program activities include habitat protection and restoration, artificial reef development, fisheries and resource management and aquaculture development.

Division staff provide educational programs, materials, and services relevant to the needs and desires of citizens, which enhance their economic status and/or quality of life. Family & Consumer Science educational programs link research, knowledge, and technology to the needs of individuals, families, and communities in the county. Staff are dedicated to strengthening families through education. The 4-H Youth program provides education through a "learn by doing" approach and helps young people acquire knowledge, develop life skills, and form attitudes to enable them to become self-directed, productive, and contributing members of society.

Programming, Education & Volunteer

The Programming, Education & Volunteer Division is responsible for maintaining a diverse offering of programs within Manatee County's conservation properties and parks all of which serve to connect participants to nature and inspire a spark of respect and wonder for the natural world.

The primary focus of this Division is to provide a variety of educational offerings to participants ranging in age from pre-school children to senior citizens. These hands-on, interpretive offerings are conducted all over the County, and beyond. Staff host over 500 free programs each year connecting with over 5,000 participants, primarily in Manatee County's "natural classrooms;" the preserves and parks that provide unique settings for educational opportunities Division staff provide passive recreational opportunities by offering guided paddles, hikes, archery and fishing programs. As the program expands, Division staff have accepted the new responsibility of managing, staffing, and creating programming for the Department's Nature Centers at Robinson and Rye Preserves and the environmental classrooms at Emerson Point and Robinson Preserves.

Volunteers form the backbone of the Parks and Natural Resources Department, and this Division is responsible for the recruitment, training, monitoring, and tracking of parks and preserves volunteers. In addition to maintaining the standing volunteer core of 100 individuals who regularly give time at each site, Division staff draw in over 2,000 annual participants to regularly scheduled cleanups and workdays. Each year, over 15,000 hours are donated by volunteers, serving to augment and support the work done by paid employees in these natural areas. This represents over $345,000 in donated time providing services ranging from manning the nature centers and providing additional educational programming to acting as auxiliary Rangers and conducting grant-required monitoring.

This program also maintains a variety of special projects and initiatives including managing the Department's social media and press presence as well as taking the lead to develop, update, and consult for the Department's website. The Division also maintains a graphic, layout, and design team that creates the art and layouts for preserve and park signage. Signature events, such as the annual Goblin Gathering, Fit-2-Run 5 and 10 K race, and Night Before Christmas events, are all coordinated, organized and executed by this Division, reaching over 5,000 participants each year. In addition to these internal events, staff permits over 200 special events throughout the County's parks and preserves annually, ensuring that visitors will experience a smooth and obstacle free day during their special event.

3 PROGRAMS

The Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department offers over 70 programs for residents of all ages. From day camps to sports leagues and health and safety classes, the County's many programs strive to get residents out into the community.

Athletics

The County currently runs athletic programs for a wide range of residents. Held at facilities throughout the county, adult softball and kickball leagues run year-round, as well as a popular senior softball league. Youth and adult basketball leagues are also held at G.T. Bray Park. The G.T. Bray tennis center hosts tennis and pickleball leagues on its hard surface and clay courts. Numerous private sports leagues and organizations also utilize the county's sports and recreational facilities.

Recreation Center

The County's recreation center, G.T. Bray, plays host to a variety of activities throughout the year which aim to keep residents active and involved. The Kids Club (child watch) program hosted by G.T. Bray is a useful resource for families. Health and fitness classes are offered at the complex's fitness and tennis center as well as music classes in one of G.T. Bray's indoor classrooms. Pavilion rentals are offered at the centralized front desk.

Youth Camps

The Parks and Natural Resources Department holds youth holiday camps at G.T. Bray Park. Blast Camp is a 10-week themed summer camp for the children of Manatee County also held at G.T. Bray and John H. Marble. Activities include sports, education, dance, nature, performing arts, health and wellness, and field trips. Blast Camp attendance exceeds 300 each summer.

Source: Manatee County provided - "Parks Department Programs_0816"

Aquatics

The County boasts an impressive variety of programs at its public aquatics facilities. Swim lessons for both youth and adults are offered at three of the County's facilities for those wanting to learn. High school, college, and even international swim teams use the County's facilities to practice and compete. CPR training programs and lifeguard certification classes are also offered.

Special Events/ Programs

Special events held by the County offer exciting ways to experience the many resources the County has to offer. A number of wildlife programs including paddle trips and bike rides as well as gardening classes and kids wildlife weekends take advantage of the County's beautiful preserves. Fishing and basic boating skills camps educate members of the community. The recreation center also holds a number of special events throughout the year including Halloween and Christmas themed activities.

Fitness

Fitness programs offered throughout the County include personal training and fitness equipment orientations, group 5k runs, and beach yoga classes at Manatee Beach. There are also health and wellness fairs which draw the participation of local businesses, and hospital partnerships with lunch and learns hosted at G.T. Bray.

Natural Resources

Duette Preserve offers a number of opportunities for sportsmen in the community. The Duette Hunt Programs offers big game, small game, turkey draw, and youth hunts. This is in addition to the many nature hikes and educational classes held to help residents celebrate the unique natural resources of Manatee County's 15-plus preserves.

Source: Manatee County provided - "Parks Department Programs_0816"

4 FACILITIES OVERVIEW

Facilities play several roles for the community. They act as attractions, services, and classrooms, and in some instances, all three. They act as the 'third space' - the place where you can enjoy time away from home or work - for many county residents.

The Manatee County Comprehensive Plan lists three park types (local, district, and regional) for the purposes of Level of Service standards. The definition for these park types as defined in the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

Local: A local park is a "walk-to" or "short drive-to" public or private park generally located along streets people can walk or bicycle without encountering heavy traffic. It serves the population of a neighborhood/community in radius of up to one and one-half miles and should have at least two acres for each 1,000 population or other space requirement as determined by adopted level of service standards. Its size usually ranges from five to ten acres and it serves a population of up to 5,000. Because the service areas of local parks and public schools often coincide, it is desirable for a local park to be contiguous to a public school, whenever possible. Both park and school serve the same basic population, share compatible land uses and contain recreation facilities that are mutually beneficial. Because recreation needs vary from one neighborhood to another, site design for local parks is flexible in order to meet the particular recreation needs of each neighborhood. Site design should also reflect the character of the neighborhood and incorporate compatible elements of both passive and active types of recreation. Typical facilities developed in the local park may include nature trail or access point to multi-use trail, play apparatus, recreation buildings, multi-purpose courts, sports fields and picnic tables. Additional facilities may be added, depending on the recreation demands of the neighborhood.

District: A park designed to serve the recreational needs of several communities or an entire county, and usually provides some areas and facilities that are resource-based. Typical facilities may include play apparatus, natural lands, natural trails, multi-use trails, nature center, boating, swimming, picnic areas and sports fields.

Driving periods of up to 30 to 40 minutes may be required to reach a district park, which would, when possible, be located on the periphery of a large urban area. Each such park should be utilized by an average population of 100,000 with a space allowance as defined in any adopted level of service standard. While 50 acres may meet minimum requirements, a site size of 150 acres or more is desirable. District parks serve several neighborhoods and may frequently be associated with junior or senior high schools.

Regional: Regional parks are large, resource-based areas that serve two or more counties and are usually within an hour's driving distance of the residents they serve. A space allowance of 20 acres per 1,000 population, or other space requirement as established in adopted level of service standards, is preferred. The park should serve a population of 500,000 and should range in size from a minimum of 250 acres to as much as several thousand acres. Because regional parks are generally designed for resource-based activities, location is dependent upon the availability of high quality natural resources capable of being developed and used for outdoor recreation.

Typical facilities provided at a regional park include water-based recreation sites, camping areas, natural lands, nature trails, multi-use trails, picnic areas and other facilities not requiring intensive development. Parking areas are necessary support facilities and should be designed to minimize adverse effects on the natural environment. The most prominent feature of a regional park is that it provides recreational opportunities that, through the design and development of outdoor recreation resources and facilities, capitalize on the natural environment and promote an atmosphere of beauty and serenity.

What does it mean?

The categories as defined in the Comprehensive Plan, while helpful in generating Level of Service standards, fail to adequately categorize the wide variety of parks and the type of services they provide. For the last few years the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department has been using a more in depth, use specific system to define parks and open spaces within the county. Loose definitions along with a brief description are listed below and detailed on the following page. Later chapters will explore whether or not this method of categorization is effective and how park types should be treated moving forward.

The Parks and Natural Resources Department further breaks down park type into the following categories based on the County's Park Atlas 2016:

- **City**
- **District**
- **Future**
- **Golf Course**
- **Historic**
- **Local**
- **Preserve**
- **Regional**

It should be noted that these categories are not absolute in that characteristics typically associated with a category may not be fully found within the respective park or may be generalized in nature due to various items including geography, size, facilities and similar.

Pride Park - *Local*

Braden River Park - *District*

Robinson Preserve - *Preserve*

Coquina Beach - *Regional*

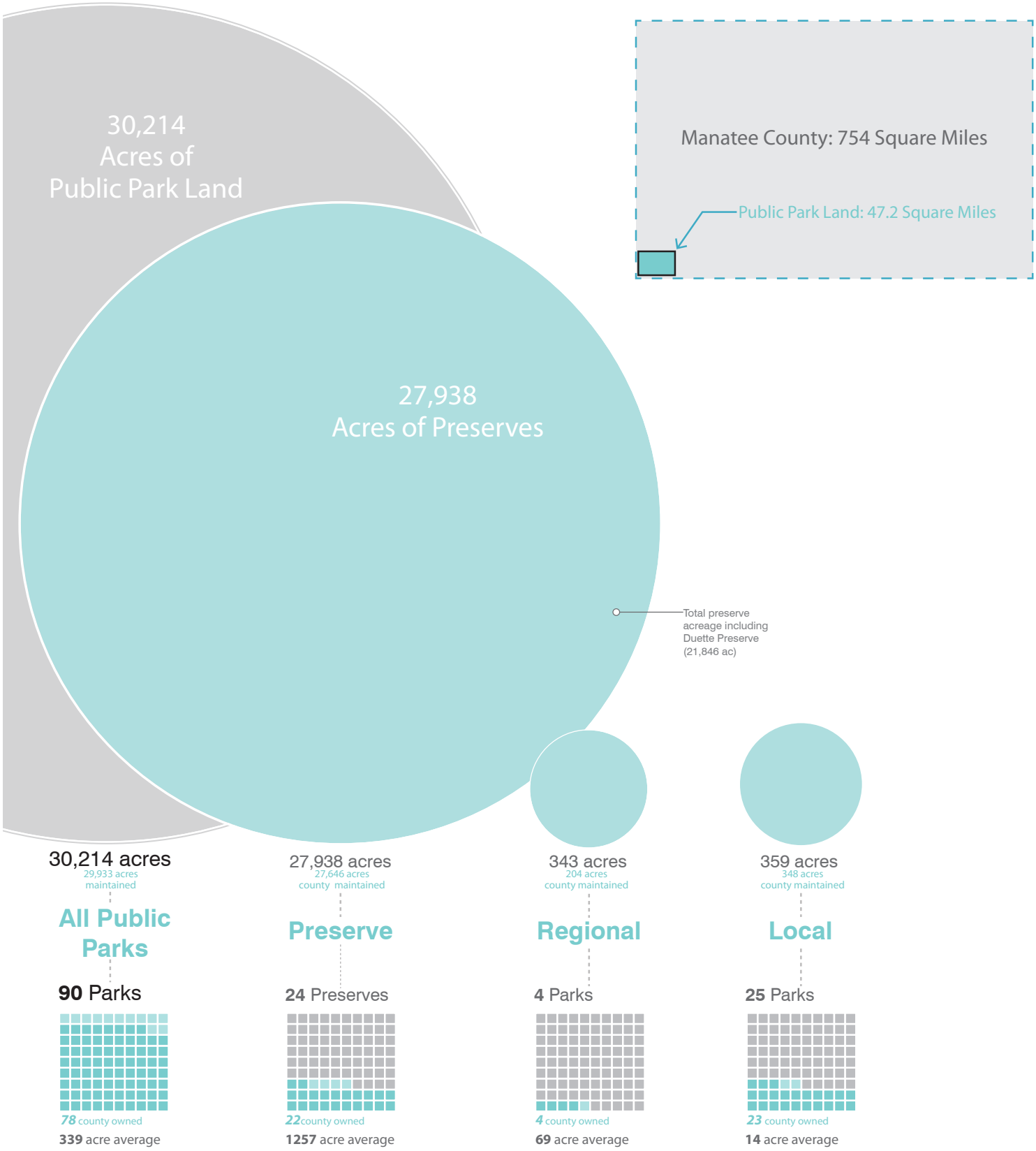


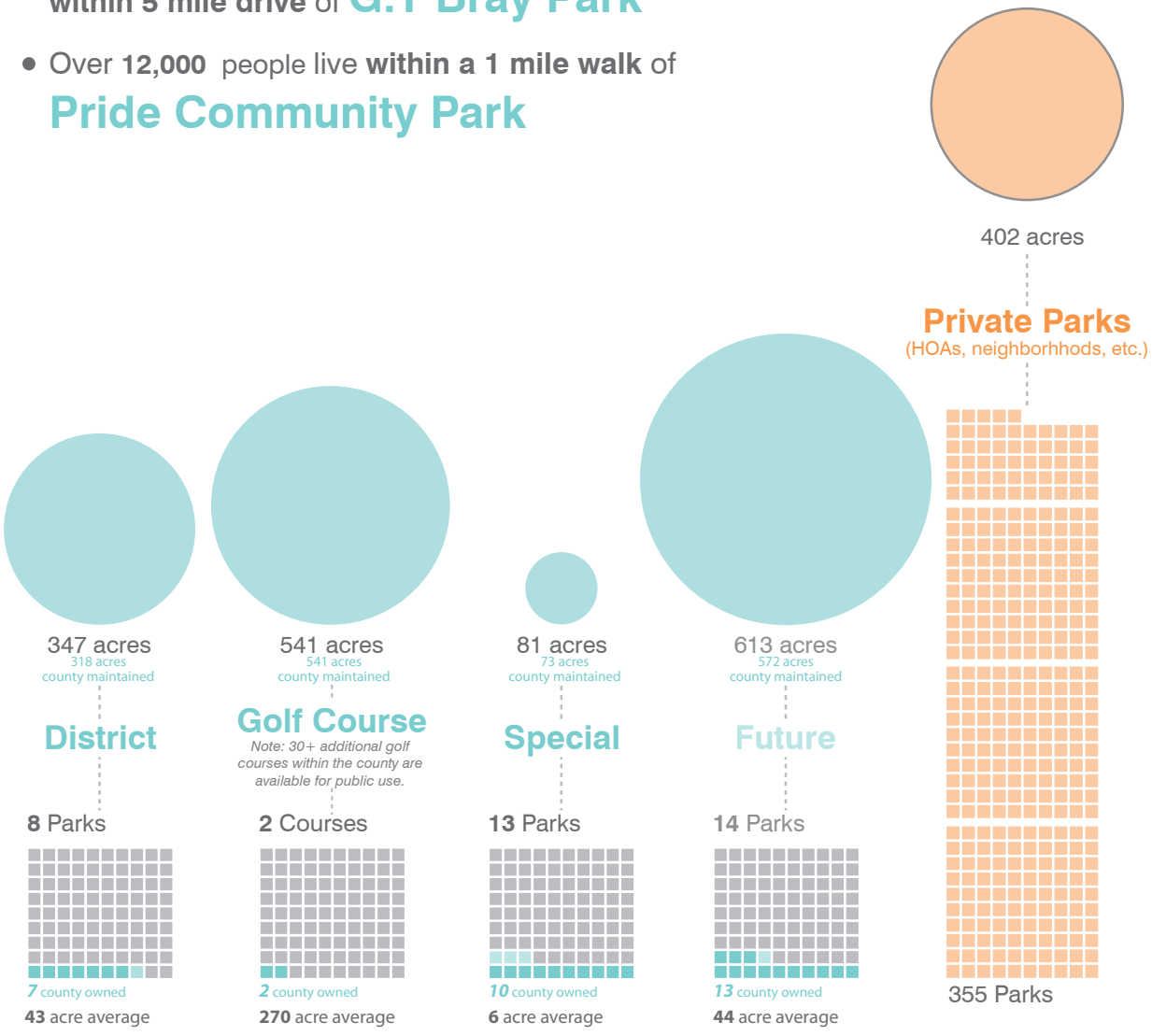
Diagram Legend: - All Public Parks - Manatee County Owned Park - Non-Manatee County Owned Park

Source: excel park summary report

Parks Inventory

Manatee County Quick Facts

- **6.3%** of **Manatee County's** land area is **made up of park land**
- **Largest** Public Park: **Duette Preserve** (21,846 acres)
- **Smallest** Public Park: **Rose Park** (0.07 acres)
- **92.5%** **of park land** is made up of **preserves**
- Over **1/4** of the **population** (118,891 residents) lives **within 5 mile drive** of **G.T Bray Park**
- Over **12,000** people live **within a 1 mile walk** of **Pride Community Park**



Source: excel park summary report; Esri Community Analyst Report utilizing US Census Bureau 2014-2018 ACS Estimate

Amenities

Manatee County offers a wide variety of parks, preserves, and active recreation opportunities. Active recreation plays a large role in the community and most amenities can be enjoyed year-round due to the county's temperate weather. Facilities offered by the county are listed below. Some residents may have access to additional amenities via City and private (neighborhood) facilities, however these facilities will not be included in the facility count or Level of Service standards due to the fact that they are not under county control and in some cases limit access by the public.

* Numbers shown represents *only* Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department Maintained facilities.
**Number shown represents *only* Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department Owned Golf Courses. 30+ courses within the county are open for public use.

County Facilities*

3 Community Pools	**2** Public Golf Courses**	**35** Playgrounds
15 Basketball Courts	**33** Tennis Courts	**44** Baseball / Softball Fields
33 Football / Soccer Fields	**7** Multi-purpose Fields	**4** Splash Pads
	4 Dog Parks	

"I think we need more swings." (Blackstone Park) -Libby D, 8

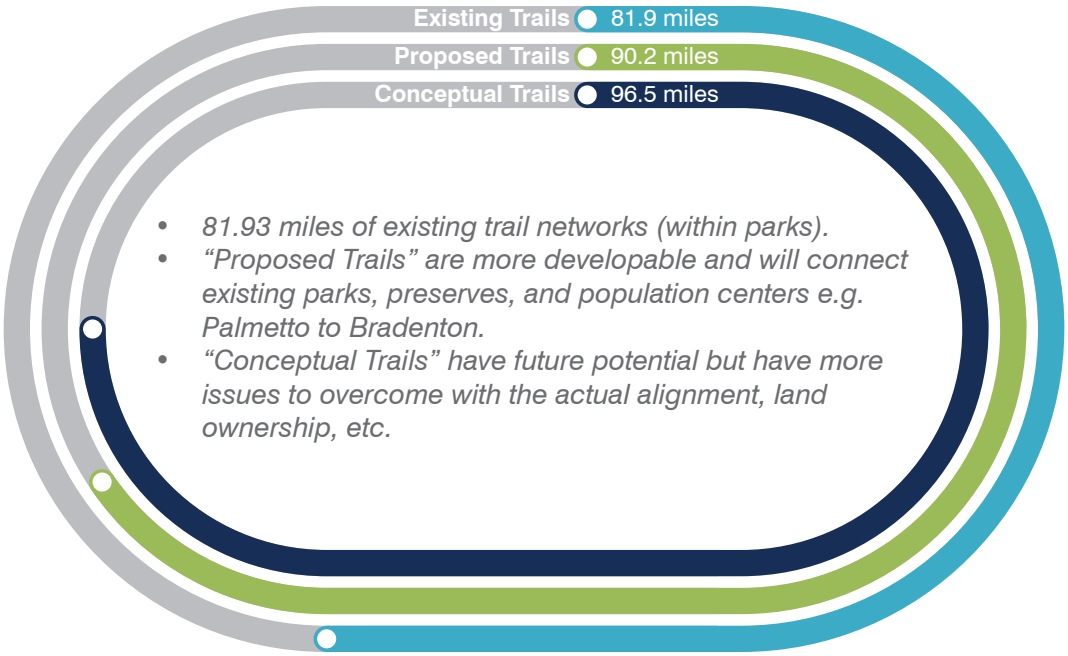
"I like the park at Buffalo Creek. It would be awesome if there could be a small skate park in our area." - Emily G, 12

"I'd like to see more fitness equipment at parks." -Trevor L, 22

Source: park summary report

Trails

Trails include both hard surface trails and primitive unpaved trails outside of the road right of way. Great examples include the trails within Robinson Preserve and future greenways like the Legacy Trail in Sarasota County. Trails not only provide opportunities for walking/hiking, biking, and equestrian, but also provide connection between neighborhoods and communities and serve as transportation corridors for residents. Trails and greenways promote economic development and raise quality of life as many, especially in younger generations, seek alternative modes of transportation and active lifestyle opportunities. The current Manatee County trail system (*figure below*) provides great exercise opportunities. Since the existing trails are limited to within parks, they fail to provide adequate service on a county or regional level or provide connectivity to other assets. The County's 2002 Greenways and Trails Master Plan had no dedicated funding source until changes to impact fees in 2015. Proposed trails like the Gateway Greenway and the Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project are now in the design stage and will provide more extensive recreation options and broaden the reach of the trail network.



Source: 2016 GIS Greenway Data provided by Manatee Co.

5 DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics provide a "snapshot" of the make up of communities as well as a glimpse into the future and the direction of the county. From this snapshot we can gather information on the makeup of the county, from average age, ethnicity, and income, to housing type and family size. This information can be used to inform decisions regarding the future of the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources system and how it can best serve its users.

Manatee County is older than the national average by 10.9 years with an average age of 49.4, a number that is projected to continue to trend older. This "graying" of the County's population can drive demand on certain types of park and recreational facilities. The County is not only getting older but wealthier, with the median household income projected to also continue to rise.

The steady rise in population (from 387,414 in 2019 to 434,600 by 2025) is predictably coupled with a

Ethnicity & Race

White
85.3%

Black
9.0%

Other
1.7%

Two or More Races
1.7%

Asian
2.1%

American Indian
0.1%

Pacific Islander
0.0%

Hispanic Origin*
(any race)
16.9%

Household Type

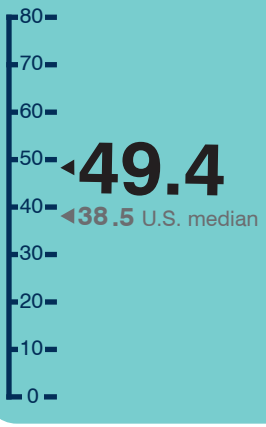
2.75 people
average household size

27.5%
1 person household

45.9%
2+ person household

19.7%
of households have children

Median Age



Household Income

U.S. median
$65,712

Manatee Co. median **$64,499**

U.S. average
$92,324

$92,213 Manatee Co. average

* The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines "Hispanic Origin" as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

Source: US Census Bureau 2019 ACS. US Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 ESRI forecasts for 2020 and 2025. Bureau of Economic and Business Research 2020-2045 Projections.

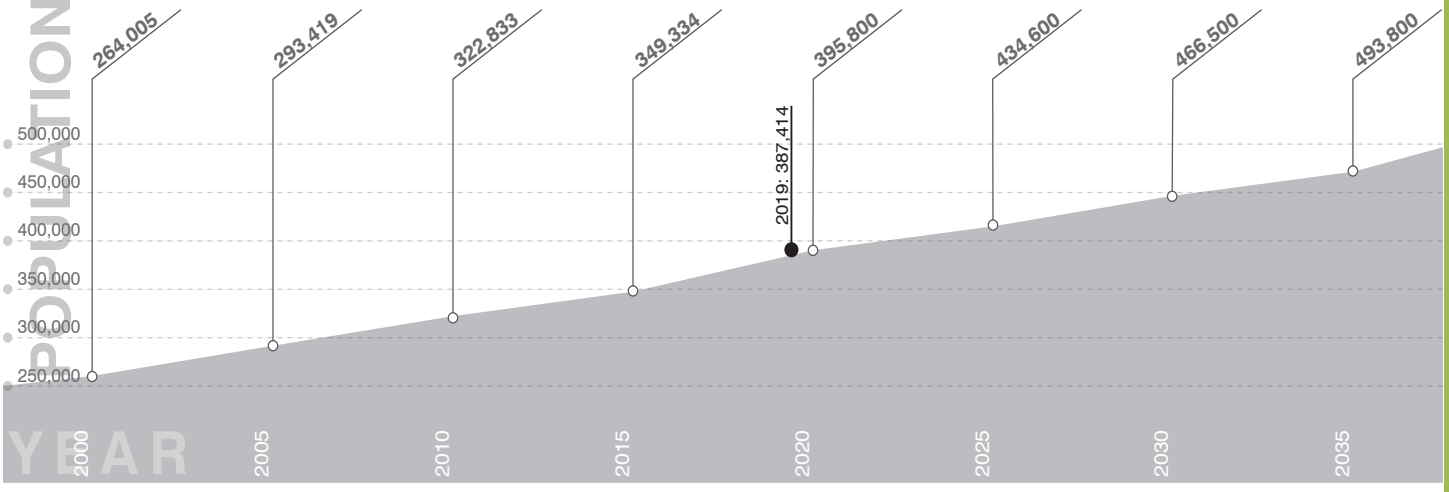
rise in number of households. The total number of households is 145,171, and of these households, the density will grow slightly with the average household size also projected to grow. All of these factors combined with a rise in owner occupied housing and a decline in renter occupation are very positive signs for Manatee County.

These growth trends can place increased demand on the existing Parks and Natural Resource system and create a need for new and improved facilities. It is important that growth of the Parks and Natural Resource system is in line with the growth trends of Manatee County in order to best serve its residents. Improvements to the Parks and Natural Resource system can also generate additional growth as a healthy parks and recreation system can draw new residents and promote development in the community.

With a county of this size it is important to study not only the growth trends of the population, but where this growth is projected to occur. A vast majority of the population (*408,718 residents, according to 2015 Traffic Analysis Zone-TAZ population data*) live within the 90 square mile Southwest (SW) quadrant. As shown in the figure on page 32, *Population by Quadrant,* all but one of the most populated study areas are located within this quadrant according to 2015 TAZ data.

As we look toward the future we see continued growth in the SW quadrant as well as substantial growth east of Interstate 75 in both the Southeast and Northeast quadrants. However, when looking at growth rate in this 30 year span an extremely telling trend emerges. While study areas in the SW quadrant continue to grow, the most substantial growth is projected to occur in the eastern quadrants. As population growth stabilizes in the SW quadrant, pending development of the Lake Flores, and the focus turns to redevelopment, residents will look to the east and large developments like Lakewood Ranch to call home. It is important that future parks and recreation efforts are adequately aimed in this area to serve the rapidly growing population in these quadrants and elsewhere. **However, this is not meant to imply a sole focus on new or expanded parks but in contrast signals the need to maintain and enhance existing parks to serve the established population.**

Population Growth



Source: US Census Bureau 2019 ACS. US Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 ESRI forecasts for 2020 and 2025. Bureau of Economic and Business Research 2020-2045 Projections.

Population by Quadrant

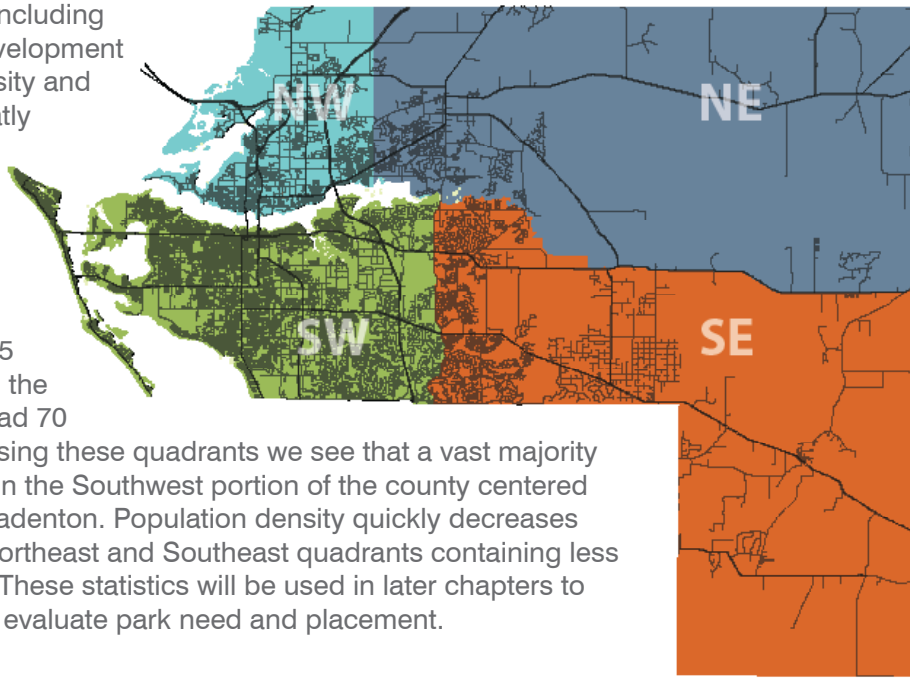
Northwest

- 57,995 - 2015 Population*
- 1.95 - Residents per Acre
- 435.9 - Acres of Parkland**
- 7.5 - Acres of parkland per 1000 residents

Northeast *(does not include Duette Preserve)*

- 63,935 - 2015 Population*
- 0.33 - Residents per Acre
- 924.6 - Acres of Parkland**
- 14.46 - Acres of parkland per 1000 residents

Due to a number of factors including geographic location and development patterns the population density and needs of residents vary greatly from one part of the county to the other. In order to further analyze the wants and needs of county residents, Manatee County has been broken into four quadrants using Interstate-75 as the east west divider, and the Manatee River and State Road 70 dividing north from south. Using these quadrants we see that a vast majority of the population is located in the Southwest portion of the county centered around the urban core of Bradenton. Population density quickly decreases moving east with both the Northeast and Southeast quadrants containing less than 0.4 residents per acre. These statistics will be used in later chapters to inform decision making and evaluate park need and placement.



Southwest

- 408,718 - 2015 Population*
- 5.91 - Residents per Acre
- 2219.8 - Acres of Parkland**
- 5.4 - Acres of parkland per 1000 residents

Southeast

- 70,528 - 2015 Population*
- 0.37 - Residents per Acre
- 335.8 - Acres of Parkland**
- 4.8 - Acres of parkland per 1000 residents

** 2015 TAZ Data*
***2016 Manatee County GIS - "Parks", includes both public and private parkland.*

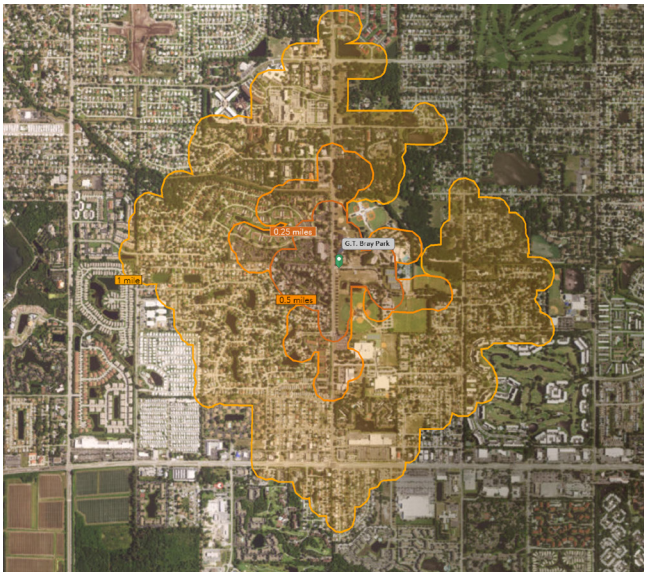
Manatee County's Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces aim to bring quality to the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment of the community. In addition, they aim to provide balanced and diverse recreational opportunities for both residents and visitors alike.

The PROS Master Plan analyzed demographic trends surrounding the County's Parks and Recreation facilities in an effort to provide a "snapshot" of who each park is serving. In addition, this analysis provided an opportunity to identify the number of residents who live within a one-half mile radius and could conceivably walk to the park. By analyzing this information, the County can not only identify what trends are occurring in the area and how to best serve the population, now and in the future, but also identify "gaps" in future services.

The **Population Snapshots** on the following page identify population, median age, median income, number of households and other notable information for the population within a 5-mile radius of the selected parks. This distance is a typical distance a person will travel, typically by car, to get to "their" park. It should be noted, the 5-mile radius of one park may overlap with that of another park so some residents may be counted towards multiple parks. In summary, the parks located within the urbanized areas tend to have the greatest population segments within the 5-mile radius (Blackstone, East Bradenton, G.T. Bray and John H. Marble); however, have some of the lower median incomes. This is not true in all of the urbanized areas, with parks and preserves such as Robinson Preserve having higher than average median incomes. There is not specific correlation between the facility and its location (i.e., urban versus suburban) as it relates to median age; median age varies by area and is not tied to a specific age group and/or generalized location.

East Bradenton Park included one of the highest populations within a 0.5-mile walking distance (1,041 persons) as well as the 5-mile driving distance (127,802). This Park also had one of the highest percentages of minorities. By comparison, G.T. Bray had 986 persons living within a 0.5-mile walking distance and a total of 118,891 within a 5-mile driving distance. Travel distances will be studied in depth as part of the Access Level of Service analysis in chapter 3.

G.T. Bray Park - Walking Distances



Source: ©2015 Esri.

This map shows the quarter, half, and 1-mile walking radii based on County road and sidewalk networks. There are currently 260 residents within a 0.25-mile walk of G.T. Bray, 986 residents within 0.5-miles, and 5,762 residents within 1-mile walking distance.

March 22, 2017

Page 1 of 1

East Bradenton Park - Driving Distances

This map shows the 1, 3, and 5-mile driving radii based on the Manatee County road network. There are currently 7,655 residents within a 1 mile drive of East Bradenton Park, 45,582 residents within 3-miles, and 127,802 residents within a 5-mile driving distance.

March 22, 2017

Page 1 of 1

Population Snapshots

What does the population look like within 5 miles of our major parks?

Bennett Park
total population: 36,422
median age: 40.7
median income: $61,757
number of households: 14,074
notable information:
*2nd "youngest" park population based on median age.**

Buffalo Creek Park
total population: 42,303
median age: 49.5
median income: $63,333
number of households: 17,710
notable information:
*Highest population growth rate.**

Emerson Point Preserve
total population: 15,220
median age: 44.2
median household income: $47,099
number of households: 5,812
notable information:
*Lowest number of households.**

G.T. Bray Park
total population: 118,891
median age: 48.7
median income: $45,838
number of households: 54,028
notable information:
*Highest number of households.**

Lakewood Ranch Park
total population: 43,032
median age: 52.5
median income: $99,277
number of households: 17,680
notable information:
*2nd lowest percent of renter occupied housing.**

Blackstone Park
total population: 54,327
median age: 41.4
median income: $45,763
number of households: 20,861
notable information:
*3rd lowest median age.**

Coquina Beach Park
total population: 10,898
median age: 65.9
median income: $61,971
number of households: 5,885
notable information:
*2nd lowest number of households.**

East Bradenton Park
total population: 127,802
median age: 40.2
median income: $43,401
number of households: 45,372
notable information:
Highest population of minorities.
*Lowest median age.**

John H. Marble Park
total population: 117,841
median age: 43.9
median income: $47,205
number of households: 47,982
notable information:
Over *30% of households are renter occupied.**

Robinson Preserve
total population: 23,973
median age: 57.9
median household income: $64,483
number of households: 10,621
notable information:
*Lowest population growth rate.**

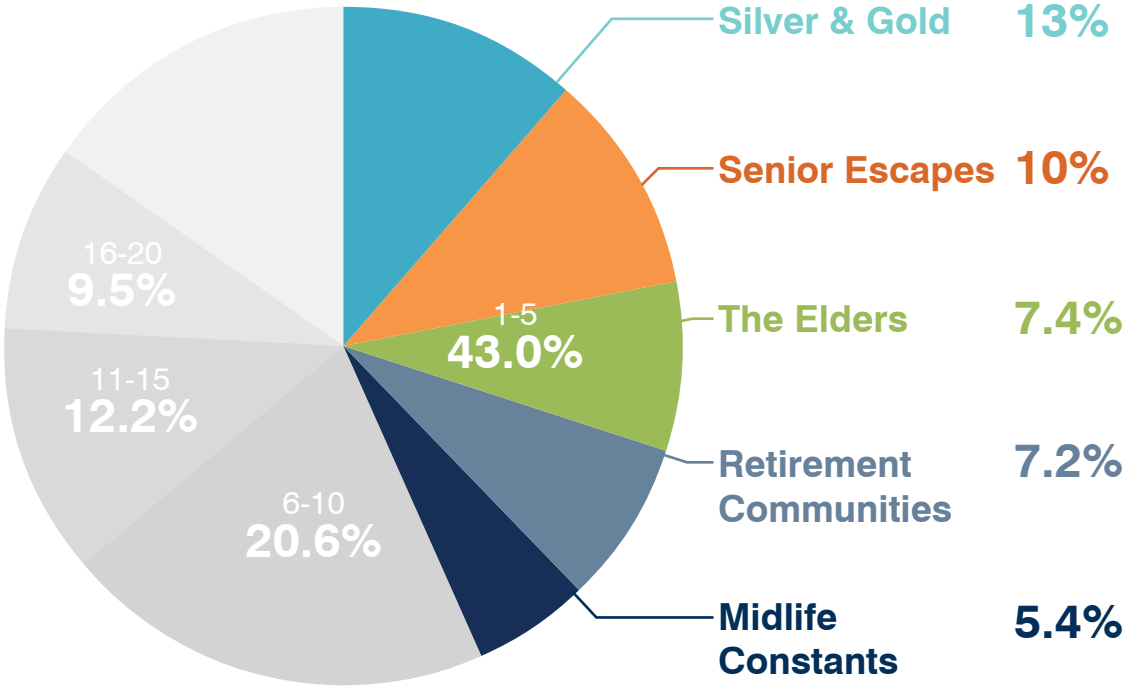
All data is based on a 5 mile drive distance from park entrance and is based on U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 Esri forecasts for 2020.
**Rankings are in comparison to the 10 parks listed on this page only.*

Tapestry Segments

Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) Tapestry Segmentation divides US residential areas into 67 distinctive segments and 14 summary groups based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to provide an accurate, detailed description of US neighborhoods.

ESRI's demographic analysis uses US census data including single person or family, income, relationships (single or multi generational), owner/renter status, age, sex, education, employment, and marital status as well as property value and housing type to generate in depth constituent profiles.

Manatee County's Top 5 Tapestry Segments



Silver & Gold

This growing market is the wealthiest senior market and the second oldest. Many in this segment live in exclusive communities and vacation homes. They worked hard and are now enjoying the good life.

Median Age: 61.8

Senior Escapes

This group is concentrated mostly in warmer climates and is highly seasonal. Mobile homes make up 40% of this segment. Mostly white and fairly conservative in their political and religious views.

Median Age: 52.6

The Elders

The oldest market tapestry, these residents favor communities designed for senior or assisted living in warmer climates. 80% of household derive their income from Social Security.

Median Age: 71.8

Retirement Communities

This segment combines single family living with apartments and assisted living facilities. Income and net worth are well below national averages. Over half of housing units in this segment are rented.

Median Age: 52.0

Midlife Constants

Residents approaching retirement, with below average labor participation and above average net worth. Tend to live in smaller communities.

Median Age: 45.9

Source: ESRI Tapestry Profile

The Next Five...

Comfortable Empty Nesters **5.3%**
Over half of households in this group are 55 or older. They have above average net worth and benefit from prudent investing and saving. Most are still working and are transitioning from child rearing to retirement.
Median Age: 46.8

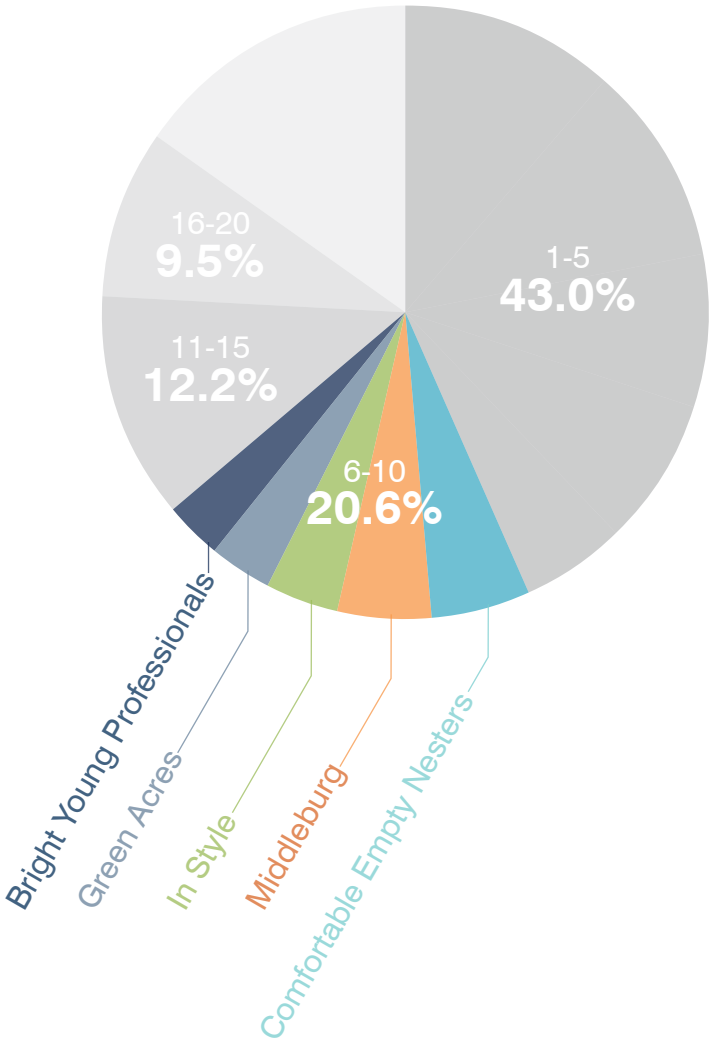
In Style **4.7%**
Professional couples or single households without children. They enjoy urban lifestyles and support the arts and travel.
Median Age: 41.1

Middleburg **4.3%**
This younger group growing in size and assets, is made up of mostly family-oriented conservatives. This market lives mostly in semi-rural subdivisions.
Median Age: 35.3

Green Acres **3.5%**
Do-it-yourselfers who enjoy country living and self reliance. They enjoy outdoor activities and are mostly conservative.
Median Age: 43.0

Bright Young Professionals **2.8%**
Primarily located on the urban outskirts of large metropolitan areas. White-collar work, with a mix of food services & part-time jobs.
Median Age: 32.2

Source: ESRI Tapestry Profile



What Does It Mean?

ESRI Tapestry Segment Data is useful in that it goes beyond typical demographics and age bracketing, and studies the socioeconomic and lifestyle breakdown of the residents of Manatee County. With each of these tapestry segments comes valuable information about each group's hobbies and interests as well as income, living situation, and working status. Although general, these Tapestry Segments can be used to help develop a better understanding of the population of Manatee County and, along with other factors, develop a successful Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan that caters to the people it is intended to serve.

The Tapestry information gathered shows a relatively old yet active population along with a strong number of younger professionals and working types. This breakdown suggests a focus on passive recreation, lifetime sports and nature preservation. However, the Tapestry information can vary by limiting the area of analysis. For example, there are many areas of the county where the population has a lower income, is more diverse, and has different recreational needs.

Tapestry Segments #11-15

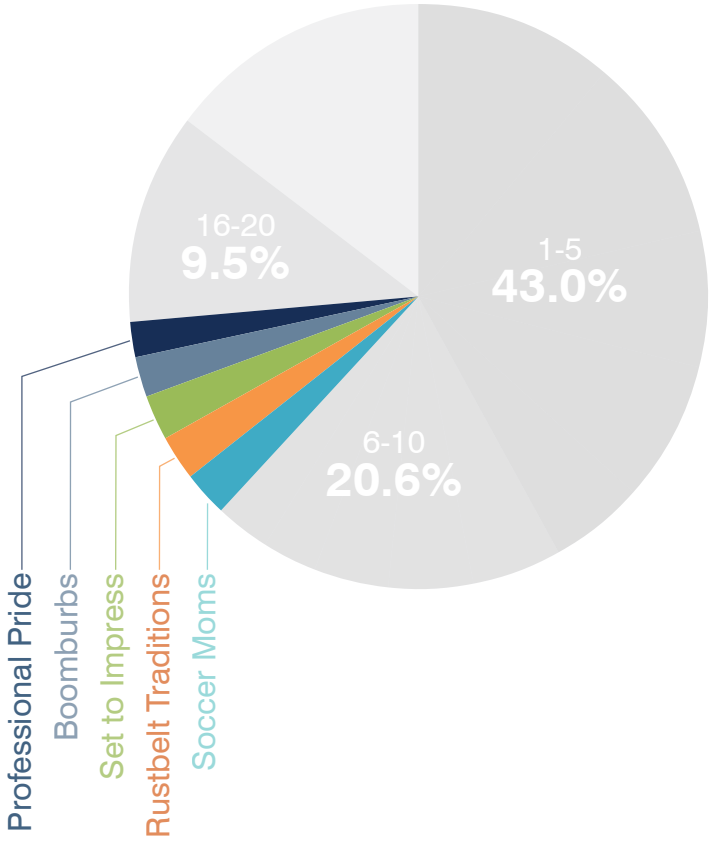
Soccer Moms 2.7%
Affluent family-oriented market with a country flavor. Enjoy suburban life. Two working parents with growing children.
Median Age: 36.6

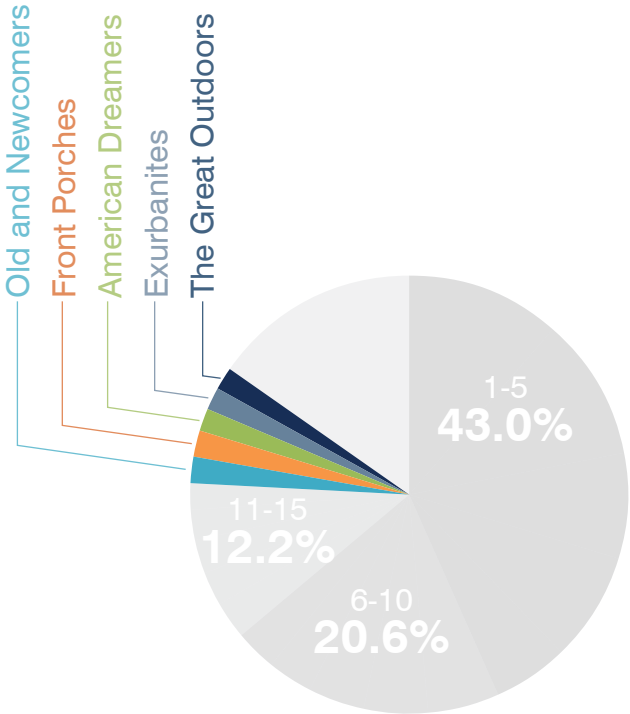
Rustbelt Traditions 2.6%
Stable, hard-working consumers with modest incomes but above average net worth. Most have lived in the same area for years.
Median Age: 38.4

Set to Impress 2.4%
Mostly made up of multi-family apartment dwellers. Income levels are low and many work while attending college. Budget conscious.
Median Age: 33.1

Boomburbs 2.3%
Young professionals with families in new housing in the suburbs. Well educated and prosperous.
Median Age: 33.6

Professional Pride 2.2%
Well-educated goal oriented couples. Often have young children and keep busy schedules
Median Age: 40.5





Tapestry Segments #16-20

Old and Newcomers 2.1%
Consists of renters either just beginning their career or retiring.
Median Age: 38.5

Front Porches 2.0%
Young families with children and single households. Many live in older homes and duplexes.
Median Age: 34.2

American Dreamers 1.8%
Younger married families with children in primarily single-family housing. Diversity is high.
Median Age: 32.5

Exurbanites 1.8%
Affluent residents approaching retirement. Support the arts and enjoy traveling.
Median Age: 49.6

The Great Outdoors 1.8%
Educated empty nesters who enjoy the outdoors and focus on the land. Active gardeners.
Median Age: 46.3

6 KEY FINDINGS

This chapter has given us a snapshot of the current state of the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department in all aspects. From these existing conditions, trends are beginning to emerge that will be studied further in the coming chapters which will analyze whether these current conditions are properly meeting the needs of the County's residents. From the inventory gathered in this chapter, a few key points have been identified and will help guide decisions as the Manatee County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan takes shape.

Strong Existing Parks and Natural Resources System

The current parks and natural resources system is in very good heath. With many programing and athletic opportunities as well as the recent addition of new parks like Perico Preserve, the future of the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resource Department is bright.

Improve upon existing, add strategically

The parks and natural resource system that is currently in place has a number of positives to build upon. In order to most effectively use funds and resources, it is important to identify opportunities and challenges within the system and work strategically to address them. This means working with residents and County officials as well as studying the Level of Service (LOS) standards through a variety of lenses in order to accurately identify needs.

Shifting population = shifting needs

The population of the county is ever evolving, whether it be age, race, income, or physical location. The challenge for the department is to keep up with these shifts and stay one step ahead in order to adequately serve residents and their interests. The demographics show an aging wealthier population which will grow both in number and in physical spread. How this will effect the future of the parks system and it's strategy moving forward will be explored in later chapters. However, this does not mean to overlook the County's existing parks and population centers. It does require a strategic balance between new versus existing.

Department must keep up with future growth

As the demographics illustrated, the population within Manatee County is on a steady upward climb. This means the Parks and Natural Resources Department must keep up with future growth by both addressing increased use and resulting wear and tear of existing parks, as well as the possible addition of new amenities and facilities in order to keep pace with growing demand. The Department will also need to keep pace with the locational factors of growth (i.e., where is the growth occurring) as well as access (i.e., roadway network, access LOS). The Department must also look at the distribution of facilities including an identification of the park delivery approach. This key finding is also tied to the "Shifting population = shifting needs."

Regional trail growth

Compared to surrounding counties, Manatee lacks in its trail and greenway network. County and Regional connectivity should not be overlooked moving forward. Trails can be a useful recreation amenity as well as a viable transportation option and driver of economic growth and development when implemented correctly. The County has identified several local and regional trail linkages including the Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project. However, implementation of a true regional trail system will require a commitment beyond the funding capabilities of the current impact fee structure.

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bottles and cans only
CYCLE

Needs Assessment Summary 3

1 - Introduction

2 - Methods & Techniques

3 - Department Operations Assessment

4 - Site Evaluations

5 - LOS Analysis

6 - Community Participation

7 - Analysis & Summary

1 INTRODUCTION

After gathering information about Manatee County, its residents, and park system in the previous chapter, we will now begin to analyze findings to develop a *needs assessment* of the existing parks and natural resources system. To do this Manatee County's Parks and Natural Resources Department and facilities used national, regional, and state benchmarks, on-site park evaluations, resident input and feedback, conversations with county officials, as well as a three-part Level of Service analysis to gain a better understanding of how the Manatee County parks and natural resources system compares. This comparative analysis will not only cover traditional park facilities, but also examine the department's staff and budget.

By using a variety of needs assessment techniques, we will be able to gain a more complete understanding of where the County is currently and what opportunities may exist. Through the needs assessment process it is likely that trends will emerge. These trends, which present themselves through multiple needs assessment methods, allow the county to move forward with confidence in order to create a more complete parks system based on the current programs and facilities, analysis provided in Chapter 2 and a visionary approach.

This chapter will identify strengths and weaknesses of the current system as well as resident's wants and needs which in later chapters will be used to develop a comprehensive parks vision. This chapter will also identify, preliminarily, future facilities needs including justifications of the County's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP). The needs assessment takes into consideration the availability of existing (private) facilities including those required by the County's Land Development Process.

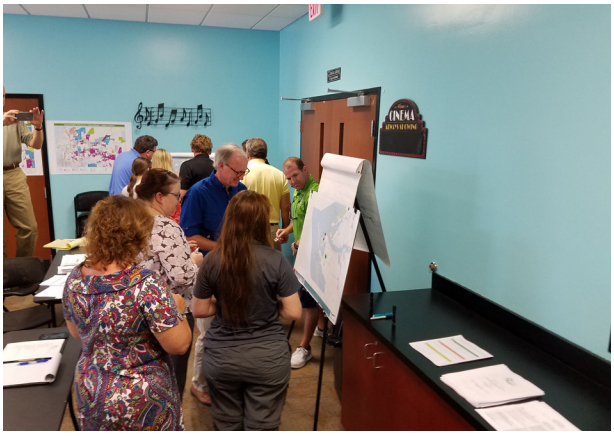
Chapter Goals

- Gain an understanding of where the department stands compared to national averages and surrounding counties.
- Develop firsthand knowledge of the state of the park system through on site evaluations of a carefully selected cross-section of parks.
- Evaluate the level of service of the park system in terms of its acreage, facilities, and ease of access, and identify geographic and service shortcomings.
- Talk with residents, maintenance staff, and county officials to gain an understanding of the needs of the county and its vision for the future of the parks system.

2 METHODS & PROCESS

In order to get the most complete understanding of the County's needs it is important that a wide range of "lenses" are used. The needs assessment study uses both qualitative and quantitative data, involves experts and residents, and draws comparisons from county standards as well as national benchmarks. The variety of methods study all facets of the Parks and Natural Resources Department, from budget and staff, programs and maintenance, to park amenities, facilities, and preserves. Through the analysis process, illustrated below, a parks vision will be developed and explored in later chapters.

A key component in this process is resident and stakeholder feedback. Manatee County embarked on a broad public outreach and community input process that included an online survey, neighborhood workshops that included a variety of public comment activities, comments solicited at the Manatee County Fair, State College of Florida and MCon, and an online "open comment" box. Altogether over 800 responses were received. These were in addition to the technical site visits by the team analyzing facility conditions and an in depth analysis of Department operations and level of service.



The Analysis Process

1 Park Metrics Assessment

Using NRPA's Park Metrics park scoring system we will compare how Manatee County's Parks and Natural Resources Department stacks up to surrounding counties and national standards.

2 Site Evaluations

Site visits to a group of selected parks throughout the county by county officials and consultants provides a first hand look at the current state of the park system in Manatee County.

3 LOS Analysis

A three-part level of service analysis will offer an in depth look at how well Manatee County parks are serving the community and what shortcomings need to be addressed.

4 Resident & Stakeholder Feedback

Workshops and conversations with county commissioners, officials and staff as well as resident input gives insight into Manatee County's vision for the future parks system.

3 DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS

Operational Assessment

While the focus of many assessments is the design and strategy of the parks system and the facilities, there is a lot to be learned from an examination of the Department itself. Many times, there are opportunities within administration that lead to a more successful overall operation.

As part of the department operations needs assessment the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department underwent an Operational Assessment by an outside consultant. Using a series of evaluation processes including:

- Interviews with Maintenance and Leadership personnel.
- Evaluation of staffing levels to their productivity of maintaining parks.
- On-site evaluations of parks and recreation facilities.

Through this process, key issues and opportunities were identified which will be explored below. *Chapter 4 - Vision Plan* will examine goals and opportunities moving forward.

1. Split Departments

The Parks Department separated into two groups whereby parks maintenance moved under a different department; no longer part of an overall agency that combines operations and maintenance as one group. The staff feel they have a unique relationship with maintenance working under a different organization but feel they make it work for each other and the community.
The staff of both groups indicated that they hold each other accountable, they are civil about calling each other out when needed, and both groups have high ethics in focusing on the customer first versus themselves or their respective divisions first.
The staff interviewed indicated that they communicate daily as they see each other as each other's customer and there is constant sharing.

Next Steps:
Over time, operations and maintenance groups in other parts of the country are re-united for efficiency and for productivity reasons and to create a stronger sense of pride that goes with operating as one agency. As long as the two groups continue to treat each other with respect and as each other's customer they could carry on in this manner effectively.

2. NRPA Accreditation

Currently the Department is not accredited with NRPA. The staff indicated they would like to work towards this over the next couple of years. And staff reiterated that they do embrace those same operational standards even though they are not accredited. They feel that they should address the CAPRA (Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies) requirements as they move forward.

Next Steps:
PROS will provide the staff with the CAPRA requirements for maintenance standards for their review as part of the master plan process.

Why Become Accredited?

Accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies provides an enhanced sense of quality and external (public) assurances that the department adheres to the highest parks standards. While accreditation is not mandatory or required for a parks department to achieve similar goals, it does provide the recognition that the County's parks are meeting certain standards. From the CAPRA website, "The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accredits park and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. Charged with providing high quality services and experiences, park and recreation agencies across the United States turn to CAPRA Accreditation as a credible and efficient means of achieving these goals, while providing assurance to the public that the agency meets national standards of best practice.

Benefits for the Public:

- Assurance and validation of well-administered services in accord with approved professional practices .
- Potential for external financial support and savings to the public.
- External recognition of a quality governmental service.
- Holds an agency accountable to the public and ensures responsiveness to meet their needs.
- Improves customer and quality services.

Benefits for the Agency:

- Public and political recognition.
- Increased efficiency and evidence of accountability.
- Answers the question, "How are we doing?" through extensive self evaluation.
- Identifies areas for improvement by comparing an agency against national standards of best practice.
- Enhances staff teamwork and pride by engaging all staff in the process.
- Creates an environment for regular review of operations, policies and procedures, and promotes continual improvement.
- Forces written documentation of policies and procedures.

Currently, 171 agencies nationwide have received CAPRA Accreditation including two benchmark communities of Hillsborough County and Lee County.

Department Snapshot

The consultant team visited selected County facilities on two different time frames for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of the County's programs and facilities. The team, along with County staff, observed programs, and reviewed the parks against multiple criteria (see Section 4 this chapter for the analysis and observations). During this time, the team also interviewed County staff and reviewed available information, and performed an analysis or "benchmark" of the Department (staff, budget, acres/facilities maintained, population served, etc.) as compared to other similarly situated counties based on population, geography and adjacency – Sarasota County, Hillsborough County, Lee County, and Pasco County.

Park Metrics are a tool to make informed decisions about future park and recreation improvements in Manatee County. The needs identified in this chapter will provide a basis for system-wide "Vision" as well as opportunities for improvements related to existing and future parks, and park needs (i.e., reinvestment). This approach takes the previously narrowly focused method of basing park and recreation needs solely on a population factor and instead addresses quantity and quality related factors as well, distribution of facilities and programs, access to them, and the quality of experience they provide.

By the Numbers

176 full time and seasonal staff[1]

annual operating budget[1] **$18.5** million

70+ programs[2]

annual athletic event attendance[3] **+2** million

30,000+ acres of park land[4]

Source:
1. 2021 Manatee County FY 2021 Adopted Budget (includes Department of Parks & Natural Resources and Maintenance Budgets and Staffing)
2. Parks Department Programs List
3. Parks PowerPoint
4. Parks Inventory Spreadsheet

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Staff

Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources, as identified on *pages 18-21*, is comprised of seven main programs including: Administration Leadership Team, Resource Management, Ecological & Marine Services, Environmental Protection and Mining Regulation & Services, Recreation, Agriculture & Extension, and Programming, Education & Volunteer. However, Parks Maintenance was reorganized in 2013 and placed under the supervision of the County's Property Management Department. The department responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the parks facilities, along with all non-park county facilities and constitutional officer facilities, is Grounds Maintenance. Prior to 2013, maintenance was provided under the Parks and Recreation umbrella.

Currently, the County's 2021 Adopted Budget includes a total of 176 budgeted positions, 110 in Parks & Natural Resources and 66 in Grounds Maintenance. The adopted budget also includes a total combined budget (personnel and operating) of $18,530,599 including $101,399,361 for Parks & Natural Resources. *Table 3.1* examines the Department Level of Services as it relates to Staff. The information compares total park acreage, populations (as of April 1, 2019), Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions, Residents per FTE, and Total Parks Acreage per FTE. FTE's identified in *Table 3.1* include both the Parks & Natural Resources and Property Management-Grounds Maintenance FTE.

Table 3.1 - Department LOS - Staff Benchmark Comparison

	Manatee County[1]	Sarasota County[2]	Hillsborough COunty[3]	Pasco County[4]	Lee County[5]
Total Park Acreage	30,214	54,780	60,604	10,330	31,500
Populations (April 1, 2019)*	387,414	426,275	1,444,870	527,122	735,148
Full-Time Equivalent Position	176	217.46	332	143	263
Residents per FTE	2,201.2	1,960.3	4,352.0	3,686.2	2,795.2
Total Acres per FTE	171.7	251.9	182.5	72.2	119.8

** UF Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Projections of Florida Population by County, 2020-2045*
***2015 NRPA Progragis Database Report: Counties*
1. Manatee County FY 21 Adopted Budget Book, FY2021-2025 CIP & Manatee County provided parks inventory spreadsheet.
2. Sarasota County FY 21 Adopted Budget, Sarasota County Parks, Recreation, and Preserves Strategic Master Plan Adopted Financial Plan/CIP 2021-2025.
3. Hillsborough County FY 2021 Adopted Budget / FY 20-25 CIP & Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan.
4. Pasco County FY 21 Adopted Fiscal Plan & Pasco County Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
5. Lee County FY 20-21 Annual Budget & FY 2021-2025 CIP.

Manatee County maintains approximately five times more acreage per FTE than the National County Upper Quartile. Based on this information, the County is serving 2,201.2 residents per FTE; 171.7 acres per FTE. As demonstrated in this figure, the Department manages (overall) more acres and per FTE than its neighboring counties.

Similar to its peer counties, Manatee County's facilities and services are spread across a wide geographic area. The Parks and Natural Resources Department along with the Grounds Maintenance Division provides facilities for its residents and maintains not only county non-park amenities but also parks, beaches and fields that are owned by some of the municipalities located within the County. The Property Management Department's staff spends a large percentage of their time on maintenance, which impacts their capacity for management, programming and long-range planning.

Budget

Table 3.2 - Department LOS - Budget per Acre Comparison

	Manatee County[1]	Sarasota County[2]	Hillsborough County[3]	Pasco County[4]	Lee County[4]
Total Park Acreage	30,214	54,780	60,604	10,330	31,500
Department Operating Budget	$18.531 million	$31.843 million	$38.263 million	$16.907 million	$35.302 million
Operating Expenditure Per Acre	$326.43	$581.29	$631.36	$1,636.7	$1,120.7
Department Capital Budget (5-Year)	$122.314 million	$53.230 million	$154.775 million	$30.081 million	$10.391 million
Capital Budget Per Acre	$4,048.26	$971.71	$2,553.87	$2,911.97	$329.87
Total Department Budget	$140.845 million	$85.073 million	$193.038 million	$46.987 million	$45.693 million
Total Budget per Acre	$4,661.58	$1,553.00	$3,185.24	$4,548.63	$1,450.58

Note: Manatee County Department Capital Budget does not include additional Capital Improvements Projects funded through Infrastructure Sales Tax and Impact Fee Funding.

***2015 NRPA Progragis Database Report: Counties*

1. Manatee County FY 21 Adopted Budget Book, FY2021-2025 CIP & Manatee County provided parks inventory spreadsheet.

2. Sarasota County FY 21 Adopted Budget, Sarasota County Parks, Recreation, and Preserves Strategic Master Plan Adopted Financial Plan/CIP 2021-2025.

3. Hillsborough County FY 2021 Adopted Budget | FY 20-25 CIP & Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan.

4. Pasco County FY 21 Adopted Fiscal Plan & Pasco County Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

5. Lee County FY 20-21 Annual Budget & FY 2021-2025 CIP.

There are three main metrics used to gauge whether a county is adequately funded to manage, operate, maintain and build its parks and recreation system. These are operating budget per resident, capital budget per resident and total budget per resident (the sum of the operating and capital budgets). These metrics are determined by dividing the total dollars of each type of budget by the population of the County. *Tables 3.2 and 3.3* benchmarks the Department's 2021 budget to the 2020 or 2021 budget of its neighboring counties, using the same listing as was analyzed for Staff. It is important to note the budget information is based on the combined Parks & Natural Resources Department and the Property Management's Grounds Maintenance Division which maintains the County's parks, facilities and preserves.

As identified in *Table 3.3*, when compared to the other counties, Manatee County appears to spend less than the average of the benchmarked departments on total expenditures per resident and capital expenditures per resident. The Department's operating budget per residents of $47.83 is the third highest of the benchmarked departments and in line with national median and averages. The

Table 3.3 - Department LOS - Budget per Resident Comparison

	Manatee County[1]	Sarasota County[2]	Hillsborough COunty[3]	Pasco County[4]	Lee County[5]
Population (April 1, 2019)*	+410,000	426,275	1,444,870	527,122	735,148
Department Operating Budget	$18.531 million	$31.843 million	$38.263 million	$16.907 million	$35.302 million
Operating Expenditure Per Resident	$47.83	$74.70	$26.48	$32.07	$48.02
Department Capital Budget (5-Year)	$122.314 million	$53.230 million	$154.775 million	$30.081 million	$10.391 million
Capital Budget Per Resident	$315.72	$124.87	$107.12	$57.07	$14.13
Total Department Budget	$140.845 million	$85.073 million	$193.038 million	$46.987 million	$45.693 million
Total Budget per Resident	$363.55	$199.57	$133.60	$589.14	$62.16

Note: Manatee County Department Capital Budget does not include additional Capital Improvements Projects funded through Infrastructure Sales Tax and Impact Fee Funding.

* UF Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Projections of Florida Population by County, 2020-2045

***2015 NRPA Progragis Database Report: Counties*

1. Manatee County FY 21 Adopted Budget Book, FY2021-2025 CIP & Manatee County provided parks inventory spreadsheet.

2. Sarasota County FY 21 Adopted Budget, Sarasota County Parks, Recreation, and Preserves Strategic Master Plan Adopted Financial Plan/CIP 2021-2025.

3. Hillsborough County FY 2021 Adopted Budget / FY 20-25 CIP & Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan.

4. Pasco County FY 21 Adopted Fiscal Plan & Pasco County Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

5. Lee County FY 20-21 Annual Budget & FY 2021-2025 CIP.

Department manages and maintains well above the median and average amount of land than the national comparisons. Similar to the Staff review and analysis, the analysis also reviewed the County's information against the NRPA Park Metrics national county data. Based on this information, Manatee County further suggests that the Department maximizes their resources, especially when considering the amount of total park and natural area acreage that the County manages. *Table 3.3* benchmarks the Department's combined budget (Parks & Natural Resources and Grounds Maintenance) to NRPA Park Metrics national county data. The Department's operating budget per acre is a third of the national average. The Department's capital budget per acre is a tenth of the national average. And the Department's overall budget per acre is one-fifth of the national average.

Key Findings

Manatee County's staffing and budgets, combined for both Parks & Natural Resources Department and the Grounds Maintenance Division have grown slowly over the past two Fiscal Years. In FY 18, the Departments were funded for 152 positions and had an adopted budget of $15,283.595 compared to FY 21's budget which includes 176 staff and a budget of $18,530,599. **This represents a 14-percent increase in staff with a corresponding 8 percent increase in operating budgets.** While these numbers have increased they **have not reached pre-recession budget and staffing levels or kept pace with the increased population growth** (17% growth from 2010-2019) and number of parks and preserves, and programs, maintained by the County. By comparison and using the information provided by the County's FY 05-06 and FY 06-07 budget, the adopted budget and staff including $20,241,427 and 255 positions, and $24,280,124 and 269 positions; respectively. Of these numbers, the Parks and Recreation component comprised $15,139,967 and 186 positions in FY 05-06, and $17,321,314 and 194 positions in FY 06-07. Using the current adopted budget and the FY 05-06 budget information for comparison purposes, **the Departments are operating with approximately 8 percent less budget and 30 percent less staff.**

If the Department, including the Grounds Maintenance Division is going to continue to provide the current level of service and ultimately improve maintenance, operations and programs, then there will be a need to continue analyzing required resources and prioritization of funding along with corresponding increases in budgets and staffing. As indicated in the preceding pages, **funding has not kept pace with the rate of growth of the County** and continues to lag behind its neighbors.

4 SITE EVALUATIONS

As part of the needs evaluation process, County officials and consultants visited a selected group of parks within Manatee County to evaluate their current state.

General Park Evaluations

The goal of the park visits was to take an inventory of park amenities, assess conditions, and gain a hands on understanding of the County's level of service and maintenance practices.

What Parks and Why?

The parks visited were chosen in order to gain the widest breadth of understanding of the many different park types and amenities present throughout the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources System. The survey team visited parks ranging in size and types. The team also made both weekday and weekend visits to assess the different activities and levels of use depending on time of the week.

The Survey Team.

The team selected was made up of county officials and consultants, some of whom had visited the parks many times while others were viewing the sites with fresh eyes. All parties had extensive experience working in the parks and recreation realm and are fully aware of what compromises a great park.

General Park Evaluations

Scoring System

The parks were scored in a five part system focused on different qualities of the park, each with a set of sub categories. Participants were asked to rate the parks on 1-5 scale based on the following categories:

- Proximity/Access/Linkages
- Comfort & Image
- Uses Activated & Socialability
- Environmental Sustainability
- Building/Architecture

The scores were then used to rate each park on its overall quality. Comments were also collected in order to gain more information on what went into the score each park received.

1.0 = Well below expectations

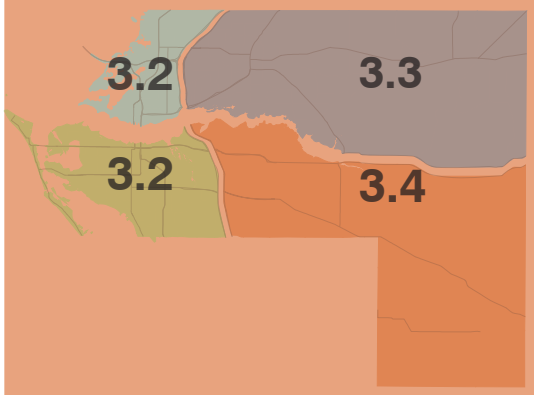
2.0 = Not meeting expectations

3.0 = Meets expectations

4.0 = Exceeds expectations

5.0 = Far exceeds expectations

Quadrant Scores



	Northwest		
	Blackstone Park	Lincoln Park	Emerson Point Preserve
1. PROXIMITY/ ACCESS/ LINKAGES	3.0	3.4	3.2
A. Visibility from a distance	4	4	3
B. Ease in walking to the park	4	4	3
C. Clarity of information / signage	2	3	3
D. ADA Compliance	2	2	4
E. Lighting	3	4	3
2. COMFORT & IMAGE	2.6	2.5	3.9
A. First impression / overall attractiveness	3	3	4
B. Feeling of safety	3	3	3
C. Cleanliness / overall quality of maintenance (Exterior Site)	3	2	4
D. Cleanliness / overall quality of maintenance (Facilities Interior)	2	2	4
E. Comfort of places to sit	2	3	4
F. Protection from bad weather	2	3	4
G. Evidence of management / stewardship (Exterior Site)	3	2	4
H. Evidence of management / stewardship (Facility(is) Interior	3	2	4
3. USES AND ACTIVITIES & SOCIALABILTY	3.8	3.6	4
A. Mix of uses / things to do	5	5	4
B. Level of activity	3	4	4
C. Sense of pride / ownership	3	2	4
D. Programming Flexibility	4	4	4
E. Ability of facility to effectively support current organized programming	4	3	4
4. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	3.3	2.5	3.8
A. Storm water management	3	3	5
B. Multi-modal capacity	4	3	4
C. Co-location / integration of infrastructure	3	2	2
D. Facility energy efficiency	3	2	4
5. BUILDINGS / ARCHITECTURE	2.7	2.2	4.0
A. Image and Aesthetics	2	2	4
B. Clarity of entry and connection to park	3	3	4
C. Interior finishes furniture and equipment	NA	2	4
D. Building enclosure	3	2	4
E. Building systems	NA	2	4
TOTAL SCORE	3.1	2.8	3.8

Northeast				Southeast		Southwest										
Buffalo Creek Park	Ft. Hamer Park	Ola Mae Sims Park	Bunker Hill Park	Lakewood Ranch Park	Greenbrook Park	GT Bray Park	Anna Maria Bayfront Park	Conservatory Park	John Marble Park	Palma Sola Park	Pride Community Park	University Place Community Park	Whitfield Park	Perico Preserve	Robinson Preserve	Coquina Beach
3.5	3.4	2.4	3.6	3.6	3.8	4.6	3.3	3.4	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.8	4.4	3.6	4.4
5	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	2	3	2	2	4	2	5
4	4	1	2	3.2	4	5		2	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	5
2	2	3	4	3.7	3	5	3	4	2	2	3	3	2	4	3.5	4
4	3	3	4	3.75	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	5	3.5	4
2.5	4	3	4	3.5	4	5	3	5	2	4	3	4	3	5	5	4
3.3	3.9	2.4	3.7	3.2	3.0	4.6	3.1	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.4	3.9	3.3	4.3	4.4	3.8
3	4	2	4	3.25	3	4	3	5	2	3	2	4	2	4	5	4
4	4	2	2	3.5	3	4	4	5	1	2	3	4	4	4	4	4
4	4	2	4	3	4	5	3	4	3.5	4	4	4	3	4	5	5
3.5	4	2	4	4	4	5	2	4.5	2	4	3	4	3	4	5	3
3	3	3	4	2	3	5	3	2	3.5	3	5	3	4	4	3.5	4
2	3	3	4	2.5	3	4	3	2	NA	3.5	4	4	4	4	3	2
4	5	2.5	4	3	2	5	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	5	5	4
3	4	2.5	NA	4	2	5	3	3	3	4	3	4	NA	5	5	4
4.2	3.6	3.1	3.2	3.6	2.6	4.8	3.2	2.5	4.4	2.9	3.8	3	2.7	3.8	4.9	3.6
4	2	3.5	3	4	3	5	3	4	5	2.5	5	2	3	4	5	4
4	4	3	2	4	2	5	4	2	5	2	4	2	2	3	5	4
4	5	3	4	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4.5	4
5	4	3	3	3.5	4	5	3	1	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	3
4	3	3	4	3.5	2	5	3	1,4	5	4	3	4	2.5	5	5	3
4.3	3.8	1.8	3.0	2.8	3.3	4.0	2.5	2.3	2.0	3.0	3.8	3.0	2.7	4.3	3.0	3.0
4	4	3	5	2.5	4	4	NA	2	2	3	4	3	3	5	3	2
4	4	1.5	2	3.5	4	4	3	2	2	4	4	4	3	4	3	5
5	3	1	2	2.5	2	4	2	1	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2
NA	4	NA	3	2.5	3	4	NA	4	2	3	3	3	NA	NA	4	3
3.3	3.4	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.0	4.8	2.6	3.5	1.0	3.3	2.8	3.7	2.7	4.0	4.4	3.0
3	4	3	3	4	3	5	2	4	1	3	3	4	3	NA	4	3
3	2	3	3	3	3	5	3	2	1	4	2	3	2	4	4	3
3	4	3	4	3	3	5	2	4	1	3	3	NA	NA	NA	4	NA
4	4	3	4	4	3	5	3	4	1	3	3	4	3	NA	5	NA
NA	3	3	NA	4	3	4	3	NA	1	3.5	3	NA	NA	NA	5	NA
3.7	3.6	2.5	3.4	3.3	3.1	4.6	2.9	3.0	2.6	3.1	3.4	3.4	2.8	4.2	4.1	3.6

5 LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) ANALYSIS

For most of the history of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), a standard residents per acre formula was used to calculate a Level of Service, however in recent years it has become apparent that a simple one-pronged approach to LOS does not tell the full story. There are many factors that go into a successful parks system and it is important that those are studied in order to gain a better understanding of the state of the department. While the standard parks per residents approach gives some understanding of how well the parks system is serving its residents, it fails to study a number of other factors. One must also look at the size and quality of the parks provided; a large community park full of amenities will better serve the community than a small .5 acre park with little to do. The mere fact that there are a certain number of parks in the community also fails to study what facilities (ball fields, playgrounds, dog parks, pools, etc.) are being offered there. Ease of access must also be studied as it plays a large factor in how likely someone is to use a park, as we see first hand in the online survey responses later in the chapter.

For the purpose of the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources System a three-prong approach was used. Acreage studies the amount of park space per resident. Facility LOS studies the amount of individual facilities offered to identify possible shortcomings on an individual facility level. Lastly, travel distance, or access LOS, examines how easy it is for residents to reach the parks in their area. At the end of this section a well rounded understanding will be reached of how well the parks system is serving its residents.

3 Part LOS Analysis

1. Acreage LOS: Measures acreage in a ratio to the community's population (acres per 1000 residents)

2. Facilities LOS: Measures facility capacity in ratio to the community's population, and compares to benchmarks such as other similar counties and SCORP (State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan)

3. Access LOS: Measures travel distances to parks and individual facilities such as playgrounds, athletic fields, recreation centers, etc.

Current Manatee County Level of Service

(based on comprehensive plan)

- One local park per 10,000 residents
- One district park per 100,000 residents
- One regional park per 500,000 residents where residents are calculated for unincorporated Manatee County.

Acreage LOS

The Tables below study how current Manatee County park and preserve acreage compares to the standard acre per resident approach in a number of different categories. As shown in the tables below, The Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department meets or exceeds Acreage Level of Service in all categories, however this can be deceiving due to the presence of large preserves (namely Duette Preserve) which account for much of the park acreage while not readily accessible, due to location/distance, to residents of the county.

Table 3.4 - Park LOS Comprehensive Plan Comparison

	Manatee County Residents per Park (387,414)*	Manatee County 2020 Comprehensive Plan Goal	Goal Met?
Local Parks (62)	6,249	10,000	YES
Local County Maintained Parks (48)	8,071	10,000	YES
District Parks (5)	77,483	100,000	YES
District County Maintained Parks (5)	77,483	100,000	YES
Regional Parks (12)	32,285	500,000	YES
Regional County Maintained Parks (9)	43,046	500,000	YES

**2019 UF Bureau of Economic Research and Development, Official Population Estimate: April 1, 2019.*

Table 3.5 - Acreage LOS 20 Year Projection

	2019	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	387,414**	395,800*	434,600*	466,500*	493,800*	519,200*
Acres of Parkland per 1000 Residents	77.99	76.34	69.52	64.77	61.19	58.19

(Based on 30,214 acres of Manatee County Maintained parkland)
* 2020 UF Bureau of Economic Research and Development, Projections of Florida Population by County, 2020-2045.
**2019 UF Bureau of Economic Research and Development, Official Population Estimate: April 1, 2019.

Table 3.6 - Acreage LOS Benchmark Comparison

	Manatee County (2019)*	National County Median**	National County Average**	National County Lower Quartile**	National County Upper Quartile**
Acreage	30,214	2,628	11,164	769	9,079
Acres per 1000 Residents	77.99	13.1	15.8	6.3	18.5

* 2019 UF Bureau of Economic Research and Development, Official Population Estimate: April 1, 2019.
** *2015 PRORAGIS Database Report: Counties*

Facilities LOS

Facilities LOS studies how well the county is being served on an individual facility level. This helps to identify how well individual recreational needs are served for the county as a whole without taking into consideration proximity to the population or the condition of the facility. Based on *Table 3.7* the county falls short in a number of categories based on Manatee County's *Comprehensive Plan.* This likely means that some facilities within the county are being overused while parts of the county are underserved.

Table 3.7 - Facilities LOS - Comprehensive Plan Comparison

Resource / Facility Type	Units	Units / Resident Population	Current Facilities	Units / Resident Population	Goal Met
Bicycle Trail	Miles	1/10,000	68.0[B]	1/5,697	Yes
Accessible Hiking Trail	Miles	1/10,000	82.0[C]	1/4,725	Yes
Boat Ramps	Lanes	1/7,500	16[C]	1/24,213	No
Swimming Pools	Pools	1/50,000	3[C]	1/129,138	No
Basketball Goals	Goals	1/5,000	32[A]	1/12,107	No
Handball / Racquetball Courts	Courts	1/20,000	18[C]	1/21,523	No
Shuffleboard Courts	Courts	1/10,000	0[A]	-	No
Tennis Courts	Courts	1/3,000	33[C]	1/11,740	No
Baseball / Softball Fields	Fields	1/6,000	44[C]	1/8,805	No
Football / Soccer Fields	Fields	1/15,000	33[C]	1/11,740	Yes
Gun / Archery Ranges	Stations	1/6,000	0[A]	-	No
Golf Courses	Holes	9/25,000	2 (18 holes)[A]	9/193,707	No

A - 2016 Manatee County Parks Atlas
B - Manatee County 2016 GIS Data - "Greenways"
C - 2021 Manatee County Property Inventory
Note: Based on 2019 UF Bureau of Economic Research and Development, Official Population Estimate: April 1, 2019
Facility numbers reflect Manatee County Maintained facilities only. Non county maintained and private facilities may also serve to meet LOS standards.

Table 3.8 - Facilities LOS - National Benchmark Comparison

	Manatee County Existing[A]	Residents per facility[B]	National County Median[C]	National County Average[C]	National Lower Quartile[C]	National Upper Quartile[C]
Basketball Courts	15	1/25,828	28,995	101,896	16,838	94,688
Community Gardens	0	-	440,045	529,710	120,032	622,263
Adult Baseball Fields	7	1/55,345	52,376	123,857	23,604	152,010
Youth Baseball Fields	20	1/19,371	16,387	29,864	6,242	42,664
Softball Fields	17	1/22,789	35,227	114,667	13,026	71,394
Tee-Ball Fields	7	1/55,345	-	-	-	-
Dog Parks	4	1/96,854	262,671	332,800	117,181	403,161
Playgrounds	35	1/11,069	14,793	40,760	9,616	40,110
Tennis Courts	33	1/11,740	12,688	37,585	6,792	32,480
Football Fields	5	1/77,483	27,574	309,967	16,814	94,688
Multipurpose Fields	7	1/55,345	-	-	-	-
Soccer Fields	23	1/16,844	21,002	50,527	7,534	63,636

A - 2016 Manatee County Parks Atlas and 2021 Manatee County Property Inventory
B- Based on 2019 UF Bureau of Economic Research and Development, Official Population Estimate: April 1, 2019
C - 2015 NRPA Field Report

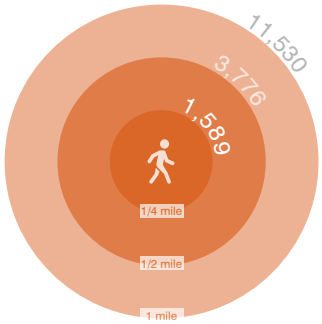
Summary & Analysis

Manatee County is deficient in a number of areas based on the Level of Service (LOS) standards spelled out in the Comprehensive Plan. This deficiency could be a result of several factors including rapid population growth, unreasonable LOS standards, and a lack Parks and Natural Resources funding. These numbers also do not represent facilities provided by private entities such as neighborhood HOAs. LOS standards will be evaluated for feasibility and relevance in later chapters as alternate methods of evaluating parks Level of Service standards are explored.

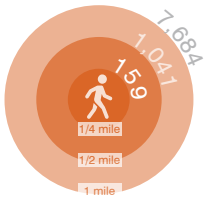
Access LOS

Walking Distance

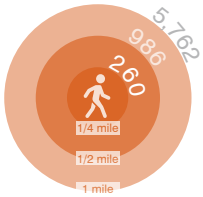
Most Residents within 1 mile walking distance (Manatee County Maintained Parks)



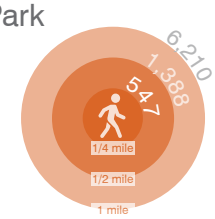
Pride Community Park



East Bradenton Park



G.T. Bray Park



Lincoln Community Park

John H. Marble Park

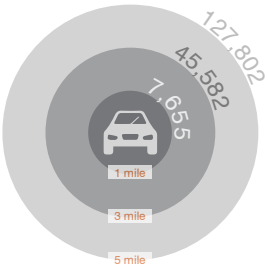
County Average (Manatee County Maintained Parks)

- 1/4 mile: *225 residents*
- 1/2 mile: *804 residents*
- 1 mile: *3,148 residents*

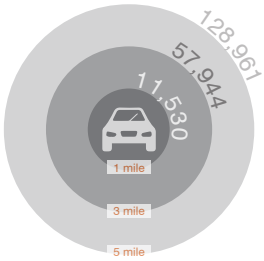
Note: Calculations are based on walking distance of road and sidewalk networks using ESRI Community Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 Esri forecasts for 2020.

Driving Distance

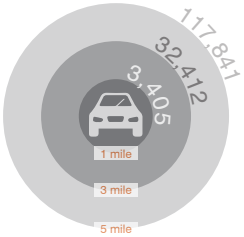
Most Residents within 5 mile driving distance (Manatee County Maintained Parks)



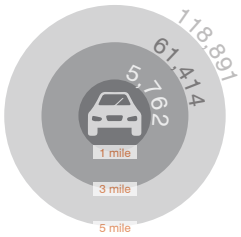
East Bradenton Park



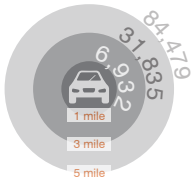
Pride Community Park



John H. Marble Park



G.T. Bray Park



Lincoln Community Park

County Average (Manatee County Maintained Parks)

- 1 mile: *3,167 residents*
- 3 mile: *23,004 residents*
- 5 mile: *92,118 residents*

Note: Calculations are based on drive distance of current road networks using ESRI Community Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 Esri forecasts for 2020.

Access LOS looks at the ease at which residents can access parks and by what means. This Level of Service analysis studies the population within a given driving or walking distance to assess the number of people each park serves. (*See Table 3.9 below*) Studies have shown that proximity and ease of access greatly effect a persons likelihood to use park facilities. As stated on *p.10,* proximity to parks can also have a positive economic impact on surrounding businesses and communities.

Table 3.9 - Access LOS - Population within Walking and Driving Distances to Selected Parks

Selected Park	Park Type	Population within walking Distance			Population within Driving Distance		
		0.25 miles	05. miles	1 mile	1 mile	3 mile	5 mile
Bennett Park	Regional	59	1,336	2,193	2,193	15,485	36,422
Blackstone Park	Local	11	381	1,829	2,124	22,522	54,327
Braden River Park	District	0	598	1,630	1,563	23,418	76,562
Buffalo Creek Park	District	0	438	1,144	1,141	12,544	42,303
Conservatory Park	Local	96	249	1,572	1,572	22,262	66,068
Coquina Beach Park	Regional	0	254	632	632	3,855	10,898
East Bradenton Park	Local	159	1,041	7,684	7,655	45,852	127,802
Emerson Point Preserve	Preserve	256	256	311	311	3,968	15,220
G.T. Bray Park	District	260	986	5,762	5,762	61,414	118,891
Hidden Harbor Park	District	0	0	7	7	9,543	27,721
J.P. Miller Tennis Courts	Local	598	1,475	6,975	6,975	54,505	128,499
John H. Marble Recreation Complex	Local	42	320	3,405	3,405	32,412	117,841
Lakewood Ranch Park	District	0	21	439	439	13,762	43,032
Leffis Key Preserve	Preserve	65	65	254	264	3,275	10,097
Lincoln Community Park	Local	547	1,388	6,210	6,932	31,835	84,479
Manatee Village Historic Park	Local	805	2,258	8,224	7,723	42,876	125,204
Ola Mae Sims Park	Local	0	84	161	161	4,935	21,473
Palmetto Tennis Courts	Local	424	1,840	6,554	6,554	24,721	715,683
Perico Preserve	Preserve	41	378	1,515	1,515	6,337	35,998
Pride Community Park	Local	1,589	3,776	11,530	11,530	57,944	128,961
Robinson Preserve	Preserve	0	40	583	583	8,004	23,973
Rye Preserve	Preserve	0	523	639	639	4,608	15,132

Note: Calculations are based current road and sidewalk networks using ESRI Community Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 Esri forecasts for 2020.

In order to better understand the neighborhood each park is serving it is important to examine the demographic makeup of the residents surrounding each park. *Table 3.10* looks at a variety of factors that represent the communities of each park including Median Age, Number of Households, Average Household Size, Median Income, and % Minority.

Table 3.10 - Access LOS - Population Demographics within 3 mile driving distance of selected Parks

Selected Park	Park Type*	2020 Demographic Data (3 mile)				
		Median age	Total House-holds	Household Size	Median Income	% Minority
Bennett Park	Regional	42.0	6,468	2.39	$71,181	20.7%
Blackstone Park	Local	40.8	8,134	2.74	$47,655	41.7%
Braden River Park	District	48.3	9,592	2.43	$66,851	19.1%
Buffalo Creek Park	District	49.4	5,337	2.35	$61,727	14.6%
Conservatory Park	Local	55.7	10,504	2.12	$68,618	12.5%
Coquina Beach Park	Regional	65.3	2,138	1.8	$63,314	3.5%
East Bradenton Park	Local	37.0	17,115	2.58	$39,154	42.7%
Emerson Point Preserve	Preserve	50.6	1,555	2.55	$56,531	14.6%
G.T. Bray Park	District	48.4	28,302	2.14	$50,040	16.4%
Hidden Harbor Park	District	45.3	3,433	2.78	$100,912	10.4%
John H. Marble Recreation Complex	Local	45.1	12,943	2.48	$52,715	25.9%
Lakewood Ranch Park	District	59.2	5,741	2.4	$102,282	6.4%
Leffis Key Preserve	Preserve	65.2	1,793	1.83	$66,499	3.8%
Lincoln Community Park	Local	41.3	11,902	2.65	$46,901	41.0%
Ola Mae Sims Park	Local	40.2	1,781	2.76	$80,008	17.0%
Perico Preserve	Preserve	56.6	3,099	2.04	$64,718	7.1%
Pride Community Park	Local	43.8	24,495	2.35	$40,961	28.4%
Robinson Preserve	Preserve	51.1	3,240	2.47	$78,751	7.6%
Rye Preserve	Preserve	42.5	1,575	2.92	$110,212	7.7%

Note: Population Demographic Data generated using ESRI Community Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Summary File 1 Esri forecasts for 2020.

6 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Community input is a vital part of the needs assessment process because the parks and natural resources of the county are meant to serve the people. There is no better way to gain an understanding of the current state of the system and what needs are and are not being met than by talking to the people who use the parks on a daily basis.

Community input was gathered through an online survey and community input workshops held at various sites throughout the county. The goals of using multiple methods was to elicit feedback from the widest cross section of residents to get an accurate understanding of the needs of the community as a whole.

Online Survey

The online survey and accompanying website *www.planmanateeparks.com* informed residents of the goals and objectives of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Master Plan, kept them up to date on where the team was in the planning process, and posted important dates and milestones. In addition, the website offered a channel for visitors to give their feedback through a survey monkey survey. The brief 15 minute survey consisted of questions which focused on what residents liked and disliked in the current parks and natural resources system, and what their vision for the future might be.

Community Workshops

Community workshops were held at seven different locations during December 2016 and January 2017. The locations were strategically selected to make it easily accessible for residents in all parts of the county to contribute. There are also different needs and existing facilities in the neighborhoods where each workshop was held which is reflected in the feedback received at each of the sites. In addition to the community workshops, county administrators set up booths at the University of Central Florida and the County Fair to gain additional input on the strengths and weaknesses of the Parks and Natural Resources System.

Online Survey

As part of the community input process, PROS Consulting, INC. in conjunction with Kimley-Horn and Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department staff conducted an online survey through www.surveymonkey.com.

The purpose of this survey was to develop a better understanding of the needs, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Manatee County residents in relation to parks, natural resources and recreation activities. The survey went live in October of 2016 and received a total of 534 responses through January 31, 2017. The survey received responses from all areas of the county, with an age distribution roughly mirroring that of Manatee County.

Parks & Facilities

Satisfaction Ratings

Survey respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction of a list of parks from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied". The following parks received the most responses of "very satisfied" or "satisfied" based on participant responses.

94% - Robinson Preserve
92% - Emerson Point Preserve
86% - Manatee Beach
84% - Coquina Beach
84% - G.T. Bray Park

Most Important Parks

Survey respondents were asked to list the top four parks that are most important to them. The following appeared on the highest percentage of respondents most important parks.

76.7% - Robinson Preserve
68.7% - G.T. Bray Park*
66.6% - Coquina Beach
63.2% - Manatee Beach
45.5% - Emerson Point Preserve

**G.T. Bray Park received the highest percent of 1st place votes with 32.1% of participants listing it as the most important park to them.*

Programs & Events

Participation Rate

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the top four programs in which they would be most likely to participate. The following programs were listed on the highest percentage of responses.

92.3% - Fitness Programs*
85.2% - Health & Wellness Programs
58.3% - Senior Programs
36.6% - Youth Athletics
34.1% - Swim Lessons

**Fitness Programs received the highest percent of 1st place votes with 37.8% of participants listing it as the program they would most likely participate in.*

Met Needs by Program

Survey respondents were asked to rate how well their needs were being met when it came to each program type. The following lists the highest and lowest rated programs in terms of needs met.

Highest Percent Needs Met
43% - Fitness Programs
35% - Youth Athletics
29% - Health & Wellness Programs

Highest Percent Needs Unmet
85% - Swim Teams
80% - After-school Programs
80% - Swim Lessons

56.9% of survey respondents participated in a recreation program or event held by Manatee County in the past year. This is well above the national averages which range from 35% - 40%.

Facilities

Facility Usage / Need

Survey respondents were asked to list the top four facilities which they would be most likely to use if they were offered by the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department. The following facilities were listed on the highest percentage of responses.

50.5% - Nature Trails*
49.6% - Paved Hiking/Biking Trails
40.5% - Unpaved Hiking/Biking Trails
30.7% - Boardwalks
24.1% - Outdoor Swimming Pools/ Water Parks

**Nature Trails received the highest percent of 1st place votes with 15.2% of participants listing it as the facility they would most interested in using.*

Met Needs by Facility

Survey respondents were asked to rate how well their needs were being met when it comes to each facility. The following lists the highest rated and lowest rated facilities in terms of needs met.

Highest Percent Needs Met

66% - Soccer Fields
60% - Baseball/Softball Fields
52% - Picnic Areas/Pavilions

Highest Percent Needs Unmet

87% - Community Gardens
82% - Campgrounds
82% - Outdoor Amphitheaters

Other

Barriers to Participation

Survey respondents were asked what kept them from using the parks, facilities, and programs the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department offers. The following were given as the reasons that most deterred respondents.

56.0% - Distance to the Park
35.7% - I don't know what is being offered
22.6% - Program times are not convenient
21.4% - Lack of activities at the park
14.2% - Price for programs

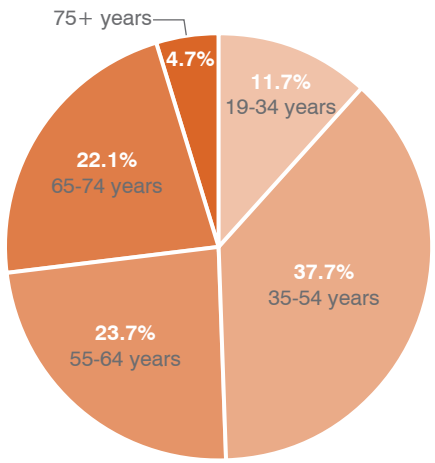
74.2% of survey respondents say they are satisfied with the value their household receives from the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department, while **94.0%** of respondents would recommend department programs and activities to a friend.

Survey respondents listed *word of mouth, website, and activity guide* as the most effective marketing methods for learning about department programs and activities.

Participants

Survey Respondents

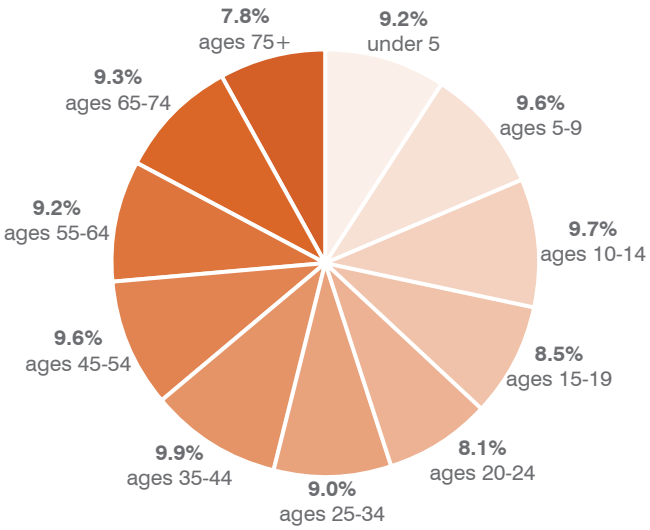
Survey respondents were asked to list their age from the ranges provided.



online survey participant age range

Makeup of Households Surveyed

Survey respondents were asked to list the age of all people in their household from the ranges provided.



online survey participant residents in household range

Community Workshops

The community workshops were held at seven sites around the County and drew over 100 residents from throughout the community.

The workshops consisted of six hands-on stations designed to actively engage participants and elicit feedback on the future of the Parks and Natural Resources Department.

Station 1 - Your Story

Participants were asked to list their favorite park and their primary method of travel to the park.

Favorite Park (top-5 responses)

1. Robinson Preserve
2. Emerson Point Preserve
3. G.T. Bray Park
4. Coquina Beach
5. Manatee Beach

How do you get to your favorite park?

walk/run	*bicycle*	*automobile*	*public transportation*
9.2%	11.7%	76.0%	3.1%

Station 2 - One Word Responses

Participants were asked to write one word describing how they see the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department today, and one word to describe how they would like to see it in the future.

Today

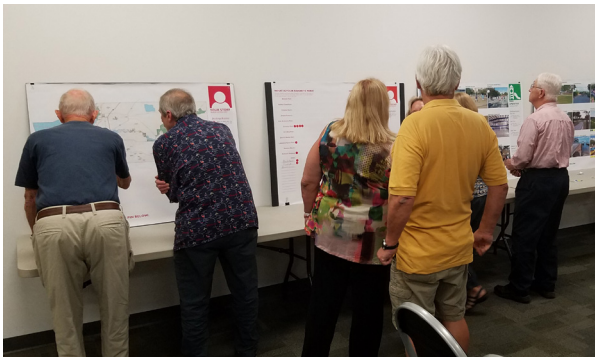
Future

Station 3 - Facilities Preference Study

Participants were asked to identify their top-3 choices of facilities they would most like to see in Manatee County based on a list of 24 facility types provided. The top-5 responses are listed below.

Facility Preferences (top-5 responses)

1. Nature Trails (hiking, biking, etc.)
2. Small Neighborhood Parks
3. Outdoor Swimming Pools / Water Parks
4. Boardwalks
5. Kayak Launch



Station 4 - Programs Preference Study

Participants were asked to identify their top-3 choices of Programs they would most like to see provided by the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department based on a list of program types provided. The top-5 responses are listed below.

Program Preferences (top-5 responses)

1. Health & Wellness Programs
2. Senior Programs
3. Youth Athletics
4. After-School Programs
5. Fitness Programs

Station 5 - Funding

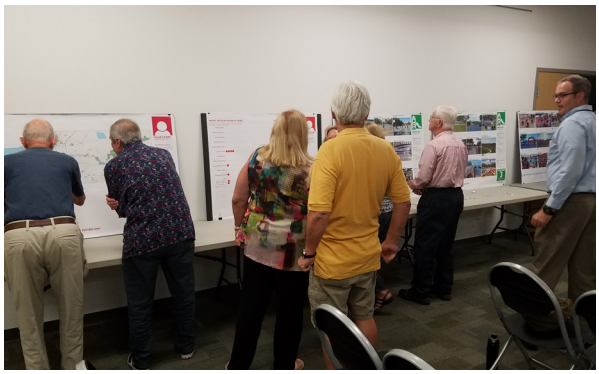
Participants were given 10 "park dollars" and asked to spend them how they see fit based on 11 categories.

Preferred spending options (top-5 responses)

1. Preserves - 25.9%
2. Trails - 19.4%
3. Park Improvements - 14.2%
4. Wellness & Fitness Programs - 9.7%
5. Aquatics / Pools - 8.4%

Station 6 - Comments / Discussion

Participants were invited to join in an open ended discussion with Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department officials. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, voice concerns, and share what the Parks and Natural Resources Department means to them.



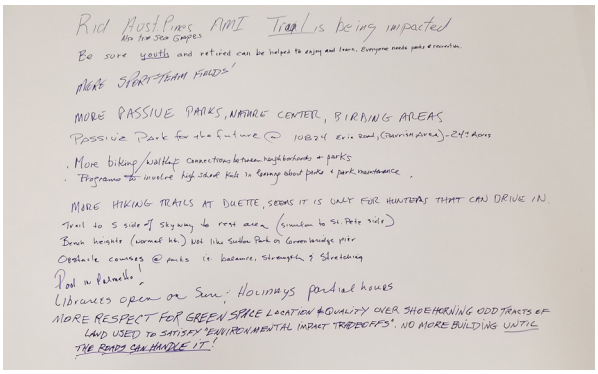
"More biking/walking connection between neighborhoods & parks."

"Better labeled and maintained trails."

"Space for local artists and musicians to entertain."

"Planned programs to make use of great facilities."

"Open spaces for group activities distributed around the community."



"Off-leash dog parks with water runs."

"Additional kayak storage units."

"Think about connectivity for wildlife corridors."

"Accessibility for disable people."

"More sports team fields."

7 Analysis & Summary

KEY FINDINGS

- **Air Conditioned Space at a Premium**
  The County has a lack of Air Conditioned Space when compared to National, State, and Regional Benchmarks. Providing air conditioned space is an important amenity as it gives respite from the hot Florida sun and allows for year-round, all-weather recreation and programming opportunities.

- **Focus on Aquatics**
  The County is not providing the aquatic facilities outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Stakeholder groups were vocal about a lack of swimming opportunities in the East County, and current challenges for high school and competitive swim meets.

- **Continue to grow Athletics**
  While most needs are being met, athletic facilities are facing issues associated with wear and tear, overuse and overcrowding. New sports like pickleball do not have individualized facilities, and time on multi use fields is shared sometimes between three sports (soccer, lacrosse, football).

- **Trails / Greenways lagging behind**
  Manatee County has fallen behind its neighbors when it comes to capital investments in greenways and trails. This need is exacerbated by the North-Port-Sarasota-Bradenton Metro Area's high ranking in the 2016 Dangerous by Design Report by Smart Growth America.

- **Identify Land for Acquisition while it is still available**
  The County has a significantly low amount of land set aside for conservation when compared to its neighbors and the State of Florida. Luckily, Manatee County has an Environmental Lands Management and Acquisition Committee (ELMAC) that can be leveraged for public benefit.

Summary

A Needs Assessment is a process for determining the "gaps", existing or perceived, in service along with the desires of the community using a variety of evaluation methods. This assessment was used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current state of Manatee County's Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, and where opportunities exist, now or in the future, to improve the County's system. The analysis prepared in this section focused on a variety of factors ranging from the location and type of park/facility (district, neighborhood, etc), connectivity via both walking and driving, as well as population and demographic shifts. In summary, the gaps in aquatics, air conditioned space, athletic facilities and greenways reviewed below, when combined with the Vision Plan in Chapter 4, form the basis for the Master Plan and Capital Improvements Plan.

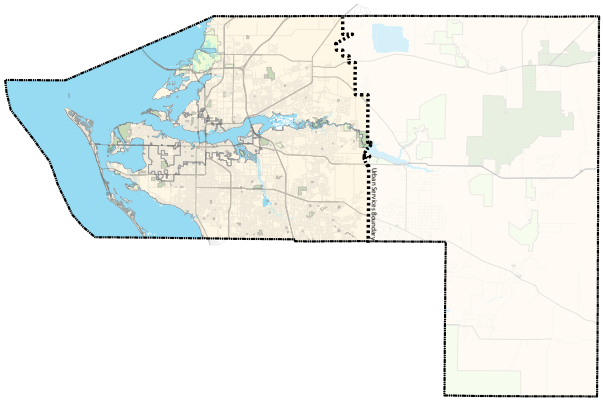
The needs generally exhibited the supply and demand inconsistencies the park system has in a geographic context based on the generalized areas of analysis (NW, NE, SE, SW). Although successful and well maintained assets and

programs continue to serve all citizens of the County, they are largely concentrated west of I-75 (i.e., NW and SW). Generally, Manatee County's parks and facilities have not kept pace with the eastward shift of the center of population. This is not intended to imply a lack of facilities necessarily but more so that the population growth and geographic shift has outpaced park development, despite open space requirements in the Land Development Code[1]. It is important to note that while growth has been focused in the NE and SE quadrants (i.e., Lakewood Ranch and Parrish), there are still significant populations in the western portions of the County served by the County's parks system. The County is projected to grow by 34% by 2040. Even though residential and population growth has outpaced park development, resulting in gaps in service and issues associated with facility overuse, overall, there is a high level of satisfaction with the County's park system, with most parks and facilities meeting or exceeding the expectations by the various respondents.

It should be noted, that providing a park or park facility is a public service. The Urban Service Boundary is a demarcation line running North to South (*Exhibit 3.11*), roughly splitting Manatee County in half. On the western side of this line, Manatee County Government has committed to providing services (with some limitations) such as potable water and waste water. Beyond this, it is understood to be financially infeasible for the County to support infrastructure and would result in a burden on its current tax base. Parks should be viewed similarly as they serve fewer people per acre(less cost effective), require more expensive maintenance (employees must drive further distances), and have access to fewer resources (public utilities). Preserves and greenways serve different purposes than parks, so should be exempt from any discussion pertaining to the Urban Service Boundary.

Manatee County has accomplished a lot with

Exhibit 3.11 - Manatee County Urban Services Boundary



less. The County's combined budget for the Parks & Natural Resources Department and Property Management – Grounds Maintenance Division is 28% below the benchmark average. The County's budget has generally remained flat since 2013 causing the County to adapt where possible, sacrificing services and compelling the Department to become more creative with funding. When comparing Manatee County against regional and national indicators, Manatee County has an operating budget 28% below the national average, and a capital expenditure budget 67% higher than the national average. The County's residents supported a one-half cent sales tax initiative in 2016 of which 14% will help offset the cost of maintenance and enhancement of parks and recreation facilities. These budgetary shortages

[1]Land Development Code requires open space in Planned Developments. The LDC regards amenities such as landscape buffers and stormwater retention bodies as open space, but it is not required and left to the discretion of the developer to provide recreational open space. These facilities are privately funded and in some cases, have restricted access. Also, due to the discretionary nature of the code, there is no specific correlation between community provided recreational open space and the larger area park needs or facility needs.

have had an impact on the ability of the Parks and Natural Resources Department and the Grounds Maintenance Division to appropriately address the demand for park space that has come with the County's growth. Historically the County has relied on grants, donated land, and other creative methods to fund facility and parkland investments and utilized budget funds primarily for operations and maintenance. High growth rates, and a relatively stagnant park budget has led to deficiencies in the system, substantiated by the needs assessment.

Aquatic facilities are currently failing the level of service standard of 1 per 50,000 residents. Currently, there are three facilities serving a combined population of 387,414. Note, additional facilities are included within the FY 2021 budget; however, even with these, the County will not meet the adopted LOS. One important item that is not considered in this evaluation are the provisions of personal pools and or those provided by HOAs (i.e., private facilities). Respondents noted that pools and swim teams were some of the most popular requests in the online survey portion of the assessment, with swim teams and swim lessons not meeting the needs of 85% and 80% of survey respondents, respectively. Furthermore, the lack of an aquatic facility(s) east of I-75 provides a geographic gap in service in the fastest growing region of the County. This is compounded by the need to provide competitive pools for high school and club swim programs as all competitive programs must utilize either G.T. Bray or John H. Marble pools.

A similar gap appeared when identifying areas served by air conditioned recreational facilities. In the Florida heat, County owned and operated air conditioned space is an important commodity for residents of all ages. This theme is once again exacerbated in the regions east of I-75, where the only air conditioned space is the Myakka City Community Center, 20 miles east of I-75, in the far southeastern corner of the County.

In some cases, athletic fields are sufficient overall County-wide, with handball/racquetball courts and football/soccer fields meeting their respective LOS standard. However, their location and quantity may not be functioning to accommodate needs. For example, an east county soccer club has experienced 31 % growth since 2013 and exceeds 2,375 total athletes. Based on information and analysis, they have outgrown their current facilities. This trend is especially relevant for District and Regional levels of parks. For example, the need for a park with facility investment similar to G.T. Bray is necessitated by current and future growth in the eastern portions of the County. A facility in the eastern portion of Manatee County, Premier Sports Complex, is identified in the FY 2021 budget and should be developed as a County priority as discussed in Chapters 4-5. Funding for preparation of this master plan will be shared across Tourist Development Council, general fund and parks fund sources. District type parks with aquatics, sports fields and air conditioned space are located west of I-75 and include G.T. Bray and John H. Marble Park. This type of Park is desired by the residents and is supported by data collected through Online Surveys and Site Evaluations in which G.T. Bray Park received the highest score (4.6) of any site in Manatee County. The parks highest in satisfaction, according to respondents, are G.T. Bray and Robinson Preserve; east county parks did not appear in the Top 5. With population in the East County expected to double between the 2010 census and 2040, the shortfalls in the area specific level of service will continue to grow or be exacerbated.

[2]2010 Manatee County Comprehensive Plan
[3]Florida Office of Economic & Demographic Research Annual Assessment of Florida's Water Resources and Conservation Lands 2017 Edition Table 2.1.2 Part 3 – Shares of Conservation Lands in Coastal non-FCCs

General recreation and leisure should not be overlooked when assessing park services. Amenities like walking trails, picnic shelters/ shade pavilions, and dog parks are low cost improvements that serve a broad range of residents. These basic features should be provided at all county parks if not already implemented, and existing facilities should be assessed for additions and improvements.

Based on a generalized LOS analysis using Manatee County's current uniform standard,[2] the County is deficient in swimming pools, boat ramps, and baseball/softball facilities (based on population). However, the County meets/exceeds LOS of football/soccer fields and trails. Again, this standard is not based on geographic indicators along with population but population based only. Portions of the LOS analysis are also skewed based on the County's Duette Preserve which accounts for over 70% of the County's Parks and Preserve lands. If Duette Preserve is removed from the analysis, the County's Level of Service shrinks from 77.99 to 21.45 acres per 1000 residents.

Duette Preserve plays an important ecological and preservation role as a committed open space. However, Duette Preserve included, the County falls short of local and State averages for Shares of Conservation Lands.[3] The County has committed 12.5% of lands to open spaces, less than one-half of the State average of 30.66%. Locally, the Manatee County allocation of 12.5% open space pales in comparison to Sarasota County's 52% and Pasco County's 23%.

Other needs as identified in this Chapter include the lack of connectivity amongst the County's parks facilities. The parks west of I-75 generally enjoy greater connectivity based on the established roadway network, while parks in the eastern portions of the County are generally more limited due to an incomplete roadway network or gaps in coverage due to private roadways which do not afford overall public access.

The next phase in the planning process is the development of the Parks Vision. The Vision is a response to the needs identified in this assessment and the information obtained during interviews with stakeholders. It is mission-based and focused on addressing the shortfalls within each of Manatee County's Park sub-systems. The Vision detects opportunities to improve and sets the stage for the Implementation of the Master Plan.

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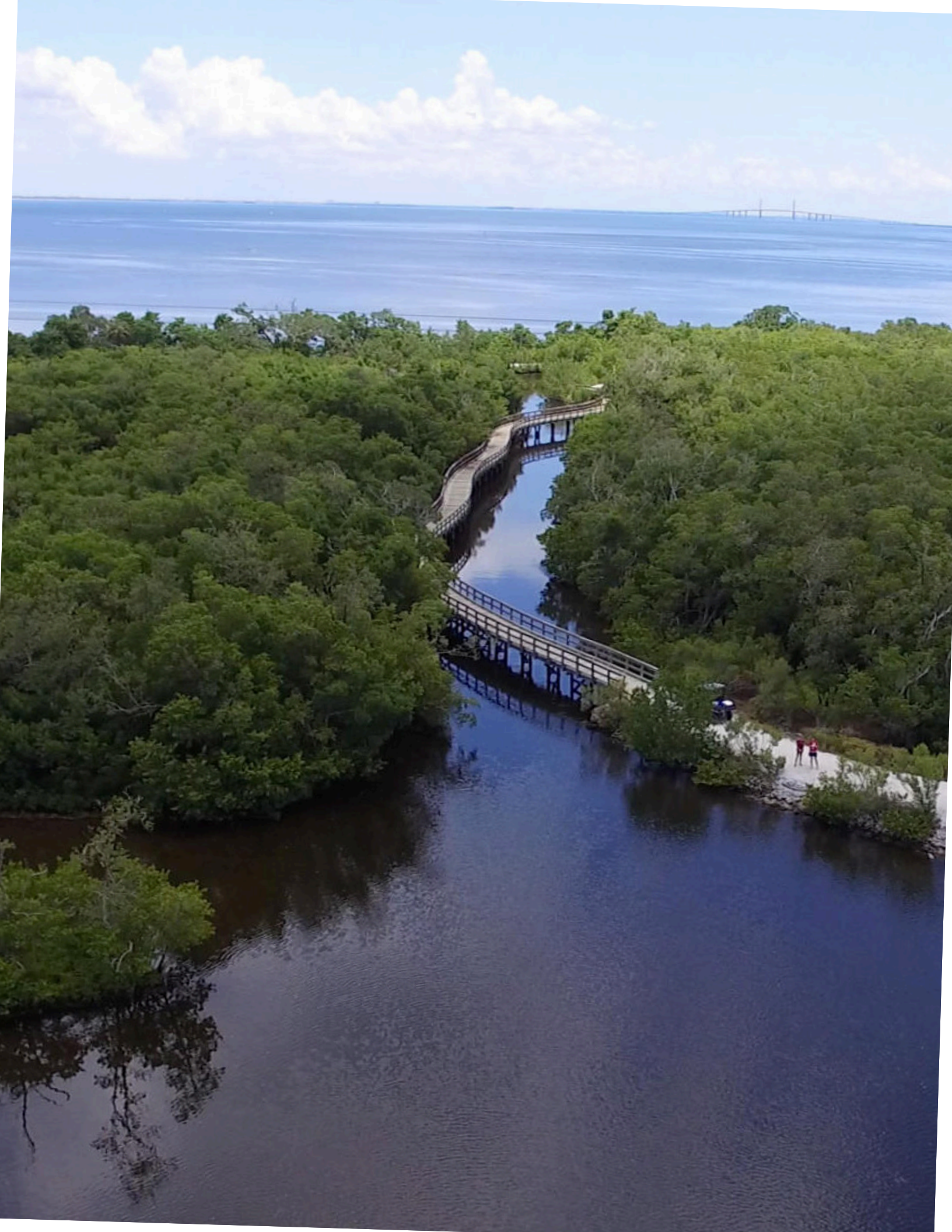


Vision Plan 4

1 - Introduction

1 INTRODUCTION

The next step in the planning process is to determine the most appropriate response to Manatee County's needs. Unfortunately, there are no "universal" standards to follow in park and open space planning and development. The previous uniform standards have fallen out of use due to differences in their interpretation, application, and a realization that "one size does not fit all". As such, every community must decide for itself how to best provide parks and recreation services.

County staff, consultant team, and residents met for a series of half-day workshops to discuss needs and priorities of the focused parks sub-systems, and to develop a mission-based, 10-year Vision for the parks system. The County was asked to provide a preliminary principal mission statement and the vision for each of the sub-systems during the vision workshop. The mission statement for the County's Parks and Natural Resources Department is "To create lifelong memories by offering diverse leisure activities in a safe and beautiful environment that will enhance your quality of life in Manatee County." [County to update]. The Vision workshop was divided into separate sessions to discuss each of the County's parks and recreation sub-systems: Parks, Indoor Recreation Centers, Athletics Facilities, Aquatics Facilities, Greenways and Trails, Preserves, and Operations & Maintenance. Following is the proposed vision for each of the sub-systems and a summary of the information, including a proposed service delivery model obtained during each workshop. It should be noted that the models replace the typical approach to parks planning and identify ways in which the County can provide certain services and facilities based on the "parks" function. Similar to the earlier statements, one model will not apply to all park sub-systems and as such, each sub-system has a recommended model for existing and proposed facilities. The delivery models will be explored further as they apply to the individual sub-systems.

Vision Sub-Systems

- **Parks**
- **Indoor Recreation Centers**
- **Athletic Facilities**
- **Aquatics Facilities**
- **Greenways & Trails**
- **Preserves**
- **Operations & Maintenance**

Participants of the Greenways and Trails Vision Workshop discuss the future of the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources system.

Participants of the Athletics Visioning Workshop identify facilities uses for baseball and softball and identify gaps in the system.

Parks

The County's vision for its parks is to be the provider of large, centralized, multi-use parks and recreation facilities, averaging 50-100 acres each. Existing examples of this include G.T. Bray Park, John H. Marble Park, and Blackstone Park. Other parks may meet the size and definition, but may not provide the necessary amenities and facilities for the community.

The vision is based on an "equity model" (*Exhibit 4.1*), meaning residents in each geographic area of the County will have access to a similar facility within close proximity to their home. Parks may be closer in high density areas west of I-75 that are serving more people and somewhat more dispersed in the eastern areas addressing/anticipating the growth in those sectors of the County. Based on the needs assessment, it had appeared that there was an existing/future demand for the new Premier Sports Complex, east of I-75 and south of the Manatee River, and additional large parks in the NE (Parrish) area. The Park should reflect a coordinated effort based on the improvements scheduled by the Manatee County School Board (new high school) and the extension of Ft. Hamer Road to Erie Road. In the Village of Parrish, there is a need for a centrally located local park that is capable of absorbing the open space demands of this quickly growing subarea of the county. A park of this nature has the ability to serve as a nucleus for the community, with potential placemaking and "third-place" characteristics. Although there are also additional parks in the NW (Palmetto) geographic area, similar (identified) amenities such as aquatics are lacking and should be considered based on the County's vision. *Exhibit 4.2* illustrates the locations of existing and proposed large, multi-use parks.

Small, local parks should be provided by municipalities, developers of new communities, and homeowner associations (HOAs). Private communities can meet many of the day-to-day fitness and recreational needs of Manatee County residents.* However, current Land Development Regulations (LDRs) do not specify the types of parks and recreation facilities that must be provided as part of these private facilities in order to meet residents' needs; only that a certain portion (acreage) is provided and only when part of a planned

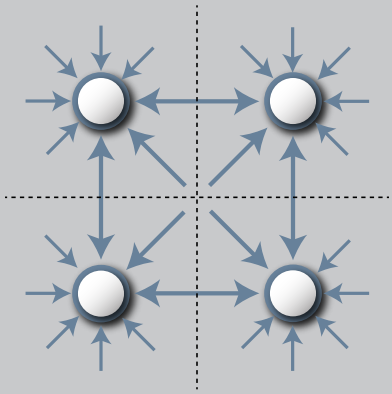


Exhibit 4.1 :Equity Model (Barth Associates, 2015)

The Equity Model

The equity model focuses on the equitable distribution of services, measured in terms of distance (Access LOS) or population served (Facility or Acreage LOS). This model assumes that facilities or parks will be distributed equitably throughout the community, e.g. one facility per quadrant, as opposed to a single centralized facility.

*Note: John H. Marble is scheduled for renovation FY 2021.

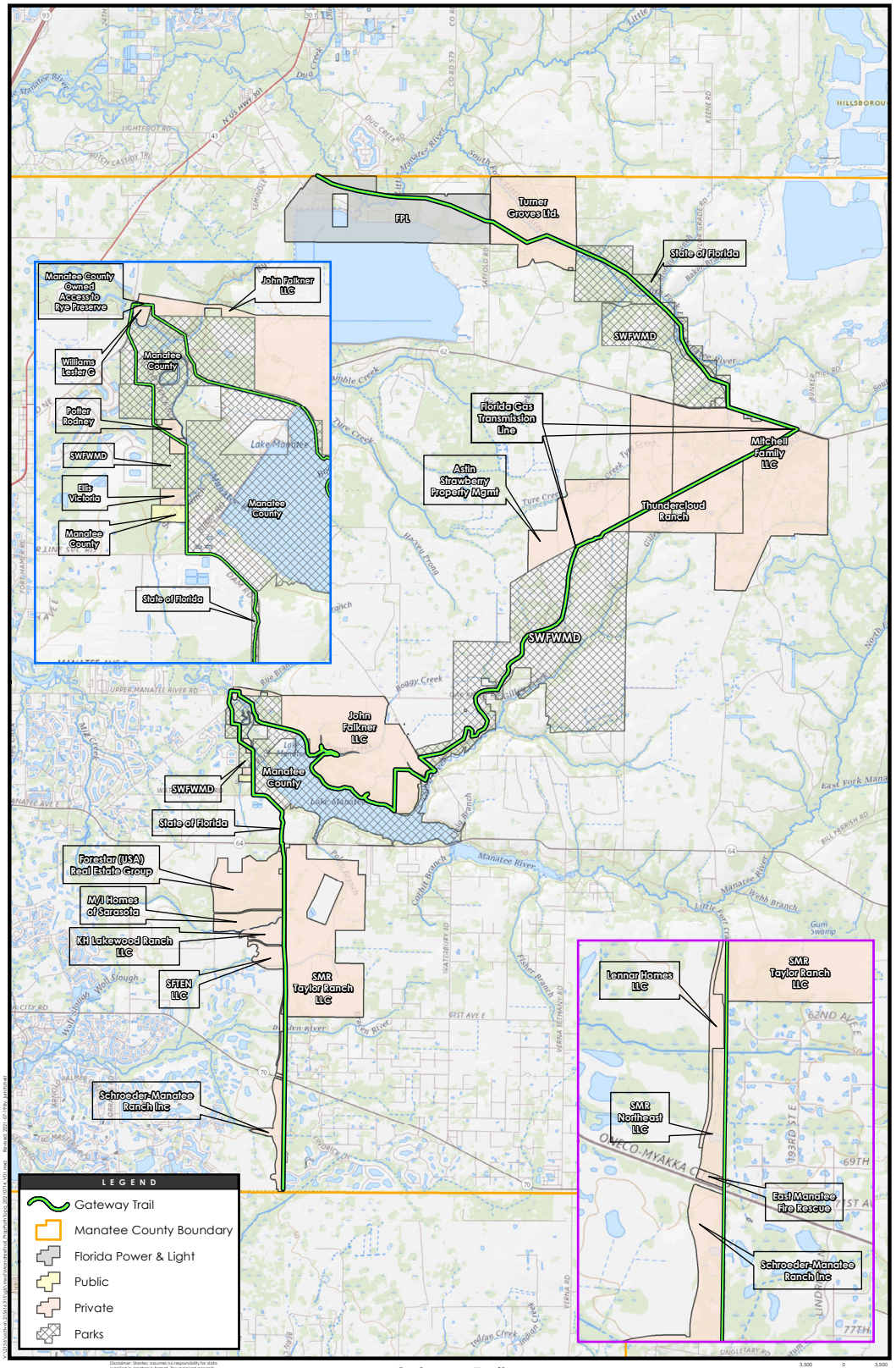
unit development (PUD). This results in a greater burden for the County who is then responsible for meeting a larger portion of the recreation needs for new residents with its already limited resources. As noted in the Needs Assessment, one of the challenges is also that a portion of these parks are located on private lands and not publicly accessible to residents outside of the neighborhood.

The County's Land Development Regulations should be updated to more specifically define parks and open space requirements, and establish prototypes for required park types. Typical neighborhood facilities amenities include:

- **Power, water, and infrastructure for special events**
- **Multipurpose open lawns**
- **Shade trees and canopies**
- **Paved, multi-purpose fitness trail**
- **Dog Parks**
- **Variety of seating, including movable tables and chairs**
- **Picnic shelters and grills**
- **Playground for all ages**
- **Wi-Fi throughout the park**
- **Drinking fountains**
- **Outdoor fitness equipment**
- **Multi-purpose courts for basketball, tennis, and pickleball**

The County's LDRs should also be updated to define what can be "counted" towards Acreage Level-of-Service (LOS) requirements, and to establish requirements for Facilities LOS and Access LOS (these LOS types are defined beginning on *page 55*) to make sure that an equitable level of service is provided. Updating the current LDRs may not reduce existing parks and recreation needs, but it will reduce the costs of meeting the needs of future residents by ensuring day to day open space needs of residents are met, as Manatee County concentrates its resources on providing larger scale (and more expensive) amenities in regional and district parks. This will also require an amendment to the Manatee County Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Recreation/ Open Space Element, Objective 8.1 and Policies 8.1.1.1-8.1.1.3.

Large regional parks like G.T. Bray above will become the focus of the Parks and Natural Resources Department.



Gateway Trail Proposed Alignment

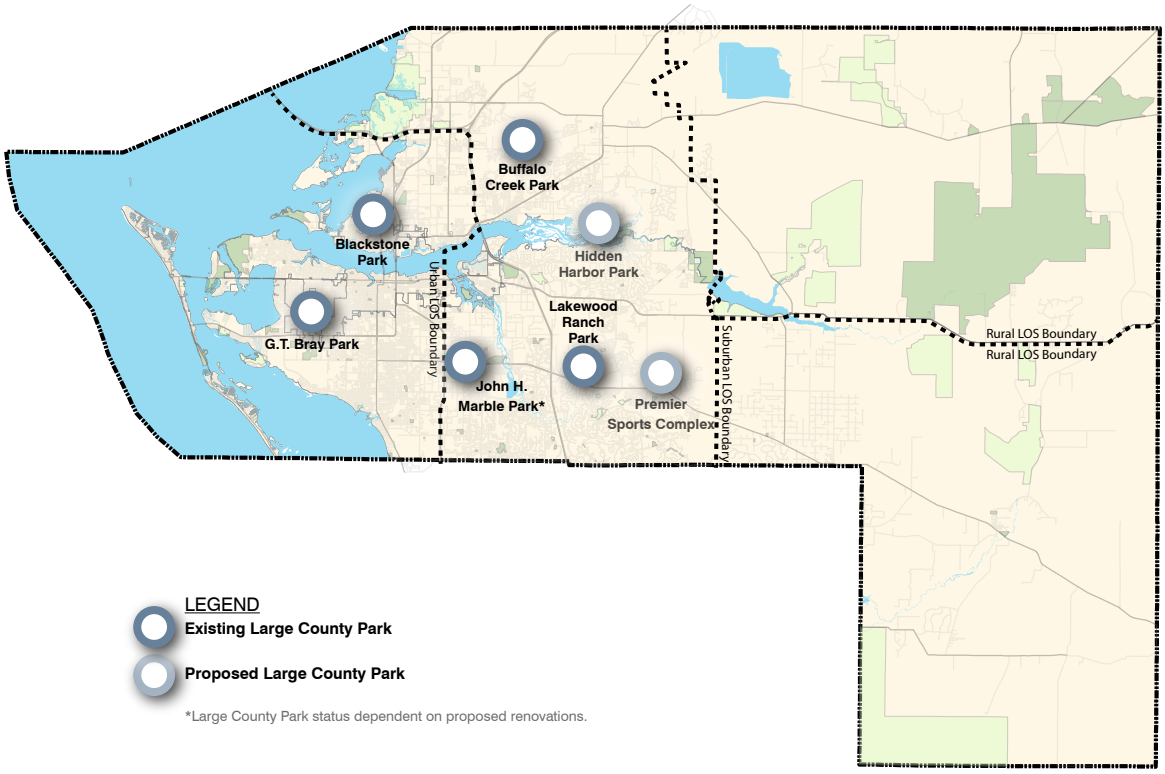
Gateway Trail
Proposed Alignment
July 2021

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
6900 Professional Pkwy E.
Sarasota, FL 34240
tel 941.907.6900
fax 941.907.6910

Prepared by: JM 07/16/21
Technical Review by: JW 07/16/21
Independent Review by: SB 07/16/21

Source: July 2021 Stantec

Exhibit 4.2 - Parks Vision Plan Map - Equity Model



Land Development Regulations should define park and opens space requirements in order to ease LOS needs required of the county in the future.

Indoor Recreation Facility

The County's facilities vision includes providing indoor (air conditioned) recreation centers. These facilities are growing in popularity as aging baby boomers focus on health and fitness facilities and programs. There is also a growing demand for indoor gymnasium space for sports and activities including pickleball (one of the fastest growing sports in America), basketball, and volleyball.

The goal, expressed as part of the vision, is for the County and/or other recreation providers to make available approximately 450,000 square feet (sf) of indoor recreation space by the year 2035. This number is slightly less than the industry benchmark of one square foot (1 sf) per capita. Based on available information, it is estimated that approximately 100,000 sf of indoor space is available today concentrated at G.T. Bray, Myakka Community Center, Rubonia Community Center, and John H. Marble. Additional privately funded and maintained centers are located in Manatee County; however, these are owned/operated by groups such as the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Cities of Palmetto and Bradenton, as well as some spaces provided by individual HOAs. Although this space is present within the County, it is not always accessible and not counted towards the County's LOS. The Manatee School Board is another potential provider of indoor recreation space via gymnasiums, and the use of this space continues to be a priority.

The County's vision is to provide indoor recreation services through a "hub and spoke model" (*Exhibit 4.3*). The desired service delivery includes large, full-service,

Highland Park Recreation Center - Largo, FL

35-40,000 sf indoor recreation "hubs". Based on the information provided and identified through the workshop, this type of space is proposed and can be accommodated at John H. Marble and the future Premier Sports Complex. Note, the indoor facility at John H. Marble is not currently in use and is scheduled to be renovated for future use (FY 2022-23). A comparable facility

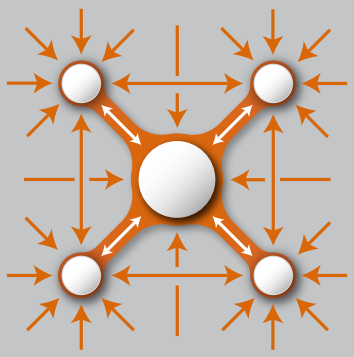


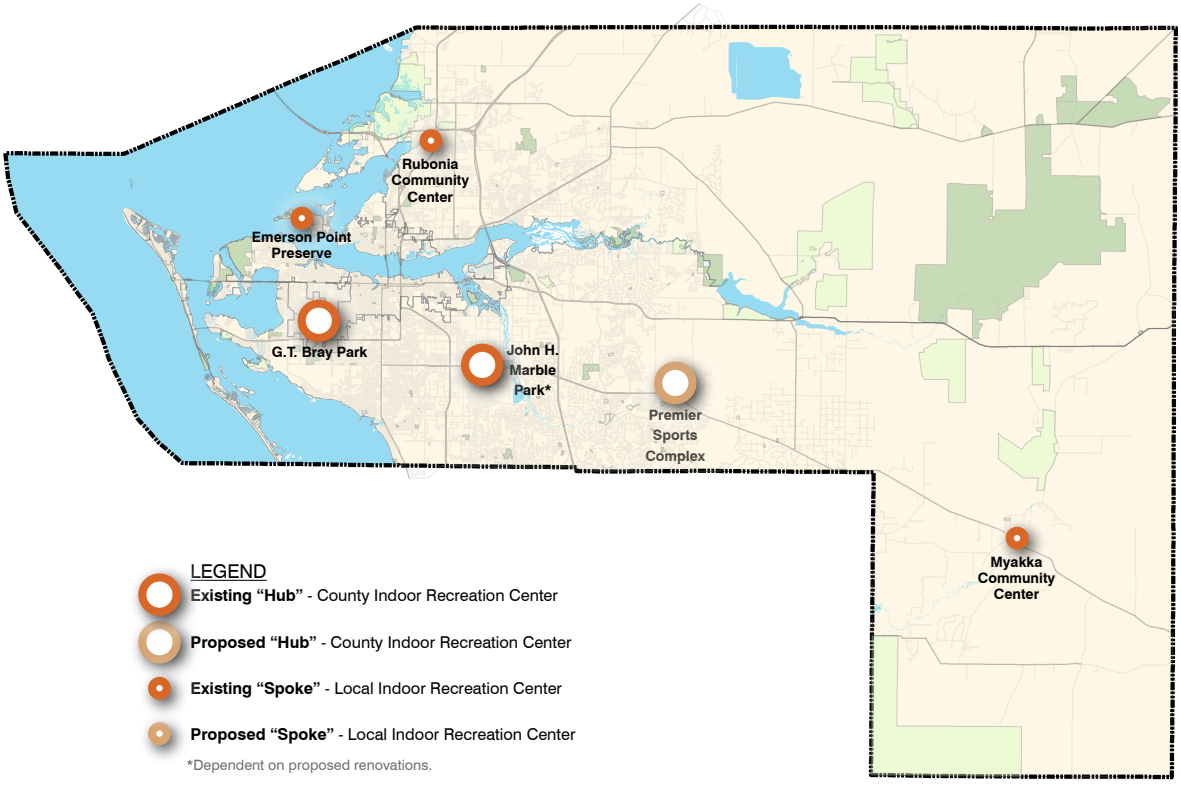
Exhibit 4.3: Hub and Spoke Model (Barth Associates, 2015)

The Hub and Spoke Model

The hub and spoke model combines the centralized model with the equity model. This model has one large central hub which serves large portions of the community with small satellite spokes serving residents at the neighborhood level.

mentioned by County staff as desirable is the Highland Park Recreation Center in Largo, FL. A smaller "spoke" or satellite center roughly 5,000-10,000 sf will supplement the services provided by the larger hubs; this also includes the indoor facilities at the Myakka Community Center and the Rubonia Community Center. Each indoor facility should be designed to reflect the character and culture(s) of the surrounding communities and provide services for that demographic while remaining flexible enough to adapt to changing needs and interests. *Exhibit 4.4* illustrates the locations of the existing, expanded, and/or proposed indoor recreation centers to be provided by the County or other providers.

Exhibit 4.4 - Indoor Facilities Vision Plan Map - Hub and Spoke Model



Goal: Provide 1 sf of indoor recreation space per county resident using the "Hub and Spoke" model.

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Athletics

Traditionally, local communities like Manatee County have focused on providing "ball fields" for youth/adult recreational league practice and games. Coaching and training were provided by parents and other volunteers, with a focus on sportsmanship, fundamental skills, safety, and life lessons. The most talented and competitive kids graduated to middle school and high school athletics programs.

With the advent of highly competitive, regional travel teams over the past two decades, participation in recreational leagues has declined. According to a national study by the Sports Fitness Industry Association, "participation among kids ages 6-to-17 has declined more than 9% in the last five years." Meanwhile "with the best coaching, training and competition, the number of families shifting from community rec leagues to traveling teams has soared — bringing the cost and time commitment up with it."[1]

This shift from recreation to competitive athletics has created the following dilemma for public agencies including Manatee County:

- Travel teams often have much higher expectations for field quality, as they travel and compete regionally. They also require multi-field venues for weekend tournaments. Typical needs include high quality natural or artificial turf fields; night lighting; concession/scorekeeper buildings; air-conditioned meeting space; and ample parking for multiple teams and spectators.
- Participants in travel teams may not be residents of the community providing the sports fields. For example, it is estimated that approximately 50-60% of the participants in Manatee County travel teams live within the County.

Considering Manatee County's limited resources, the athletics vision is to give first priority to the needs of recreational and school athletics programs; second priority would be given to travel programs, if capacity is available. Due to the County's limited maintenance budget and staffing, much of the daily maintenance is addressed by the respective sports league. The current fee schedule for recreational versus travel teams shows some disparity in the fees between the two. For example, Manatee County affiliated leagues pay $17/hour for Little League or Softball fields with lights; non-affiliated (i.e. travel, AAU, etc.) teams are charged $26/hour ($15/field + $11/lights). Should the County wish to exceed the recreational LOS to accommodate the needs of travel programs, a new user fee policy should be established to recover a higher percentage of capital, operations, and maintenance costs, especially for competitive programs.

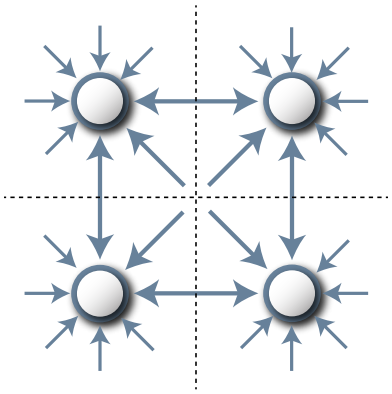


Exhibit 4.5: Equity Model (Barth Associates, 2015)

[1] *http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2015/11/16/as-competition-rises-team-sports-decline-but-traveling-teams-soar/*

- Travel programs charge players more than recreational leagues, and many hire professional managers and coaches. Some families cannot afford to enroll their children in travel programs without financial assistance.

- Travel teams do not typically own or maintain athletics fields or complexes. Instead, they rely on local governments to build and maintain these facilities. However, user fees only cover a fraction of the costs of construction, operations, and maintenance. Tax revenues collected from hotels and restaurants during tournaments or special events are not allocated directly to parks and recreation departments to offset the costs of the sports facilities and are rarely significant enough to provide any meaningful return-on-investment.

To determine the number of fields required for recreational and school athletics, a new level-of-service should be established for recreational sports. Currently, the County's LOS standard is 1-field/6000residents (baseball/softball) and 1-field/15,000 residents (soccer/football). However, this standard does not take into consideration geography or Access LOS (i.e. distance

traveled). This technique simply calculates the County's current LOS for soccer, football, lacrosse, softball, and baseball. Interviews with recreation staff indicate that most residents' recreational needs are being met through the County's existing facilities. An alternative technique is to calculate LOS based on the participation rates established in the 2013 State of Florida Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Strategies for amending LOS are covered in the next chapter of this plan. *Exhibit 4.6* compares the LOS for athletics fields from three different sources: Existing LOS; Manatee County Comprehensive Plan; and the 2013 SCORP.

The athletics vision is for fields to be located throughout the County, based on the Equity Model (*Exhibit 4.5*), to ensure that every resident has equal access to fields. For example, Manatee County Little League has established geographic districts, each with its own home field. Similarly, Manatee County girls' softball is played in three locations throughout the County. The vision recommends athletic fields will be located within County parks and will be designed to be safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing in accordance with the County's mission. User amenities would include covered seating (shade structures), drinking fountains, concessions, playgrounds, and other amenities to enhance the user's experience; this could also include a distribution of parking facilities and trails connecting areas. The vision does not propose any dedicated sports complexes proposed specifically for tournament play.

One facility not identified in this section but should be discussed due to its local and nationwide draw is the boathouse and rowing facility located at Ft. Hamer Park. Currently, the County has entered into an agreement with Manatee County Youth Rowing, Inc. (MCYR) to provide rowing and water based programs for Manatee County's high schools as well as community (masters) participants. Currently, athletes from Palmetto High School, Southeast High School, Manatee High School, Braden River High School and Lakewood Ranch High School compete under the MCYR umbrella. This facility receives visits from out of state programs including Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, and others. There are no LOS standards associated with this type of facility due to the unique nature of the programs it supports.

Exhibit 4.6 - Athletics LOS Comparison Table

	Current Inventory	Existing LOS	Comp Plan LOS	2013 SCORP LOS
Baseball Fields	44 (combined with softball)	1/8,805 (combined with softball)	1/6,000 (combined with softball)	1/1000 participants or 1/9000 residents
Softball Fields	44 (combined with baseball)	1/8,805 (combined with softball)	1/6,000 (combined with baseball)	N/A
Soccer Fields	23	1/16,844	1/15,000 (combined with football)	.53/1000 participants or 1/19,000 residents
Football Fields	5	1/77,483	1/15,000 (combined with soccer)	.56/1000 participants or 1/20,000 residents

Goal: Fields to be located throughout the County, based on the "Equity Model."

AQUATICS

The purpose (mission) of the County's aquatics program is to **"educate the public about water safety, teach children and adults to swim, provide opportunities for fitness and exercise, and to provide venues for local/high school swim meets."** Similar to the athletics vision, the County's vision does not include specialized aquatics facilities to accommodate collegiate/ national competitions.

Aquatics services can be delivered to residents through a hub and spoke model *(Exhibit 4.7*). Full service hubs - including competition, recreation, and family facilities – will include the existing G.T. Bray Aquatics complex (multi-use pool, recreation/learn-to-swim pool, kiddie pool, and splash pad); a renovated and expanded complex at John H. Marble Park (25-meter pool, splash pad); an expanded facility at Coach Clemons Pool (pool, kiddie pool, splash pad); and a new complex (programmed) at Lincoln Park. As identified in the needs assessment, an additional facility at the Premier Sports Complex is identified. Aquatics programs are envisioned to be provided through a combination of County staff and contract instructors consistent with the current programming. Notable examples of aquatics centers that Manatee County should review for design and programmatic features include Haines City's Lake Eva Park, the Long Center in Clearwater, and the Highland Recreation Center in Largo. These facilities have multi-pool concepts and incorporate other amenities (such as indoor facilities, playgrounds, splash pads, open lawn, concessions, etc.) that enhance the aquatics experience.

Existing and proposed satellite facilities could include the renovation of Lincoln Park; other amenities are needed including bleachers and bathrooms. They could also include the existing splash pad at Pride Community Park.

The vision also proposes a variety of amenities at each of the County's aquatics venues to enhance users' experience, extend the length of stay, and generate additional revenues. Examples include picnic areas, rental pavilions, game tables, sand volleyball courts, and food concessions.

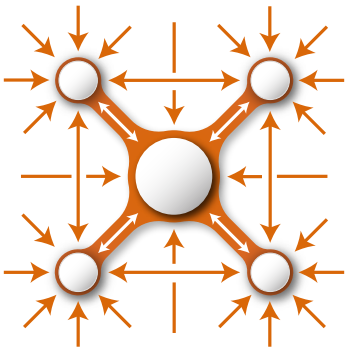
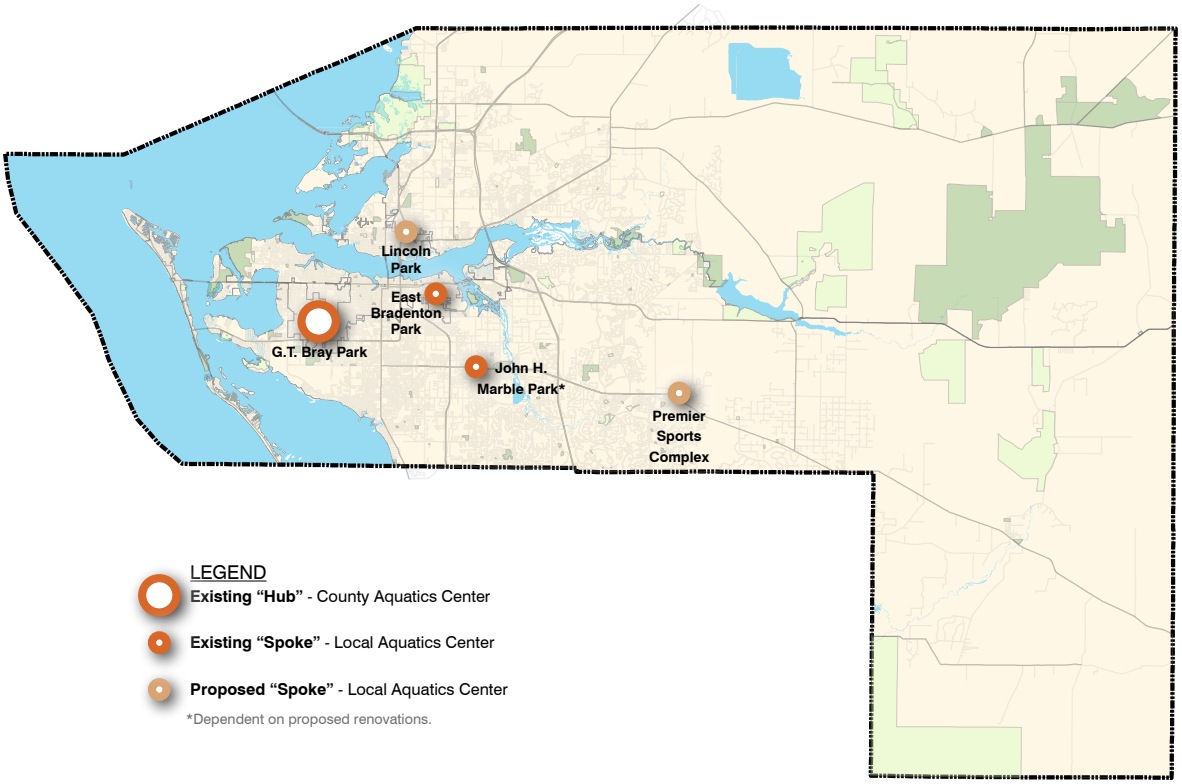


Exhibit 4.7: Hub and Spoke Model (Barth Associates, 2015)

Exhibit 4.8 - Aquatics Vision Plan Map - Equity Model



Goal: Aquatic Centers to be located throughout the County, based on the "Equity Model."

GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

An interconnected network of greenways and trails is a high priority for residents in Manatee County - and throughout the United States – for recreation, fitness, and transportation. Manatee County's most recent vision is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2013 Bikeways and Trails Plan (see *Exhibits 4.10 & 4.11*). Manatee County is pursuing the funding for three greenways and trails including the SunTrail, Gateway Greenway, and Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project. This does not include trails which are provided as part of individual neighborhoods/ communities typically maintained by the HOA, or those included within (inside) park; however, these are no less important in the grand scheme.

Greenways and trails will be increasingly important capital investments for the County because they increase mobility. Well maintained and comfortable bicycle and pedestrian networks can ease traffic congestion and provide a safe alternative to driving. These are especially relevant to Manatee County where significant amounts of money have been spent on traffic management systems, and the metropolitan area is considered one of the least safe places in America for pedestrians.

Greenways and trails can help mitigate some of those issues, and the Vision for Manatee County involves improving the experience of those using all modes of transportation.

Unfortunately, no single entity is responsible for implementing the County's bikeways and trails vision. The County's Parks and Natural Resources Department is responsible for developing trails within the County's parks, while the County's Public Works Department focuses on "complete streets" including sidewalks and bike lanes. Smart Growth America identifies Complete Streets as, "A Complete Streets approach integrates people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of our transportation networks. This helps to ensure streets are safe for people of all ages and abilities, balance the needs of different modes, and support local land uses, economies, cultures, and natural environments." They further note that," they are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work."

Manatee County, in partnership with the Manatee County Health Department (MCHD), developed a county-wide Complete Streets policy in 2012 and it continues to identify and implement this program. Unfortunately, no agency or specific person is responsible for planning, designing, etc. multipurpose trails that connect streets, parks, employment centers, and other destinations, such as Sarasota County's Legacy Trail, and Pinellas County's Pinellas Trail. The County has not funded a greenways and trails coordinator position, the position typically responsible for this, since 2009.

The greenways and trail vision focuses on the recreational corridors identified in the MPO Plan. Key tasks include funding and hiring a greenways and trails coordinator; updating the County's bike/ped plan and complete streets plan; developing prioritization criteria; prioritizing corridors; and seeking and securing funding for top priority projects. Special emphasis should be placed on opportunities to use utility corridors, existing rights-of-ways, county-owned parcels, and other publicly-owned lands.

Exhibit 4.9 - Current Greenways and Trails LOS

The current Greenways and Trails System in Manatee County only serves approximately 8% of the current population (within 1 mile of a greenway or trail). According to community feedback (Chapter 3.6) trails are one of the top priorities for residents of Manatee County. The table below shows that greenways and trails have been identified which would serve a significant portion of the population. (See Figure K a map and complete list of greenways and trails).

	Total Miles	2010 Population within 1 mile	2040 Population within 1 mile
Existing	81.93 miles	8%	9%
Existing + Proposed	90.2 miles	32%	37%
Existing + Proposed + Conceptual	98.5 miles	44%	48%

Source: 2016 TAZ Populations Data, "Trails" GIS Data.

Top Priority Greenways and Trails

- Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project
- Gateway-Greenway - Phase I
- Gateway-Greenway - Phase II

The top priority Greenways and Trails have been identified as the highest priority by the Parks and Natural Resources Department and are listed in the FY 2021-25 CIP (see *page 148* for full CIP). These trails have been identified as high priority based on community impact and feasibility and are either funded or partially funded. These multi-use trails have the potential to have an immediate impact on their surroundings as well as serve as a link between municipalities in and around Manatee County (e.g. SUNTrail)

Additional Greenways and Trails

- Coquina Beach Trail
- Desoto to Downtown Trail
- Gateway-Greenway - Phase III
- Gateway Gas Line Connector
- Riverwalk - Phase II
- Perico-Desoto Trail
- Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project

Additional Greenway and Trail networks have been identified in accordance with the Florida Greenways and Trails System Plan and identified by the County as critical trail networks. These opportunities should be studied further based on feasibility, impact, and more importantly funding in order to develop a priorities list moving forward. Based on the limited budgets available, additional importance should be placed on partnerships with the Health Department and FDOT as well as seeking grants from various sources for the development of this network.

Exhibit 4.10 - Sarasota/Manatee MPO Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan - Priorities List

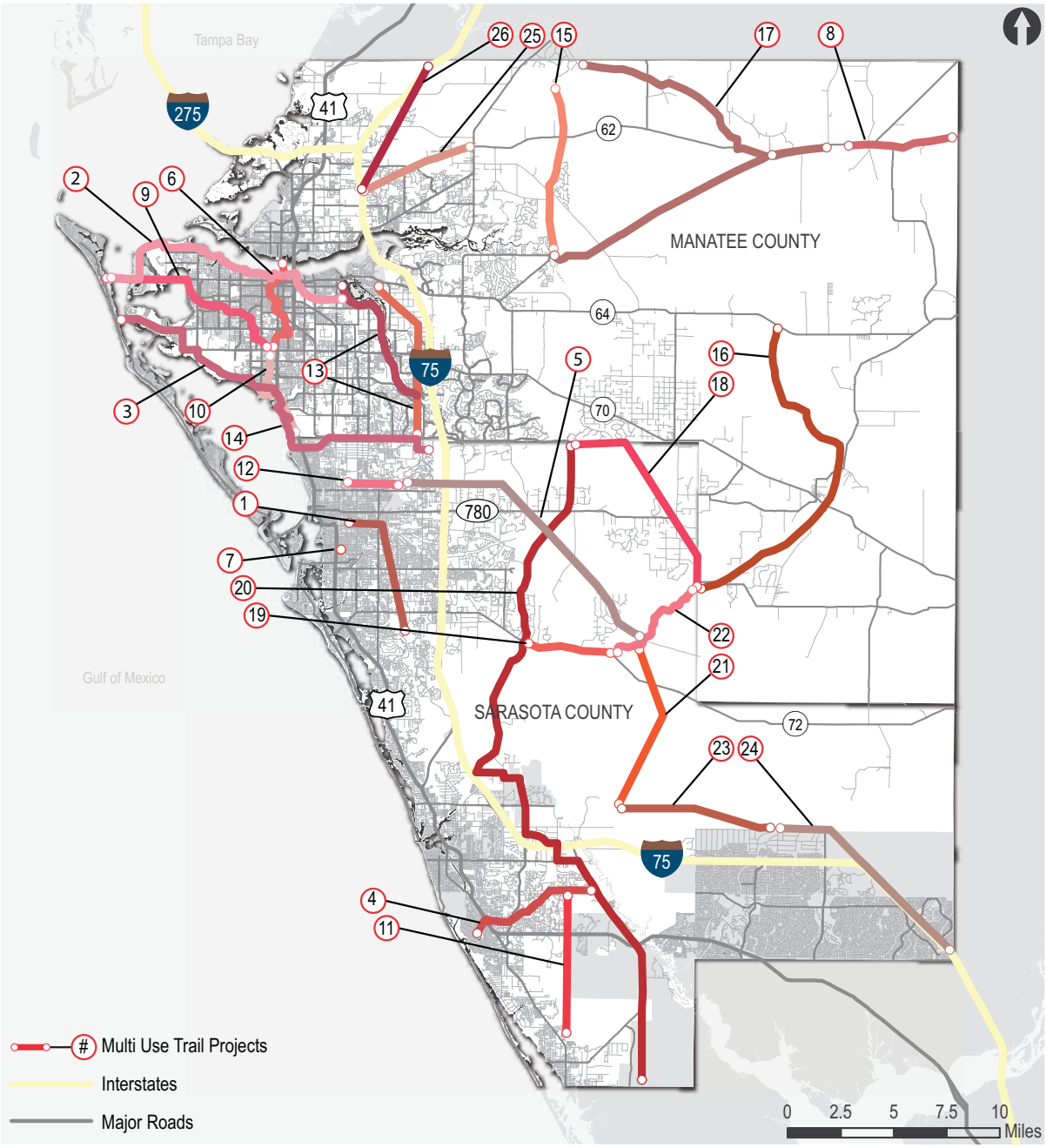


Figure 6.3: Priority Regional Multi-Use Trails Projects

Note: Numbers identified on page 88.

Source: 2013 Sarasota/Manatee MPO Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan

Exhibit 4.11 - Sarasota/Manatee MPO Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan - Trails Map

RANK/ PROJECT #	JURISDICTION	PROJECT	FROM	TO	LENGTH (MILES)
1	Sarasota County (City of Sarasota)	The Legacy Trail Corridor	SR 780 near School Ave	Palmer Ranch Pkwy	8.55
2	Manatee County	River Walk - Anna Maria Island Trail	River Walk	Manatee Beach Park	15.23
3	Manatee County	El Conquistador - Cortez Trail	Bayshore Gardens @ El Conquistador	Bradenton Beach	8.12
4	Sarasota County	Cross Venice Trail	Venice	Myakka River State Park	6.91
5	Sarasota County	Utility Connections	Myakka River State Park	West to Longmeadow	14.71
6	Manatee County	Wares Creek Trail	Along US 41 from US 301	SR 70	6.37
7	City of Sarasota	Multi Use Trail	Webber St	Datura St	0.49
8	Manatee County	Paynes Creek Corridor	Duette Park	Hardee County Line	5.43
9	Manatee County	Palma Sola Trail	Anna Maria Island	SR 70	10.33
10	Manatee/Sarasota County	Bayshore Treewalk to Sarasota Bay Trail Corridor	SR 70	Sarasota County line	5.12
11	Sarasota County	Taylor Ranch	Cross Venice Trail	Legacy Trail Corridor	6.96
12	Sarasota County	Utility Connections	MLK & Newtown	West to Longmeadow	3.01
13	Manatee/Sarasota County	Braden River - River Walk	Nathan Benderson Park (Sarasota Co)	River Walk (Manatee Co)	7.31
14	Manatee/Sarasota County (City of Sarasota	Univ Pkwy - Sarasota Bay Trail	Univ Pkwy @ Braden River Trail	Bayshore Gardens @ El Conquistador	12.71
15	Manatee County	Parrish Area Trails Corridor	Willow-Ellenton Trail	Rye Wilderness Park	8.24
16	Manatee County	Duette Myakka Trail Corridor	Duette Park	Sarasota County line	17.89
17	Manatee County	Gateway Greenway Trail	Willow-Ellenton Corridor	Duette Park Corridor	26.26
18	Sarasota County	Old Myakka Greenway Corridor	Lake Myakka	Manatee County line	10.58
19	Sarasota County	Clark Road Trail Corridor	Myakka State Park	West Coast Trail	4.42
20	Sarasota County	West Coast Trail-Sarasota County Corridor	Manatee County Line	Charlotte County line	37.29
21	Sarasota County	Myakka Corridor	Clark Road Trail Corridor	Myakka Carlton Trail	8.45
22	Sarasota County	Myakka River State Park Greenway	Lake Myakka	Clark Road Trail	6.01
23	Sarasota County	Myakka-Carlton Trail	Myakka Corridor	Carlton/ Myakkahatchee Trail	7.62
24	Sarasota County	Carlton/Myakkahatchee Trail	Myakka-Carlton Trail	Desoto County line	10.8
25	Manatee County	Willow-Ellenton Trail Corridor	I-75	US 301	5.91
26	Manatee County	South Coast Greenway Corridor	Along I-75	I-275	7.06

Table 6.4: Regional Priority Projects

Source: 2013 Sarasota/Manatee MPO Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan

PRESERVES

The County's vision is to continue to protect its natural resources, including its bays, rivers, estuaries, marshes and forests. The vision also includes reinforcement of the County's "brand" as a world-class ecotourism destination.

Public agencies often try to determine "how much land is enough?" for counties to acquire and manage. Although there are no standards for calculating open space levels-of-service, two approaches offer insights. (Barth, 2016, APA PAS Memo)

Exhibit 4.12 - Open Space by County

	Percent Open Space
Manatee County	**12.5%**
Sarasota County	52.0%
Hillsborough County	16.8%
Pasco County	23.4%
Lee County	19.9%
State of Florida	**30.0%**

Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research - Annual Assessment of Florida's Water Resources and Conservation Lands, 2017 Edition

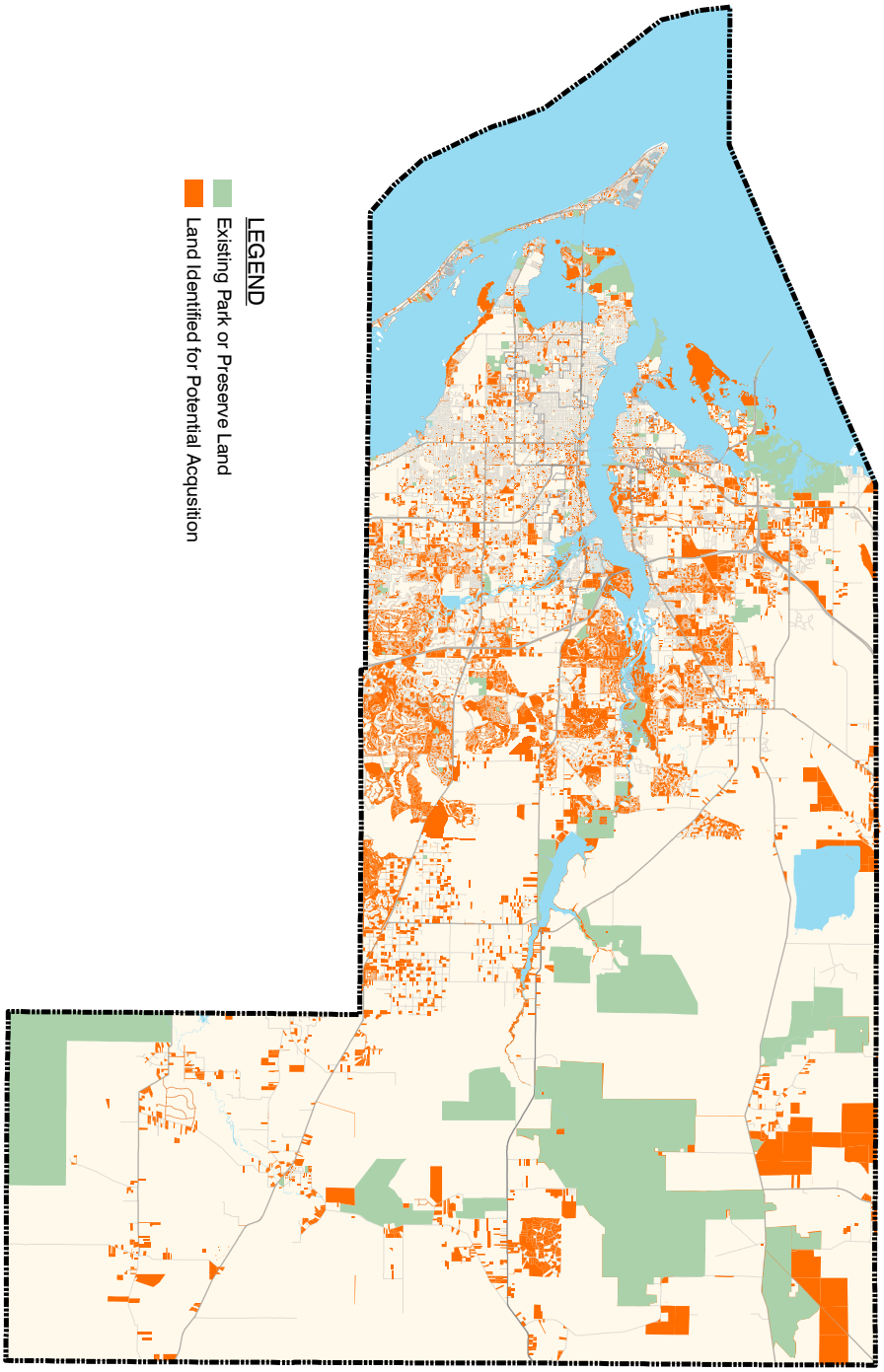
Benchmarking Approach

The first approach, used by many organizations such as the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), involves benchmarking the amount of open space and/or recreation facilities against similar communities. A commonly-used metric is the percentage of total land area preserved in public open space by all sources (County, State, Federal). This was identified and discussed briefly in the Needs Assessment in *Chapter 3*.

Exhibit 4.12 compares the percentage of conservation land in Manatee County to other, selected Florida counties. State-wide, approximately 30% of the land area is managed as conservation lands by Federal, State, and/or local agencies. While 39% of the average coastal Florida county is managed for conservation, only approximately 12% of Manatee County's lands are managed for conservation. The vision for the County is to have 25% of county land designated as protected open space. While this is a lofty goal, it should be noted that this is still below the Florida average. *Exhibit 4.13* shows parcels of land listed by the County Property Appraiser with a land use description of Vacant, Undeveloped, or County-owned. These parcels should serve as a preliminary list of potential lands for acquisition. Partnership with State and Federal agencies as well as the Manatee County Environmental Lands Management and Acquisition Committee (ELMAC) will be key in reaching this goal. Strategies will be outlined in the next chapter.

Goal: Fields to be located throughout the County, based on the "Equity Model."

Exhibit 4.13 - Preserves - Land Acquisition Map



OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

It is often a bigger challenge for local governments to fund on-going operations and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities than it is to fund the initial capital improvements. Therefore, the vision for facilities management is based on a "facilitator" model, where the County strives to provide services to residents through a small, core staff that partners with other agencies, contractors, and private instructors. For example, the County will continue to contract for golf course management and beach concessions, which collectively generated approximately $2M in revenues in 2016. The County will also rent athletic fields to various non-profit athletic associations and contract with private companies for routine maintenance.

Exhibit 4.14: Facility Classification System (Barth Associates, 2016)

A new, three-tier facility classification system will help guide day-to-day management decisions (see *Exhibit 4.14*), making the best use of limited resources. For example, maintenance for base tier facilities will be contracted to commercial landscape maintenance companies, and programs will be conducted by volunteers and non-profit associations. On the other hand, top tier facilities and programs may require the specialized skills and expertise of County staff. County staff may also be used to fill in the gaps when private contractors or instructors are not available.

Tiered Facility Examples

Preserves

Top Tier Facility
Facilities such as Robinson Preserve require more maintenance and upkeep. Facilities like Robinson Preserve have a diverse range of amenities, offering both passive and active recreational opportunities, and straddle the line between regional park and preserve. They draw a large number of visitors and have the potential to generate revenue for the department.

Middle Tier Facility
Facilities like Perico Preserve draw local visitors and are valuable assets, yet do not have the level of amenities or development seen in top tier facilitates. Middle Tier Facilities require routine maintenance and upkeep but do not have the regional draw of high profile preserves.

Base Tier Facility
Facilities like Rye Preserve, while incredibly valuable in its own right, has much lower maintenance and staffing needs. Rye Preserve draws few visitors and is more of a true "preserve."

Parks

Top Tier Facility
Facilities like G.T. Bray offer a full array of activities. These complexes typically have multiple sports fields and indoor recreation space. Facilities like this require a large number of staff to maintain. These top tier facilities also offer the best opportunity for cost recovery.

Middle Tier Facility
Middle tier facilities often have small buildings and one or multiple sports fields. These facilities are often popular local parks and can play host to recreational sports and community gatherings.

Base Tier Facility
Smaller local parks require less maintenance and do not have on site maintenance equipment. Parks like these may be best served by a contracted maintenance service.

Facility Classification System (Barth Associates, 2016)

Operational Assessment

In *Chapter 3.3 - Department Operations* the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department was evaluated and key issues and opportunities were identified. In this chapter opportunities will be discussed as part of the overall Vision Plan to guide the department moving forward. Below are key opportunities and strategies meant to give the department clear direction and identify areas for growth.

1. On-Going Benchmarking

Ideally, the County should benchmark the department against other counties based on agreed to realities. These could include:

- Number of acres maintained by level one, two and three maintenance standards.
- How many staff hours does it take to provide that services and break it down by full-time and part-time hours.
- Level of aging infrastructure the County has versus the other surrounding counties and where they are in the life cycle.
- Level of equipment is available to step up efficiency.
- True cost of service, both direct and indirect cost, as it applies to each type of park in the system, and amenity cost such as each acre maintained, a mile of trail maintained, ballfield maintenance per field, cost to maintain a picnic shelter, playground, etc. for Manatee County versus surrounding counties?
- Level of capital dollars the County spends on parks versus other counties on a per person basis.
- Total square foot for the County to maintain their facilities versus what others are paying.

2. New Revenue Opportunities

The Staff indicate they have moved away from a ready to serve concept in parks and in recreation facilities and totally focused on all population's needs. While they have not put in a true pay-to-play model, it has been discussed as a potential opportunity in light of the revenue that can be generated from it.

Staff would like to restrict occurrences where individuals profit off the public parks and facilities without any revenue gains for Manatee County e.g. tennis instructors who use public tennis courts for their private gain. Instead, staff would like to institute permit fees that offer controlled access to individuals / private contractors to use the park facilities for revenue generating activities. This is a common practice in agencies nationwide.

Staff would also like to consider an impact fee for the unincorporated areas of the County to help fund the parks they all use, but currently don't have a payment mechanism in place similar to what other cities / county agencies have.

3. Key Performance Measures

The Staff would like to institute additional performance metrics compared to what they currently have. Key performance measures that the Department should focus on for the future include the following:

- Cost of service for each unit they manage such as a cost per mile of trail, a ballfield, a playground, a splash pad, an acre of maintained park, etc.
- Staffing levels for a level one, two, or three level maintained park.
- Maintenance standards met for each type of park they manage.
- Customer satisfaction with parks, trails, amenities, graffiti removed in a timely manner.
- Asset life cycle of their system as a whole.
- Percentage of full-time, part-time and seasonal staff against best practices.
- Equipment turnover against best practices.
- Drive time of staff on an average day to determine level of productivity.
- Productivity of use of their parks daily.
- Number of volunteer hours used to help maintain the system against best practices of other agencies.

4. Other

Based on the changing population demographics and also the gaps in program needs, the areas that Staff is enhancing focus on includes special needs of the elderly, at risk children and ensuring universal ADA accessibility in Manatee County offerings.

Summary

In summary, the Vision for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space of Manatee County is based on the seven sub-systems outlined in this chapter. These are Parks, Indoor Recreation Centers, Athletic Facilities, Aquatics, Greenways and Trails, Preserves, and Maintenance. If Manatee County can fulfill the visions these sub-systems, it will have success in providing an excellent park and preserve system for its residents.

The first vision focuses on Parks. Providing large, centralized, multi-use parks and recreation facilities in equitable locations, and expanding the number of smaller local parks through land development regulations are aspects of this vision.

Next, the Indoor Recreation Center vision sees the County as being a major provider of public air conditioned space. Ideally the County and/or other recreation providers will make available approximately 450,000 square feet of indoor recreation space by the year 2035. This will expand the County's ability to program athletics, education, and summer camps as well as provide community spaces for the surrounding neighborhoods.

The third facet of the Vision involves Athletic Facilities. The goal is to give priority to needs of recreational and school athletics programs, second to travel programs, if capacity is available. These competitive leagues should pay their fair share regarding field and facility use. Also, the athletic facilities should remain equitable and accessible to children in the County and this accessibility should be monitored by the County.

Fourth, is the Vision for Aquatics. Manatee County's location on the Gulf Coast of Florida and system of rivers, beaches, and lakes should be complemented by County aquatic facilities. Educating the public about water safety, teaching children and adults to swim, providing opportunities for fitness and exercise, and to provide venues for local/high school swim meets. These facilities should be delivered through a hub and spoke model to serve most residents.

The following piece of the vision incorporates Greenways and Trails. Manatee County should invest in its greenways and trails network to provide a safe, comfortable, and healthy method of transportation and recreation. Construction of the trails identified in the 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan by the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization and securing funding for future trail projects identified in the Manatee County Greenways Master Plan are both key pieces of the future for Manatee County Greenways and Trails.

The sixth portion of *Chapter 4* is the Vision for Preserves. In this vision, Manatee County acquires more land to set aside for conservation. Ideally, this land is in areas of unique ecological importance. Manatee County has a relatively low percentage of land designated as protected open space when compared to the State of Florida and its Southwest Florida neighbors. Manatee County should continue to protect its natural resources, including its bays, rivers, estuaries, marshes and forests.

Last, the County is envisioned to evaluate itself in terms of Operations and Maintenance on a frequent basis. These evaluations should form the rationale for any changes to the department, or streamlining of processes. The benchmarking should include but is not limited to: acreage and access levels of service, staff hours, infrastructure, true and indirect costs associated with each park, preserve, and facility, and ability to fund the parks in creative ways.

The park visions were presented to the public in a series of Community Outreach Workshops in November of 2017. The visions were commended by Manatee County residents for their responsiveness to the comments and desires captured in the first round of public outreach.

Delivering services with the proposed models will be key in the success of the department and the system. Identifying this specific vision is critical for the development of fulfillment strategies. These strategies are the focus of the Action Plan.

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Funding 5

FUNDING

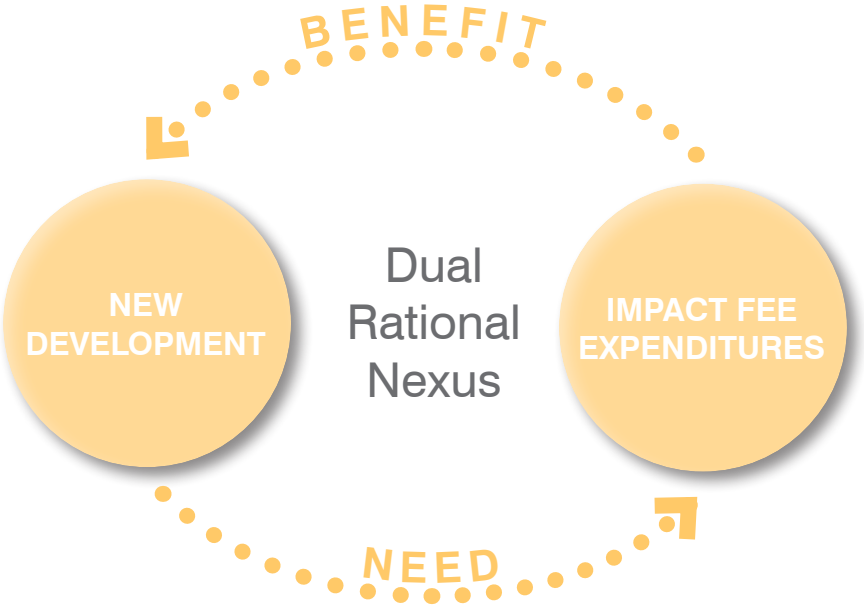
Key strategies are identified and recommended in the next chapter, and financially supporting them becomes a challenge. This section provides an overview of potential funding sources, and identifies the approach considered most advantageous or relevant. Funding sources are ever changing as laws are amended and the economy ebbs and flows. The County and Department should be prepared to respond to the conditions of the time, while also continuing to advance parks, recreation, and open space services at, if not better than, the levels residents have come to expect. Funding amenities, space, and staffing to keep pace with the growth of the county and the needs of its citizens are all components of this level of service.

KEY FUNDING SOURCES

Impact Fees

Manatee County's current Impact Fee Schedule was adopted in late 2015. The Schedule included a Park Impact Fee, a fee assessed on new residential (single family and multi-family) development that serves as a dedicated funding source to bring new parks and recreational facilities to benefit the residents of Manatee County.

The use of these impact fees for the construction of parks must pass the dual rational nexus test.



The local government must demonstrate a reasonable connection between: the need for additional capital facilities and the growth in population generated by the development; and the expenditures of the funds collected and the benefits accruing to the development (Hollywood, Inc. v. Broward County, 431 So. 2d 606 (Fla. 4th DCA 1983)).

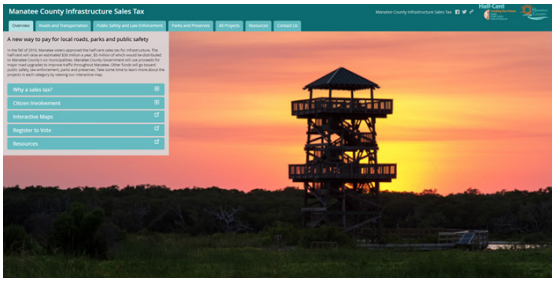
Collected Impact Fees should play a significant role in the funding of the Premier Sports Complex and other recommended new facilities. Expenditures are anticipated to pass the dual rational nexus test because population growth is the main contributor to Manatee County's current needs in Access Level of Service and Facility Level of Service. The expenditures of the funds collected from developments will benefit those same developments as they will have access to new local facilities, and large district and regional parks.

Manatee County should also consider the collection of impact fees to be split between two separate funds; one supporting the need of a small geography (i.e. District Parks) and one supporting the Parks and Recreation needs of the entire county (e.g. Regional Parks). This may require an impact fee structure reset to a recreational districts and county-wide plan. This restructuring will require adopting changes to the impact fee report and implementing ordinance that provides differential levels of service.

Recommended Actions: *Collected impact fees should be used to design and construct new facilities in existing parks, and in design and construction of new parks in accordance with recommended actions above.*

Infrastructure Sales Tax

In the fall of 2016, Manatee County voters approved the half-cent sales tax for infrastructure. Revenues collected from the sales tax will raise an estimated 4.2 million dollars for parks, preserves, and open spaces in the county. A list of proposed projects was compiled with a combination of public requests and staff input. Many of these projects involve facility upgrades and rehabilitating aging community parks (i.e. lighting, drainage, building, equipment improvements). Several projects will add to facilities in parks and preserves (i.e. playgrounds, splash pads, and kayak launches) and provide an increased level of service. The expenditure of these funds will be overseen by a committee of citizens verifying County fulfillment of the proposed project list with an understanding that additional elements will be added in order to meet unanticipated needs.

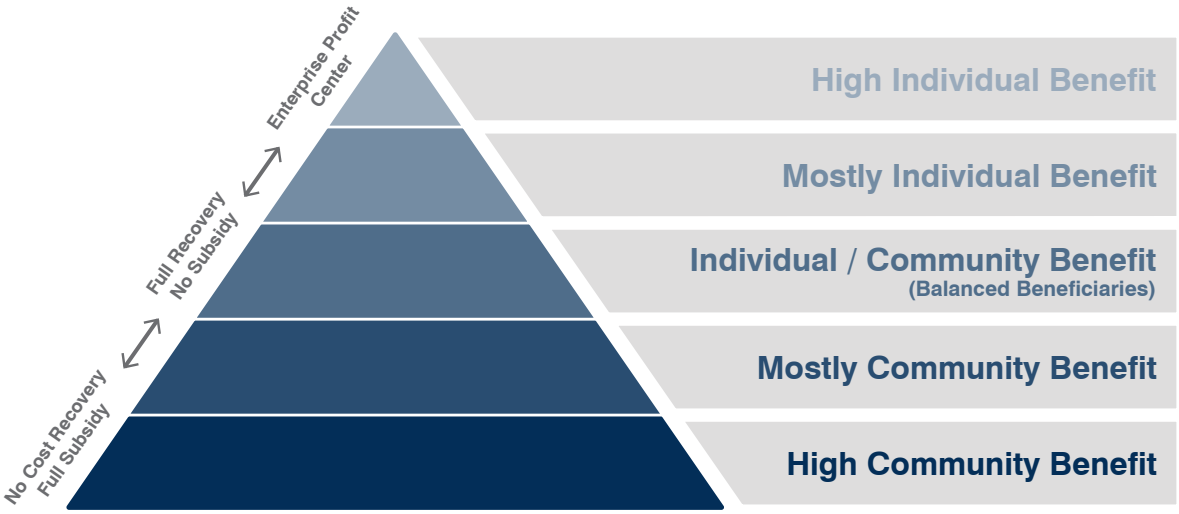


The Infrastructure Sales Tax website, www.mymanatee.org/gisapps/pm/halfcent, was proven to be a very successful method of divulging public information.

Recommended Actions: *Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources should see the proposed project list to its conclusion with priority given to projects that may generate additional revenue over time. These include concession stands, gymnasiums, and aquatic facilities.*

User Fees

Collected recreation user fees will be an increasingly significant source of revenue for Manatee County's Parks and Natural Resources Department. The Department should review its existing recreation user fee structure to reflect the vision of this plan. A key change would be to amend the current fee structure to one more progressive in nature. Also known as the 'pay for play' concept, the approach is that the higher the community benefit (i.e. open field play, daily swim, etc.), the lower the fee to participants, with no fee/full subsidy for the highest community benefits. In contrast, the more specialized and individual the benefit (dog parks, travel baseball leagues, tennis lessons, etc.) the more the fee structure resembles an enterprise profit center. These user fees may be adjusted to offset budgetary needs such as staffing and can respond to user demand easily.



This 'Ready to Serve' concept (local government is responsible for funding to provide open space and well maintained parks facilities for open play) should be financed through the general fund, and recreation user fees should be structured to pay for impacts to facilities above and beyond general maintenance requirements. This bifurcated approach of 'Ready to Serve' staffing and maintenance, and the user fee generated from 'Pay for Play' would promote a variety of recreation programming and tourist development opportunities.

Recommended Actions: *Structure user recreation fees in accordance with the 'Pay for Play' model and utilize collected fees to fund rehabilitation, replacement, and refurbishment of facilities in the parks that go beyond the general maintenance requirement. Establish a baseline of 'Ready to Serve' amenities that provide the highest community benefit.*

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

These funding sources are generally used as ancillary, complementary, or special methods of paying for parks, preserves, and facilities. The Parks and Natural Resources Department should continue to make great use of grants as they have done in the past. This list is by no means exhaustive as other funding sources may become available over time. The Department should continue to explore creative options and partnerships.

State Funding Sources

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) oversees the Land and Recreation Grant Programs. The Land and Recreation Grants staff administers grants to local governments through the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). These are competitive, reimbursement grant programs which provide financial assistance for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation. Eligible participants include all county governments, municipalities in Florida and other legally constituted local governmental entities, with the responsibility for providing outdoor recreational sites and facilities for the general public.

The FDEP also oversees the Florida Forever Grant Program through the Florida Communities Trust. A list of potential Funding Resources for Park Development is listed on their website. The Funding Sources are organized by the agency that provides the funding.

Local Funding Sources

Municipalities often plan for the funding of park facilities or park improvements through development of Capital Improvement Programs (CIP). CIPs should include all types of capital improvements (water, sewer, buildings, streets, etc.) versus programs for single purposes. This allows municipal decision-makers to balance all capital needs. Typical capital funding mechanisms include the following: capital reserve fund, capital protection ordinances, municipal service district, tax increment financing, taxes, fees, and bonds. Each category is described below.

- **Capital Reserve Fund** - Municipalities have statutory authority to create capital reserve funds for any capital purpose, including parks and open space. The reserve fund must be created through ordinance or resolution that states the purpose of the fund, the duration of the fund, the approximate amount of the fund, and the source of revenue for the fund. Sources of revenue can include general fund allocations, fund balance allocations, grants and donations for the specified use.
- **Capital Project Ordinances** - Municipalities can pass Capital Project Ordinances that are project specific. The ordinance identifies and makes appropriations for the project.
- **Local Improvement Districts (LIDs)** - Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) are most often used by cities to construct localized projects such as parks, community centers, or bikeways. Through the LID process, the costs of local improvements are generally spread out among a group of property owners within a specified area. The cost can be allocated based on a variety of criteria, i.e. property frontage or other methods such as traffic trip generation.

- **Municipal Service Taxing Unit** - Municipalities have statutory authority to establish municipal service taxing units (MSTU) to levy a property tax in a specific geographic district additional to the citywide property tax. Proceeds from the MSTU provide services in the district and can be used to fund park projects for those who directly use and benefit from the park. MSTUs are an excellent tool to improve local parks in communities that desire park features beyond the level of service adopted by Manatee County. The County should consider utilizing MSTU's in increased frequency to balance the expectations of residents with the realities of the budget.

- **Tax Increment Financing** - Project Development Financing bonds, also known as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), is a relatively new tool in Manatee County. It allows municipalities to use future gains in taxes to finance the current improvements that will create those gains within a designated geographic area. When a public project (e.g., sidewalk improvements) is constructed, surrounding property values generally increase and encourage surrounding development or redevelopment. The increased tax revenues are then dedicated to finance the debt created by the original public improvement project. Tax Increment Financing typically occurs within designated development financing districts that meet certain economic criteria that are approved by a local governing body. TIF funds are generally spent inside the boundaries of the TIF district. Manatee County's Southwest TIF is eligible to be used as a funding source for new parks and park facilities within the TIF.

- **Installment Purchase Financing** - As an alternative to debt financing of capital improvements, communities can execute installment or lease purchase contracts for improvements. This type of financing is typically used for relatively small projects that the seller or a financial institution is willing to finance or when up-front funds are unavailable. In a lease purchase contract, the community leases the property or improvement from the seller or financial institution. The lease is paid in installments that include principal, interest, and associated costs. Upon completion of the lease period, the community owns the property or improvement. While lease purchase contracts are similar to a bond, this arrangement allows the community to acquire the property or improvement without issuing debt. These instruments, however, are costlier than issuing debt.

- **Taxes** - Many communities have raised money for general transportation programs or specific project needs through self-imposed increases in taxes and bonds. Manatee County residents recently voted for a half-cent sales tax increase to finance infrastructure. The half-cent sales tax will raise an estimated $30 million a year, $5 million of which will be distributed to Municipalities. These taxes have shown to be especially equitable in Florida because it accounts for tourists paying their 'fair share' for use of infrastructure. For example, Pinellas County residents voted to adopt a one-cent sales tax increase, which provided an additional $5 million for the development of the overwhelmingly popular Pinellas Trail. A gas tax is another method used by some municipalities to fund multi-use trails. Manatee County currently levies 11 cents per gallon in 'local option fuel taxes' but has the ability to raise it to 12, the maximum allowed by the State of Florida. A number of taxes provide direct or indirect funding for the operations of local governments. Some of them are:

  - Property Tax - These taxes generally support a significant portion of a municipality's activities. However, the revenues from property taxes can also be used to pay debt service on general obligation bonds issued to finance park

and open space improvements. Because of limits imposed on tax rates, use of property taxes to fund parks could limit the municipality's ability to raise funds for other activities. Property taxes can provide a steady stream of financing while broadly distributing the tax burden. In other parts of the country, this mechanism has been popular with voters as long as the increase is restricted to parks and open space. Note, other public agencies compete vigorously for these funds, and taxpayers are generally concerned about high property tax rates.

- Excise Taxes - Taxes on specific goods and services. These taxes require special legislation and funds generated through the tax are limited to specific uses. Examples include lodging, food, and beverage taxes that generate funds for promotion of tourism, and the gas tax that generates revenues for transportation related activities.

- Tourist Development Tax (TDT) - A local sales tax, authorized and governed by Florida Statute 125.0104. It is sometimes referred to as resort tax, bed tax, local option tourist tax or transient rental tax. The rate for Manatee County is five percent. These funds must be used to improve or augment tourist related facilities. Parks and greenways would be eligible under these criteria.

- Recreational Trust Fund - A fund that can be amassed through a variety of sources including a dedicated millage, public and private donations,gifts, grants, and awards.

o **Fees**

- A variety of fee options have been used by local jurisdictions to assist in funding park and open space improvements. Enabling actions may be required for a locality to take advantage of these tools.

- Recreational Trust Fund – A fund that can be amassed through a variety of sources including a dedicated millage, public and private donations, gifts, grants, and awards. Manatee County consider this funding source as it serves as a flexible method of funding existing parks and preserves, as well as obtaining land for future opportunities. A dedicated millage funding the Recreational Trust Fund is a sustainable method of raising the quality of amenities within parks, and act as a supplement to impact fees for maintaining the adopted level of service as the County continues to grow.

- Stormwater Utility Fees – Park and greenway property may be purchased with stormwater fees, if the property in question is used to mitigate floodwater or filter pollutants. Stormwater charges are typically based on an estimate of the amount of impervious surface on a user's property. Impervious surfaces (such as rooftops and paved areas) increase both the amount and rate of stormwater runoff compared to natural conditions. Such surfaces cause runoff that directly or indirectly discharge into public storm drainage facilities and create a need for stormwater management services. Thus, users with more impervious surface are charged more for stormwater service than users with less impervious surface. The rates, fees, and charges collected for stormwater management services may not exceed the costs incurred to provide these services.

- Impact Fees – Developers can be required to pay impact fees through local enabling legislation. Impact fees, which are also known as capital contributions, facilities fees, or system development charges, are typically collected from developers or property owners at the time of building permit issuance to pay for capital improvements that provide capacity to serve new growth. The intent of these fees is to avoid burdening existing customers with the costs of providing capacity to serve new growth so that "growth pays its own way." Impact Fees will be a useful financing tool as the center of population continues to shift East in Manatee County.

- In-Lieu-Of Fees – As an alternative to requiring developers to develop parks or internal connections to external trails that would serve their development, some communities provide a choice of paying a front-end charge for off-site protection of pieces of the larger system. Payment is generally a condition of development approval and recovers the cost of the off-site land acquisition or the development's proportionate share of the cost of a regional facility serving a larger area. Some communities prefer in-lieu-of fees. This alternative allows community staff to purchase land worthy of protection rather than accept marginal land that meets the quantitative requirements of a developer dedication, but falls short of qualitative interests.

o **Bonds and Loans Bonds** - These have been a very popular way for communities across the country to finance their park and open space projects. A number of bond options are listed below. Contracting with a private consultant to assist with this program may be advisable. Since bonds rely on the support of the voting population, an education and awareness program should be implemented prior to any vote. Billings, Montana used the issuance of a bond in the amount of $599,000 to provide the matching funds for several federal grant park enhancement dollars. Austin, Texas has also used bond issues to fund a portion of its greenway system.

- General Obligation Bonds – Cities, counties, and service districts are typically able to issue general obligation (G.O.) bonds that are secured by the full faith and credit of the entity. A general obligation pledge is stronger than a revenue pledge, and thus may carry a lower interest rate than a revenue bond. The local government issuing the bonds pledges to raise its property taxes, or use any other sources of revenue, to generate sufficient revenues to make the debt service payments on the bonds. Frequently, when local governments issue G.O. bonds for public enterprise improvements, the public enterprise will make the debt service payments on the G.O. bonds with revenues generated through the public entity's rates and charges. However, if those rate revenues are insufficient to make the debt payment, the local government is obligated to raise taxes or use other sources of revenue to make the payments. Bond measures are typically limited by time, based on the debt load of the local government or the project under focus. Funding from bond measures can be used for property and right of way acquisition, engineering, design, and construction of parks and open space. Voter approval is required.

- Revenue Bonds – Bonds that are secured by a pledge of the revenues from a specific local government activity. The entity issuing bonds pledges to generate sufficient revenue annually to cover the program's operating costs, plus meet

the annual debt service requirements (principal and interest payment). Revenue bonds are not constrained by the debt ceilings of general obligation bonds, but they are generally more expensive than general obligation bonds.

- Special Assessment Bonds – Bonds are secured by a lien on the property that benefits from the improvements funded with the special assessment bond proceeds. Debt service payments on these bonds are funded through annual assessments to the property owners in the assessment area.

- State Revolving Fund Loans – Initially funded with federal and state money, and continued by funds generated by repayment of earlier loans, State Revolving Funds (SRFs) provide low interest loans for local governments to fund water pollution control and water supply related projects, including many watershed management activities. These loans typically require a revenue pledge, like a revenue bond, but carry a below market interest rate and limited term for debt repayment (20 years).

o **Funds from Private Foundations and Organizations** - Many communities have solicited parks, open space, and greenway funding assistance from private foundations and other conservation-minded benefactors. Below are several examples of private funding opportunities available.

- Walmart State Giving Program - The Walmart Foundation financially supports projects that create opportunities for better living. Grants are awarded for projects that support and promote education, workforce development/ economic opportunity, health and wellness, and environmental sustainability. Both programmatic and infrastructure projects are eligible for funding. State Giving Program grants start at $25,000, and there is no maximum award amount. The program accepts grant applications on an annual, state by state basis January 2nd through March 2nd.

- Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Inc. - The Bank of America Charitable Foundation is one of the largest in the nation. The primary grants program is called Neighborhood Excellence, which seeks to identify critical issues in local communities. Another program that applies to parks is the Community Development Programs, and specifically the Program Related Investments. This program targets low and moderate-income communities and serves to encourage entrepreneurial business development.

- American Greenways Eastman Kodak Awards - The Conservation Fund's American Greenways Program has teamed with the Eastman Kodak Corporation and the National Geographic Society to award small grants ($250 to $2,000) to stimulate the planning, design and development of greenways. These grants can be used for activities such as mapping, conducting ecological assessments, surveying, holding conferences, developing brochures, producing interpretive displays, incorporating land trusts, and building trails. Grants cannot be used for academic research, institutional support, lobbying or political activities.

- The Trust for Public Land - Conservation is central to the mission of the Trust for Public Land (TPL). Founded in 1972, the Trust for Public Land is the only national nonprofit working exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well being. TPL helps conserve land for recreation and spiritual nourishment and to improve the health and quality of life of American communities.

- **Local Sponsors**
  - A sponsorship program for parks and park facilities allows smaller donations to be received from both individuals and businesses. Cash donations could be placed into a trust fund to be accessed for certain construction or acquisition projects associated with the greenways and open space system. Some recognition of the donors is appropriate and can be accomplished through the placement of a plaque, the naming of a trail segment, and/or special recognition at an opening ceremony. Valuable in kind gifts include donations of services, equipment, labor, or reduced costs for supplies.
- **Corporate Donations**
  - Corporate donations are often received in the form of liquid investments (i.e. cash, stock, bonds) and in the form of land. Municipalities typically create funds to facilitate and simplify a transaction from a corporation's donation to the given municipality. Donations are mainly received when a widely-supported capital improvement program is implemented. Such donations can improve capital budgets and/or projects.
- **Volunteer Work**
  - Residents and other community members are excellent resources for garner support and enthusiasm for parks and parks facilities. Furthermore, volunteers can substantially reduce implementation and maintenance costs. Individual volunteers from the community can be brought together with groups of volunteers from church groups, civic groups, scout troops and environmental groups to work on greenway development on special community workdays. Volunteers can also be used for fundraising, maintenance, and programming needs.
- **Other Funding Sources/Public-Private Partnerships**
  - Key partnerships as permitted under Florida Statutes, including Public-Private Partnerships are effective strategies to providing targeted facilities and services. For example, Manatee County is coordinating with landowners as part of a public/private cost sharing partnership for several projects, including a public/private combined boat ramp and trailer parking along 119th Street West on the Cortez peninsula adjacent to Palma Sola Bay, as well as improvements and recreational amenities at the planned Parrish Community Park (aka Parrish Central Park), and public play soccer field construction in the Rye Road/SR 675 intersection area of north Manatee County.

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Action Plan 6

1 - Introduction

2 - Policies & Strategy Board

3 - Community Outreach

4 - High Priority Actions

1 INTRODUCTION

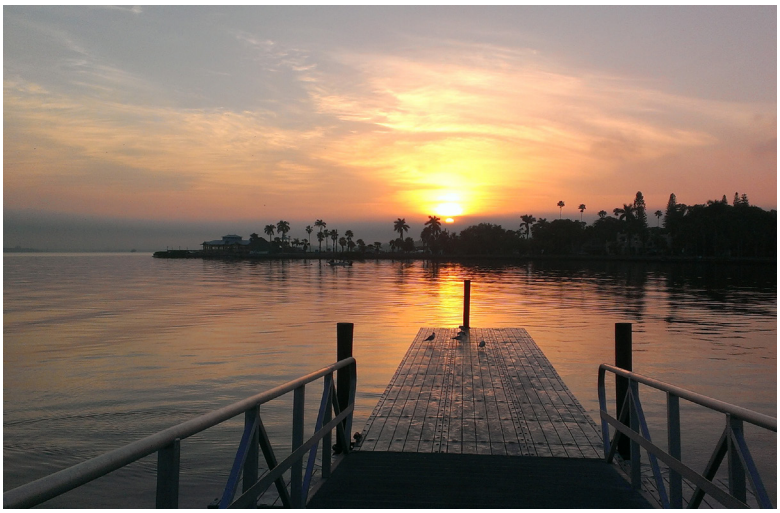
The Parks Vision provided the blueprint for the future of Manatee County's Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces. This chapter, the Action Plan, focuses on building the future of the County's Parks. The Action Plan provides the County with specific strategies and techniques to address the opportunities identified in *Chapter 3: Needs Assessment* and the goals identified in *Chapter 4: Parks Vision*. In this Chapter, high priority actions are identified and a path to success is provided. The Action Plan is mindful of limited funding sources, but also advises on potential sources of income that are underutilized or un-utilized by the Parks system. It is advised that the County establish a fee based system for surface parking changes at County boat ramps to supplement revenue needs for boat ramp improvements, maintenance, and staff operation and enforcement costs. Ultimately, the goal of this chapter is to posture the Parks and Natural Resources Department, and the Property Management Department's Parks Maintenance Division, for sustainable long term success through the implementation of the Vision Plan.

This Chapter provides three key components including the overall Policies and Strategy Board, a summary of the Community Outreach where the Policies and Strategies were vetted, and the recommended High Priority Actions based on the Strategies and community desired outcomes. Each component is further described as follows:

Policies and Strategy Board: The list of identified subsystem goals paired with a variety of potential strategies and actions that achieve the community oriented goals.

Community Outreach: A recap of the Fall 2017 Public Workshops, held to vet the previous findings, opportunities and the Strategies and to gather additional feedback from Manatee County's residents.

High Priority Actions: A focused list of seven Strategy Board items. If implemented, these actions would result in significant strides toward fulfilling the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space vision and long-term needs and goals of not only the community but the Department.



2 POLICIES AND STRATEGY BOARD

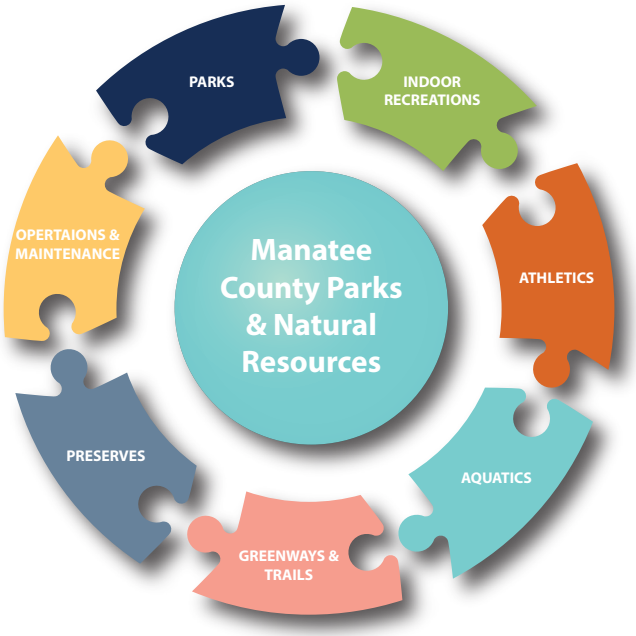
Policies: The following Board accepted Policies establish the framework and support the strategies provided under the Policies and Strategy Board section. Where necessary, references to previous sections and or page numbers are provided.

It all starts with the targeted policy level changes, accepted by the Board of County Commissioners that serve as the basis for and support the strategies. The Policies are listed below and discussed in greater detail on the following page. The policies fall into three general groups that cover various elements of the Parks & Natural Resources Department.

The first group pertains to overarching policy governing the organization and financing of the Parks and Preserves and include the title: (1) Amending Current Level of Services.

The second group pertains to overarching policies to establish an equitable financing structure for collection and allocation of operating and capital funds and include these titles: (2) Parks Trust Fund Account and (3) Parks Capital Improvement Strategies.

The third group pertains to policies directing particular strategies for the various Parks and Preserve services provided and they include: (4) Athletics Facilities Strategies, (5) Aquatics Facilities & Programming Strategy, (6) Greenways and Trails Strategy, (7) Preserves Strategy, (8) Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy, and (9) Operations & Maintenance Strategy.



Seven sub-systems make up the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources system and together form the vision for the future of the Department. In the previous chapter the vision for each of these pieces was laid out. In this chapter those visions will be distilled further and through Strategy Board and High Priority Action exercises a path to achieve that vision will be laid out.

Organization & Financing Policies

1. Amending Current Level of Service

Purpose:

Provide a Level of Service to all residents consistent with the goals of the Manatee County Comprehensive Plan and Board of County Commission Policies.

To reflect updated facility definitions (park classifications) and acreage needs for parks and open spaces, and access to those amenities based on a "Differential Level of Service" (LOS). A 'Differential Level of Service' accounts for the allocation and distribution of county facilities based on location, populations/ population density, mobility/ transportation networks, and amenities that exist or are proposed. The 'Differential Level of Service' is geographically based between the urbanized (western), suburban (central) and rural (eastern) regions of Manatee County and that those resource allocation distributions be based upon parks needs and the following park classifications.

- Regional Park: the top tier of parks, low in quantity but large in size, Regional Parks exist to serve 100,000+ people, residents and visitors alike.
- District Park: the middle tier of parks, District Parks are designed to serve several neighborhoods and sometimes contain specialized facilities.
- Local Park: the base tier of parks, Local Parks are large in number, but small in size or facility investment. They exist to fill the gaps between Regional and /or District Parks and provide open space or play areas for communities at a neighborhood level. Direct staff to evaluate smaller park holdings in municipalities and determine which park assets would best serve the citizens to have the respective municipality take ownership and overall operational responsibilities
- Preserve: a facility focused on the conservation of land for ecological, educational, or passive/ experiential recreational benefit; may also provide interactive opportunities for all ages.
- Special Park: a park facility that has a unique purpose and provides a special benefit to the park system, i.e. boat ramp, festival grounds, beach, kayak launch.

Policy:

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan to reflect a differential Level of Service between urban, suburban, and rural Manatee County.
- Redefine Regional Parks, District Parks, Local Parks, Preserves, and Special Parks in a uniform manner consistent with the goals, purposes, and facilities of each park, and update Parks Atlas and GIS accordingly.
- Provide large centralized multi use parks and facilities using an Equity Model that focuses on the equitable distribution of services, measured in terms of distance (Access LOS) or population served (Facility or Acreage LOS). This model assumes that facilities or parks will be distributed equitably throughout the community, e.g. one facility per quadrant, as opposed to a single centralized facility.
- Provide for parks according to the following park facilities infrastructure standard: Amended Table 8-1 Level of Service

Financing Structure Policies

2. Park Trust Fund Account Strategy

Purpose:

To provide the structure for collection and allocation of revenue for operational Capital and Maintenance expenses specific to the ongoing operations and maintenance of the County Park system. The Park Trust Fund Account allows reinvestment through a dedicated and committed proportion of tax revenue and ensures parks, recreation, and open space are funded appropriately.

Policy:

- The County establishes a dedicated Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Trust fund, based on a dedicated portion of the millage, for the purpose of collection and allocation of revenues for operational, capital and maintenance expenses (Fiscal Year).

3. Parks Capital Improvement Strategy

Purpose:

Develop key designed principles for park improvements.

To amend the County's current Impact Fee Structure providing the structure for equitable Impact Fee distribution and overall program service delivery.

Policy:

- Utilize sustainable design principles in current park improvements and the design of future parks - including connections to existing parks. Capitalize on Complete Street Concepts, stormwater components, and low impact development which provide a positive impact on air and water quality both for the park and its surrounding environments, as well as the County as a whole.
- Provide sun and heat relief elements in all Manatee County Parks. Equip parks with clean, safe, reliable drinking water fountains. Supply shade structures in parks.
- The County will revise and update its park districts in order to establish the needed structure for equitable Impact Fee distribution and overall program service delivery by dividing the County into four (4) quadrants and implement five (5) Park Impact Fee Collection Districts as follows. The boundaries identified are generalized and may be shifted upon further analysis to accommodate the service delivery models.
  - o Quadrants (Northwest, Southwest, Northeast, Southeast) serving Regional, District and Local Parks funded through four new Impact Fee Collection Districts.
  - o Establish a fifth County-wide Impact Fee District for preserves and special parks for purposes of revenue allocations that best address the parks, recreation and open space needs for county-wide use.
  - o Park Quadrant Districts to allow Impact Fee expenditures within both incorporated and unincorporated areas.
- Establish a fee-based system for surface parking changes at County boat ramp to supplement revenue needs for boat ramp improvements maintenance and staff operations, and enforcement costs.

Parks and Preserves Service Policies

4. Athletic Facilities Strategy

Purpose:

To provide a fair and equitable distribution of facilities and allocated resources for county residents and visitors to participate in athletic programs throughout Manatee County.

Policy:

- Provide athletic facilities to county residents in a geographic distribution based on the 'Equity Model that focuses on the equitable distribution of services, measured in terms of distance (Access LOS) or population served (Facility or Acreage LOS). This model assumes that facilities or parks will be distributed equitably throughout the community, e.g. at least one facility per quadrant, as opposed to a single centralized facility.
- Adopt a new Differential Level of Service standard incorporating equity and participation rates.
- Prioritize county resident recreational needs first, then travelling (competitive) athletic needs. Identify deficiencies in current athletic facilities regarding geography and respond to deficiencies through facility development. Charge a range of rates based on affiliation with Manatee County and appropriate cost of use.

5. Aquatics Facilities & Programming Strategies

Purpose:

To provide recreational and educational aquatic opportunities for all residents of Manatee County while allowing for local competitive events.

Policy:

- Deliver facilities through a 'hub and spoke' model (having main aquatic facilities supported by smaller aquatic facilities in an effort to provide a full spectrum of aquatic recreation programming) to address the mission of the County's aquatic program. Construct, expand, or refurbish facilities (pools/splash pads) at G.T. Bray Park, John H. Marble Park, Coach Clemons/ East Bradenton Park, Lincoln Park, Pride Park, and Premier Sports Complex. Provide aquatic programming of swim lessons and water safety through a combination of County staff and contract instructors. Expand on facilities for local/ high school swim meets.
- Provide a variety of amenities at 'hubs' to create quality and diverse positive experiences for users. Develop ancillary facilities (i.e. concession stands, volleyball courts, and game tables, etc.) to generate additional revenues and attract more users. Design aquatic facilities at hubs in a way that is compatible with the surrounding demographics and physical environment (i.e. age appropriate and supporting).

6. Greenways & Trails Strategy

Purpose:

To develop a comprehensive approach to funding, planning and constructing a county-wide greenways and trails system.

Policy:

- Coordinate with the Public Works Director to further the 'Complete Streets Initiative' and opportunities for dedicated County Bikeway and Trail system. Develop, adopt, and implement a Bicycle and Pedestrian or Mobility Master Plan. Update the 2002 Greenways Masterplan focusing on limited access trails and truly 'buildable' trails (i.e. Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project and Gateway Greenway).
- Seek funding alternative funding sources to pay for previously planned bikeways and trails. Identify federal and state grants that can help mitigate the cost of bikeways and trails. Communicate with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Sarasota Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to discuss multi-use trail gaps and opportunities within FDOT right of way to provide such facilities. Coordinate with municipalities within Manatee to augment and identify countywide trail routes. Identify high opportunity corridors and coordinate with adjacent development for the creation of spurs, trailheads, and general partnership. (i.e. agreements with developers to link their private internal trails and sidewalks to county designated ones, easements from developers to allow for construction of public trail)

7. Preserves Strategy

Purpose:

To enact strategic initiatives to develop eco-tourism and to expand and protect Manatee County's natural resources and preserves.

Policy:

- Support and promote the County's legacy as a world class eco-tourism destination. Invest in the creation, expansion and maintenance of popular preserves (i.e. Robinson, Perico, Jiggs Landing, etc.). Expand environmental education programming and ancillary facilities and activities such as water based play areas, added boardwalks, observation decks, and other features at preserves and boat ramps to create quality experiences for residents and tourists and to capture dedicated revenue with fee based programming to support educational programming and facilities. Capitalize on placemaking opportunities at popular ecotourism facilities and new construction to further the County's brand. Identify and implement joint use components including experiential activities. Experiential activities are defined to as "critical cross linkages that provide a relationship to and appreciation of nature with play spaces that incorporate to environmental features and activities."
- Continue and expand protection of natural resources and open space. Identify ecologically sensitive and environmentally significant lands to acquire for conservation and organize in the Manatee County GIS to centralize information. Leverage State and Federal Resources in a coordinated effort to conserve open spaces with extensive land management methodology. Seek to manage and harvest sustainable natural resources (i.e. silvaculture, pine straw, and palmetto berry sales, etc.) for revenue stream development.

8. Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy

Purpose:

To maximize accessibility to indoor recreation facility space county-wide.

Policy:

- Make a total of approximately 450,000 square feet (sf) of Air Conditioned space publicly accessible. Leverage Interlocal Agreements with School Board, libraries and other agencies to increase accessible square footage. Identify key spaces or parks where an air-conditioned space would be appropriate, easily accommodated, and cost effective.
- Utilize the 'Hub and Spoke' model to appropriately direct funds to districts where most needed. Identify and invest in 'hubs' (±40,000 sf) and fill the gaps with 'spokes' (±5,000 sf). Examples of 'Hubs' include but are not limited to G.T. Bray Park, John H. Marble Park, and Premier Sports Complex. Examples of 'Spokes' include but are not limited to- Rubonia Community Center, Emerson Point Preserve, and Myakka Community Park.

9. Operations & Maintenance Strategy

Purpose:

To implement key strategic initiatives that provides for the highest and best use of allocated resources to manage Manatee County's parks and preserves.

Policy:

- Transition to the 'Facilitator' model of providing services. Continue contracting golf course management, beach concessions, Ft. Hamer rowing facility, Jiggs Landing, and identify other opportunities for cost effective property management. Facilitate the rental of athletic fields to offset the cost of contracted maintenance (see also Athletic Facilities).
- Manage Facilities and Parks in accordance with the 'Three Tier Delivery Model'. Prioritize maintenance staff, equipment, and management resources in select top tier facilities. Identify base tier facilities where contracted maintenance services would be cost effective.
- Consider alternative revenue sources to mitigate the impact of private use of public facilities. (i.e. Implement a user fee charge in line with current costs of operations and maintenance.)
- Audit the department's operational resources against benchmark counties to determine performance. (Minimum every 7 years consistent with the County's review of the Comprehensive Plan)

The Strategy Board outlines approaches to implementing the Vision Plan (*p. 73*). It can be used as an outline and/or a brainstorming tool, and gives the County a 'buffet style' list in the short and long term. The Strategy Board will be reviewed and adapted into High Priority Actions in the next portion of this chapter. The strategies below build upon the sub-systems and their associated goals identified previously in *Chapter 4*. The format of the Policies and Strategy Boards is as follows:

The Sub-System: the broad category identified as crucial to the Parks & Natural Resources Dept.

1. **The Vision: the individual visions identified within each Sub-system.**

- The Strategy: an action that would assist the Department in realizing the vision.

Parks Strategy

1. **Provide a Level of Service to all residents consistent with the goals of the Manatee County Comprehensive Plan and Board of County Commission Policies.**

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan to reflect a differential Level of Service between East and West Manatee County.
- Redefine Regional, District, and Local parks in a uniform manner consistent with the goals, purposes, and facilities of each park, and update Parks Atlas and GIS accordingly (*see p.143 for proposed updated classifications*).

2. **Provide large centralized multi use parks and facilities (Regional, District, 50+ acres) using the Equity Model (p. 75).**

- Develop the Premier Sports Complex.
- Refurbish and enhance existing facilities (G.T. Bray, John H. Marble, Bennett Park).

3. **Shift the burden of providing small, Local Parks to municipalities, developers of new communities. Identify existing gaps (i.e. Parrish and Samoset) and utilize inter-local partnerships to provide facilities.**

- Update the Manatee County Land Development Code (LDC Sec. 804) to specify the types of parks and recreation facilities that must be provided by new development to support its residents.
- Update and refine Interlocal Agreements with each of the municipalities in the County as well as the Manatee County School Board, focusing on the County's role as a district park provider.

Parks Strategy (continued)

4 Provide sun and heat relief elements in all Manatee County Parks.

- Equip parks with clean, safe, reliable drinking water fountains.
- Supply shade structures in parks.

5 Identify Regional Parks that will receive capital investments from Countywide Impact Fees.

6 Utilize sustainable design principles in current park improvements and the design of future parks - including connections to parks.

- Capitalize on Complete Street Concepts, stormwater components, and low impact development which provide a positive impact on air and water quality both for the park and its surrounding environments, as well as the County as a whole.

7 Identify District Parks that would be eligible for geo-specific impact fees. (pg. 98)

Indoor Recreation Facility Strategy

1 Make approximately 450,000 square feet (sf) of Air Conditioned space publicly accessible.

- Leverage Interlocal Agreements with School Board and other agencies to increase accessible square footage.
- Identify key spaces or parks where an air-conditioned space would be appropriate, easily accommodated, and cost effective.

2 Utilize the 'Hub and Spoke' model to appropriately direct funds to geographic areas where most needed and adaptable to County hurricane shelter needs.

- Identify and invest in 'hubs' (±40,000 sf) and fill the gaps with 'spokes' (±5,000 sf).
- **'Hubs'** - G.T. Bray Park, John H. Marble Park, and the Premier Sports Complex. **'Spokes'** - Rubonia Park, Emerson Point Preserve, and Myakka Community Park.

Athletics Facilities Strategy

1 Provide athletic facilities to county residents in a geographic distribution based on the 'Equity Model'.

- Identify deficiencies in current athletic facilities regarding geography and respond to deficiencies through facility development.
- Charge a range of rates based on affiliation with Manatee County and appropriate cost of use.

2 Prioritize county resident recreational needs first, then traveling (competitive) athletic needs.

- Adopt a new Differential Level of Service standard incorporating equity and participation rates.

Aquatics Strategy

1 Deliver facilities through a 'hub and spoke' model to address the mission of the County's aquatic program.

- Construct, expand, or refurbish facilities to community needs (pools/ splash pads) at G.T. Bray Park, John H. Marble Park, Coach Clemons/ East Bradenton Park, Lincoln Park, Pride Park, Premier Sports Complex, and Parrish Community Park.
- Provide aquatic programming of swim lessons and water safety through a combination of County staff and contract instructors.
- Develop facilities to meet local/high school swim meets requirements.

2 Provide a variety of amenities facilitating learn to swim, competitive swimming, and exercise/lap swimming opportunities.

- Develop ancillary facilities (i.e. concession stands, volleyball courts, and game tables, etc.) to generate additional revenues and attract more users.
- Design aquatic facilities at hubs in a way that is compatible with the surrounding demographics and physical environment (i.e. age appropriate and supporting).

Greenways & Trails Strategy

1 Coordinate with the Public Works Director to further the 'Complete Streets Initiative' and opportunities for the County Bikeway and Trail system.

- Develop, adopt, and implement a Bicycle and Pedestrian or Mobility Master Plan.
- Update the 2002 Greenways Masterplan with limited access trails (e.g. Legacy Trail) and truly 'buildable' trails. (i.e. Gateway Greenway and Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project)

2 Work in conjunction with Public Works Department on a stand-alone Trails Master Plan for planned bikeways and trails connecting parks and preserves. Continue work to implement the Hillsborough to Sarasota Gateway-Greenway Trail as part of the State Suntrail Master Plan.

- Identify federal and state grants that can help mitigate the cost of bikeways and trails.
- Communicate with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Sarasota Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to discuss multi-use trail gaps and opportunities within FDOT right of way to provide such facilities.
- Coordinate with municipalities within Manatee to augment and identify countywide trail routes.
- Identify high opportunity corridors and coordinate with adjacent development for the creation of spurs, trailheads, and general partnership. (*i.e. agreements with developers to link their private internal trails and sidewalks to county designated ones, easements from developers to allow for construction of public trail*)

Preserves Strategy

1 Support and promote the County's legacy as a world class eco-tourism destination.

- Invest in the creation, expansion and maintenance of popular preserves (i.e. Robinson, Perico, Jiggs Landing, etc.).
- Expand environmental education programming and ancillary facilities and activities at preserves and boat ramps to create quality experiences for residents and tourists and to capture revenue such as water based play areas, added boardwalks, observation decks, and other features.
- Capitalize on placemaking opportunities at popular ecotourism facilities and new construction to further the County's brand.

2 Continue and expand protection of natural resources and open space.

- Identify ecologically sensitive and environmentally significant lands to acquire for conservation and organize in the Manatee County GIS to centralize information.
- Leverage State and Federal Resources in a coordinated effort to conserve open spaces.

Operations & Maintenance Strategy

1 **Transition to the 'Facilitator' model of providing services. (pg. 91)**

- Continue contracting golf course management, beach concessions, Ft. Hamer rowing facility, and identify other opportunities for cost effective property management.
- Facilitate the rental of athletic fields to offset the cost of contracted maintenance (see also Athletic Facilities).

2 **Manage Facilities and Parks in accordance with the 'Three Tier Delivery Model'. (pg. 91)**

- Prioritize maintenance staff, equipment, and management resources in select top tier facilities.
- Identify base tier facilities where contracted maintenance services would be cost effective.

3 **Consider alternative revenue sources to mitigate the impact of private use of public facilities.** *(i.e. Implement a user fee charge in line with current costs of operations and maintenance.)*

4 **Audit the department's operational resources against benchmark counties to determine performance. (***Minimum every 7 years consistent with the County's review of the Comprehensive Plan***)**

5 **Although not specifically limited to Operations & Maintenance, Manatee County should consider setting aside portions of the county-wide millage rate or similar mechanism (i.e., parks and recreation trust fund) to provide a dedicated funding source. In addition, revenues received from PROS usage should be reinvested in the county-wide parks system.**

3 COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department held a series of public workshops in the Fall of 2017 to present both the Parks Vision and the Strategy Boards (i.e. the first step in developing the Action Plan). The workshops were held at the Manatee County Central Library, Parrish YMCA and Community Building, and the John H. Marble Recreation Complex. These workshops continued the precedent of increased community involvement used in the development of the Parks Master Plan. The feedback was positive and supported the strategies outlined in the plan. Citizens used these workshops as an opportunity to relay their ideas, comments, and perspectives on the future of County parks to staff. A few of these comments have been recorded in the space below.

"Expansion of bike paths and sidewalks, both on street and off street would be a welcome addition. Having the option to comfortably and safely walk or bike to the store or a restaurant is important to me, my kids, and my grandchildren."

"The plans for a town square style community park in Parrish is exciting!"

"The presentation got me really excited for the future of the Manatee County Park System!"

The November 8th community meeting held at the Parrish YMCA drew residents from around the community to provide input of the Parks Vision section of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.

“Having the amenities of G.T. Bray closer to home is important to my family, thank you for listening and following through.”

“Thank you for recognizing the popularity of pickleball in our community, please continue to build dedicated courts with shade and water nearby!”

“I am glad to hear there will be more aquatic options in the summer for me and my children. Thank you for planning on reinvesting in some of the older parks too, they need a little TLC.”

“I love the Legacy Trail in Sarasota. Having something like that here would be amazing!”

4 HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS

The Strategy Board presented in the previous section and vetted through the community workshops provided an extensive list of potential approaches to implement the Parks vision. A select number of these can be identified as having the largest impact, yet remain cost effective, providing the best value for the County's current and future residents. They address opportunities as well as shortcomings discovered in the Needs Assessment and directly correlate with the mission of Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources. These strategies are considered **High Priority Actions** in this plan, and are expanded upon in this portion of the document.

This plan recognizes that citizen interests, sources of revenue, and development patterns are dynamic in nature and may change over time. Manatee County staff should continue with the implementation of the following strategies through use of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), but adjust accordingly to reflect the community's shifting needs and interests. The CIP provided in *Chapter 7*, has been developed and based on general funds, impact fees, the infrastructure sales tax and grants, in-kind services and other funding mechanisms (i.e., State and Federal grants) are discussed in *Chapter 5* but have not been identified as a specific funding source due to their timing and generally competitive nature.

1

Manatee County has promoted its brand especially well in recent years. The Parks system has implemented the brand in the form of signage at parks, painted facilities, and wayfinding signs along major roads. It is important to establish a baseline of service that can be expected by users at all County owned parks in the form of; cold, clean drinking water; shade structures; and air conditioned space. These facilities are especially relevant and should be an investment in both the Park system and the brand of Manatee County.

Air Conditioned Space should be implemented in the form of larger Indoor Recreation Facilities at priority parks, and smaller Community Spaces at appropriate sites in accordance with the Hub and Spoke Model. These spaces often act as "third places" where residents can gather in comfort outside of their home or office and are integral pieces of community and civic pride. Air Conditioned Space also provides residents respite from the Florida sun and allows a park to maintain recreational space in all types of weather.

Strategy Actions: *Install appropriate facilities in the gaps identified above and implement the Hub and Spoke Model (Exhibit 4.4, p.79) for Indoor Recreation Facilities across Manatee County.*

2

Manatee County is deficient in aquatic facilities and currently failing the level of service standard outlined in the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, the three aquatic facilities at G.T. Bray Park, East Bradenton Park, and John H. Marble Park are all located West of I-75 and South of the Manatee River, creating a geographic 'gap' in service in the East and North, and the East is the fastest growing region of the County.

The County should undertake actions to correct this overall deficiency as well as the geographic imbalance. Accounting for current stock, the County should upgrade facilities at John H. Marble and Lincoln Park. To mitigate the geographic gap in service, along with anticipated future needs, Manatee County should utilize partnerships in the East County to determine an appropriate site for an aquatic facility similar to G.T. Bray's.

Making use of collected Impact Fees and the revenue from the Infrastructure Sales Tax aids in the development in County aquatic facilities without relying on the general fund. It is still important to utilize partnerships and grants, when possible, to provide residents with high quality aquatic facilities and experiences.

Strategy Actions: *Design and phase in an aquatics facility serving the Northeast and Southeast portions of the County. Upgrade aquatic facilities at John H. Marble Park and Lincoln Park. (Exhibit 4.8, p.84)*

3

Manatee County has created a marquee facility in G.T. Bray. As the Southeast and Northeast portions of the County continue to experience explosive growth, it is important for the County to respond accordingly and maintain an equitable level of service to all county residents. This plan recognizes the need for the development of a new park in the gr with a facility investment equal to G.T. Bray's.

There are several tracts of land the county owns East of I-75, but it may be wise to identify lands for acquisition. Development standards and community desires have changed and park designs have been improved since the construction of G.T. Bray. Improvements can be financed largely through Impact Fees, supplemented by Manatee County's Tourist Development Council, and various other sources.

An opportunity has arisen that the County has taken advantage of to develop a Regional Facility in Lakewood Ranch. Its location on an integrated roadway network and integration within the rapidly growing eastern portions of the County makes it an optimal fit for an accessible Premier Sports Complex. Its innate multi-modal transportation advantages are complemented by existing world class sports fields and ample space for the future development of other desired facilities.

Desired facilities include but are not limited to:

- **Athletic Fields**
  - Softball Fields (one of which has the appropriate facilities for competition)
  - Tennis Courts
  - Pickleball Courts
  - Soccer Fields
- **Air Conditioned Space**
  - Amenity Center
  - Administrative Offices
  - Dual Gymnasium
  - Fitness Center
- **Aquatics Facilities**
  - Pool (competition/recreation/learning)
  - Splash Pad
- **Running, Biking, Nature Trails**
- **Event Space for Concerts, Dog and Skate Parks, and Festivals**

Strategy Actions: *Develop Premier Sports Complex in order to support a racquet complex, baseball complex, softball complex, gymnasium with a stadium court, aquatic center, event lawn, park with destination playground, recreational trails and outdoor fitness equipment, a public library and Manatee County office facility. This park and its facilities should lay the foundation for a 'G.T. Bray in the East'.*

4

Manatee County's neighbors to the north and south have committed to providing multi-use trails as a linear park facility. Sarasota County's Legacy Trail and Pinellas County's Pinellas Trail are excellent examples of the rails to trails movement. A direct comparison of Manatee County's financial resources to either Pinellas or Sarasota County would be misguided, but Manatee County does have a shortage of linear parks that offer both a recreational and transportation benefit.

These trails were consistently mentioned as one of the most desired facilities by residents at community outreach, and for good reason. These facilities offer easy access to parks, commercial centers, work, and schools through a system of connected designated paths. Taking trips by bicycle have the immediate impact of reducing the number of cars on the road, an increasing concern in Southwest Florida as infrastructure struggles with the impact of burgeoning residential growth. These non-motorized paths offer a tourism component as a growing number of visitors look for active recreation opportunities during our pleasant winters.

Strategy Actions: *Manatee County should retain professional services to develop a standalone Trails Master Plan addressing the transportation and recreational needs of residents and tourists. Funds from Parks and Natural Resources, Public Works, and the Tourist Development Council should bear the cost of planning, development, and implementation. Further, Manatee County should use impact fees, Federal, State, and private grants to fund construction of the prioritized trails in the Trails Master Plan. The Trails Master Plan, by definition, should include the 2013 Bikeways and Trails strategies, those that are relevant and applicable. These should include off road trails identified as the Gateway Greenway Trail and the Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project.*

5

Robinson Preserve is the preeminent coastal nature preserve on Florida's Gulf Coast and the crown jewel of Manatee County's Preserve system. Robinson has provided an ecological and aesthetic benefit but also an economic one, as it has jump started the ecotourism industry in Manatee County. It is important to continue contributing to this legacy and promote the County as a steward of the environment.

The needs assessment discovered Manatee County is lacking in its total percentage of open space when compared to benchmarks in Sarasota, Hillsborough, Pasco, and Lee Counties. Opportunities to acquire land that is environmentally significant is of utmost importance, especially in headwaters, estuarine, and riverfront locations, or in an area of unique conditions. An example is Washington Park. The 88-acre park has a diverse history, acting as a borrow pit for the construction of a US 41 overpass. More recently, the dredging plan of Port Manatee necessitated a receiving area for the soil and Washington Park was a good fit. The reception of soil altered the topography significantly, resulting in a unique hill or plateau with 360 degree views of the Manatee River, Downtown Palmetto and Bradenton, Terra Ceia Bay, and the Skyway Bridge. This rare opportunity could create another signature preserve for Manatee County.

Preserving the natural environment in Manatee County will become continually more important as it continues to develop. The Parks and Natural Resources has the difficult task of preserving and restoring the environment of Old Florida in select places for the enjoyment of all.

Strategy Actions: *Continue investment in Robinson Preserve as it furthers the County's brand and provides multiple benefits; Expand staff and budget for informal "nature classroom" activities of the Programming/Education and Volunteer Division for all preserves; Set aside funds for the purchase of environmentally significant lands; Seek to establish wildlife corridors for important plant and animal movement and propagation through review of mining reclamation plans and coordination with federal and state agencies; Consider future signature preserves in unique environments like Washington Park and coastal locations, taking advantage of public/private partnership funding solutions.*

6

The Manatee County Comprehensive Plan's Recreation and Open Space Element first goal (8.1) is to provide sufficient parks and recreational facilities to satisfy the recreational needs of Manatee County residents for all types of recreational activities. The method to achieve this goal was to establish Level of Service (LOS) standards for parks and recreational facilities. This can be seen below.

Manatee County Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space Element

Objective:	**8.1.1**	**Level of Service:** Maintain a park and recreation system consistent with the following level of service standards and with the performance measures contained in Table 8-1 (located at the end of this element).
Policy:	**8.1.1.1**	Provide for parks according to the following park facilities infrastructure standard: - One local park per 10,000 residents - One district park per 100,000 residents - One regional park per 500,000 residents where residents are calculated for unincorporated Manatee County.

Table 8-1

Recreation Facilities Performance Measures

Resource/Facility	Units	Adopted Measure (1) (Units/Resident Pop.)
Bicycle Trail	Miles	1/10,000
Accessible Hiking Trail	Miles	1/10,000
Fitness Trail with Parcourse Stations	Miles	1/50,000(2)
Fishing Piers	Feet	800'/10,000
Boat Ramps	Lanes	1/7,500(3)
Swimming Pools	Pools	1/50,000
Basketball Goals	Goals	1/5,000(3)
Handball/Racquetball Courts	Courts	1/20,000
Shuffleboard Courts	Courts	1/10,000
Tennis Courts	Courts	1/3,000(3)
Baseball/Softball Field	Fields	1/6,000
Football/Soccer Fields	Fields	1/15000
Gun/Archery Range	Stations	1/6,000(4)
Golf Course	Holes	9/25,000
Beaches		Subject to Natural Constraints

Manatee County's increasingly diverse population and dynamic needs, combined with the eastward geographic shift of population, skews the LOS standard. This phenomenon is highlighted and elaborated upon in the needs assessment and forms the basis for many of our strategies. Many of the LOS standards are outdated and should be updated to reflect current resident desires in parks and facility standards. The Level of Service outlined in the Comprehensive Plan has not been amended since it was originally adopted in 1989.

Stakeholder meetings were especially helpful when generating the new LOS standards. Key findings collected during workshops underscored some of the specific issues taking place in Manatee County's parks. One detailed issue is the overcrowding of soccer/football multipurpose fields. Shareholders representing both soccer, football, and lacrosse expressed their frustrations with competing with not only those attempting to play their sport, but also those playing other sports.

Strategy Actions: *Manatee County should amend the Recreation/Open Space portion, Element 8, of the Manatee County Comprehensive Plan to reflect modern facility/acreage needs for parks and open spaces, and access to those amenities. It is recommended that the County utilize a 'Differential Level of Service' to account for the distinct contrasts in population density, transportation network, and homeowner association provided amenities that exist between the Western and Eastern parts of the County. This 'Differential Level of Service' is the factor that allows the Parks and Natural Resources Department to serve its citizens in a cost effective and equitable manner. Other changes were made to reflect performance measures derived from state and regional benchmarks, and adjusted to reflect local recreation needs.*

The Table below outlines the recommended replacement for Table 8-1, titled, "Recreation Facilities Performance Measures".

Proposed Level of Service (LOS)

		Acreage / Facility LOS	Access LOS
Parks		7 acres per 1000 residents	3-mile / 5-mile*
Indoor Recreation Centers	-	0.5 square foot per resident***	-
Athletics Facilities	Baseball/Softball	1 per 6,000 residents	3-mile / 5-mile*
	Basketball	1 per 10,000 residents	3-mile / 5-mile*
	Football	1 per 50,000 residents	3-mile / 5-mile*
	Soccer/Lacrosse	1 per 9,000 residents	3-mile / 5-mile*
	Tennis	1 per 8,000 residents	3-mile / 5-mile*
Aquatics	-	1 aquatics facility per 100,000 residents	1 per quadrant
Bikeways & Trails	-	-	all residents within 1 mile of a bikeway/trail
Greenways & Preserves	-	-	every resident within 10 miles of a preserve (subject to natural restrictions)

* All residents within the urban areas shall be within 3 miles of a park, residents in sub-urban areas shall be within 5 miles of a park.

**Existing Local Parks to be maintained. HOAs and private entities responsible for the addition of new local parks. P&NR Department to add local parks strategically where necessary to fill voids in Level of Service.

***0.5 square foot of air-conditioned space serves immediate needs, though 1 square foot of air-conditioned space per person remains the visionary goal - to be achieved beyond the current planning horizon.

Acreage/Facility Level of Service (LOS) - Assessment Table

The table below should be used moving forward to assess the acreage/facility Level of Service provided by current and proposed facilities in Manatee County. This table will be helpful in identifying shortcomings in the Parks & Natural Resources offerings on a more granular level.

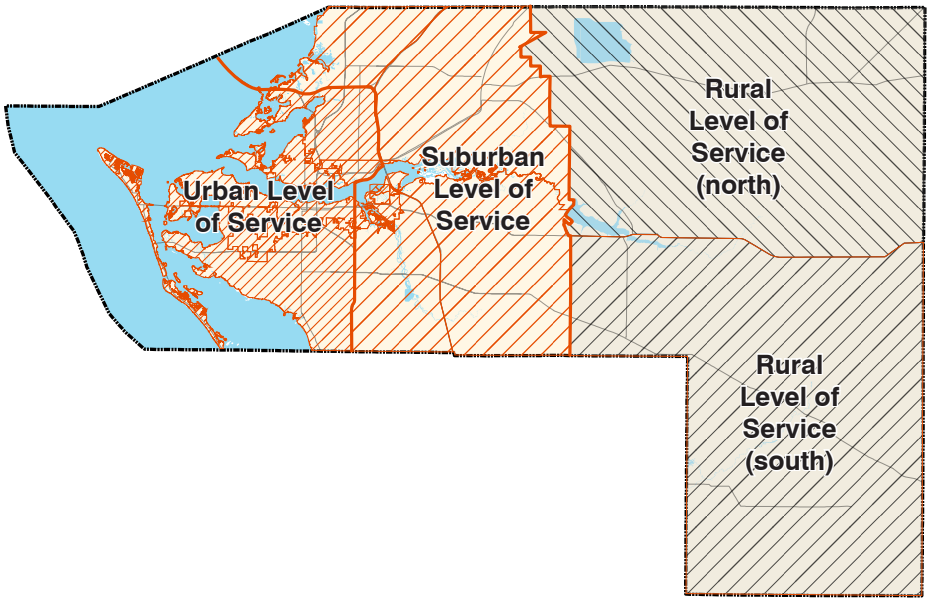
		Acreage / Facility LOS	Current Facilities	Proposed Facilities
Parks	Regional	1 per 100,000 residents	3*	
	District	n/a**	n/a**	-
	Local	n/a**	n/a**	-
Indoor Recreation Centers	-	1 square foot per resident	approx. 81,500 sf	
Athletics Facilities	Baseball/ Softball	1 per 6,000 residents	44	
	Basketball	1 per 10,000 residents	15	
	Football	1 per 50,000 residents	5	
	Soccer/ Lacrosse	1 per 9,000 residents	23	
	Tennis	1 per 8,000 residents	33	
Aquatics	-	1 aquatics facility per 100,000 residents	3	
Bikeways & Trails	-	-	-	-
Greenways & Preserves	-	25% open space (approx 120,000 acres)	12.5% open space (approx 60,000 acres)	-

*Park type definitions are proposed to be redefined, see page 143 for updated definitions and site classifications.
**Level of Service standards based on Access only, see exhibits 5.1 - 5.9 for LOS gaps and proposed facility locations.

Additional Facilities Needed to meet proposed LOS **(2025)**	Additional Facilities Needed to meet proposed LOS **(2030)**	Additional Facilities Needed to meet proposed LOS **(2035)**	Additional Facilities Needed to meet proposed LOS **(2040)**	Additional Facilities Needed to meet proposed LOS **(2045)**	Additional Facilities Needed to meet proposed LOS **(2050)**
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-

The proposed changes to the Level of Service standards are based on several observations made in the analysis of existing conditions and needs assessment of this plan. There was a real need to retool the LOS standards when taking into account the relatively high density of population, characteristic of urban areas, West of Interstate 75. This high density, urban character tapers off into a suburban, medium to low density region between I-75 and the Urban Services Boundary (USB), where many home owners associations and neighborhoods have incorporated small parks and open space, but do not have access to large multipurpose facilities. These HOA and private parks may contribute to the Access LOS, but do not serve to provide acreage to the County's Acreage LOS standard. Finally, Manatee County transforms into a rural landscape east of the USB where extremely low population density calls for a reduced Level of Service standard. This reduced LOS still appropriately serves residents in the area without placing undue strain on the Parks and Natural Resources Department. The proposed LOS corresponds to and reflects the gradual fade of population from West to East, which will help the Manatee County Parks and Natural Resources Department respond to facility needs in a cost effective, equitable manner. This LOS standard ensures adequate land is set aside for residents, now and in the future, with regards to concurrency. Ultimately, this is a policy-level decision and must be supported by the Board of County Commissioners, but it is a strategy of the plan.

Proposed Access Level of Service Boundaries



Manatee County should also consider the sale of its underutilized, most redundant (in terms of access LOS), and least cost effective parkland. The sale of parkland is ultimately a policy decision to be made by the Board of County Commissioners, an action that enables Manatee County to purchase or acquire land contiguous to other parks and preserves, more valuable parkland (from a LOS perspective), or invest in facilities in existing parks. Parks that should be considered for listing as surplus property include those adjacent to schools and those located within cities. The intent of this strategy is to raise the quality of Manatee County's most valuable parks and facilities, and allow private investment or other municipalities to make highest and best use of undeveloped and underdeveloped parkland that Manatee County has controlled for years. This should be reviewed In the context of the LOS and lands set aside for public use.

Exhibit 5.1 - Proposed Park Access Level of Service

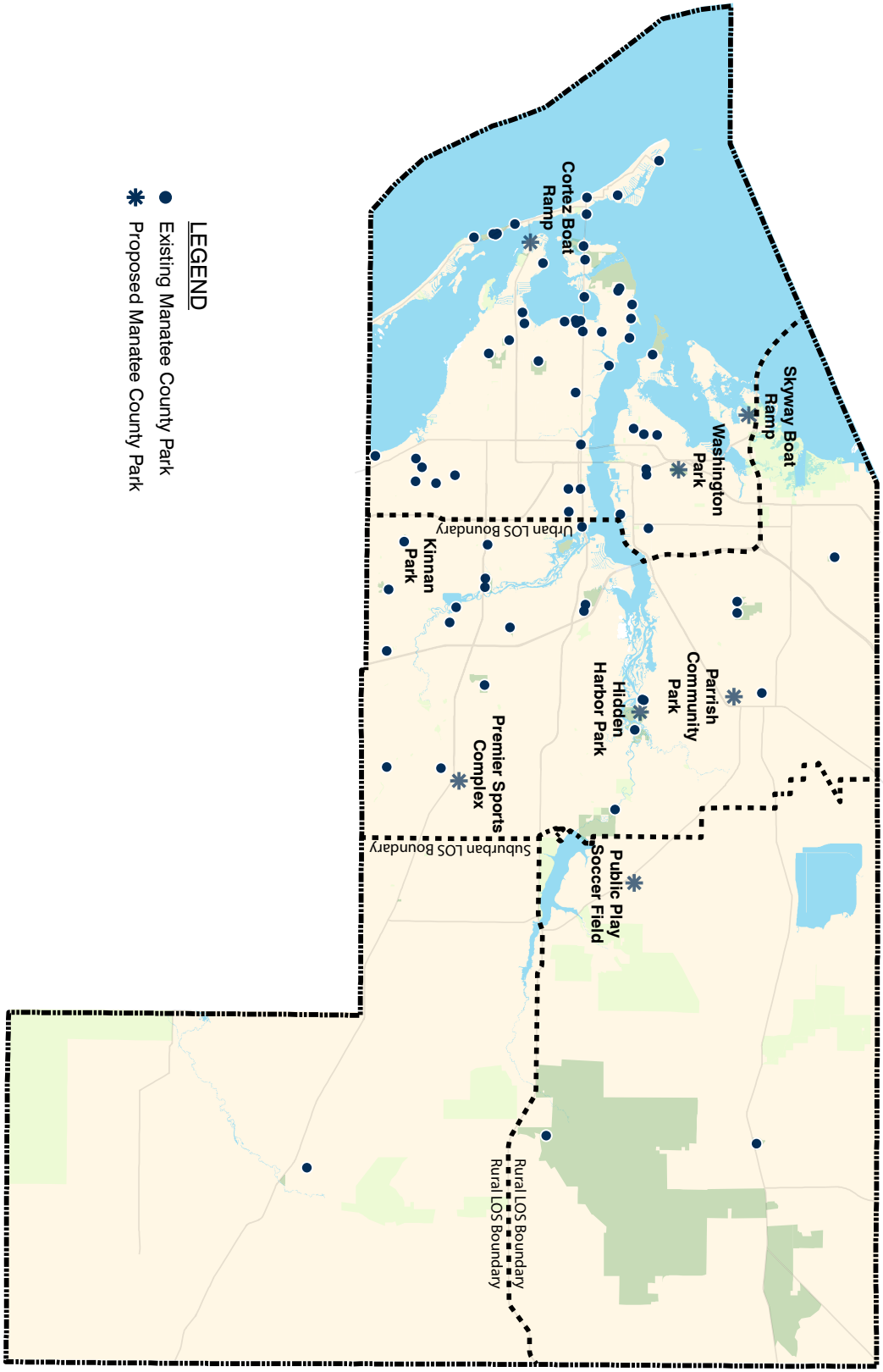


Exhibit 5.2 - Proposed Indoor Recreation Access Level of Service

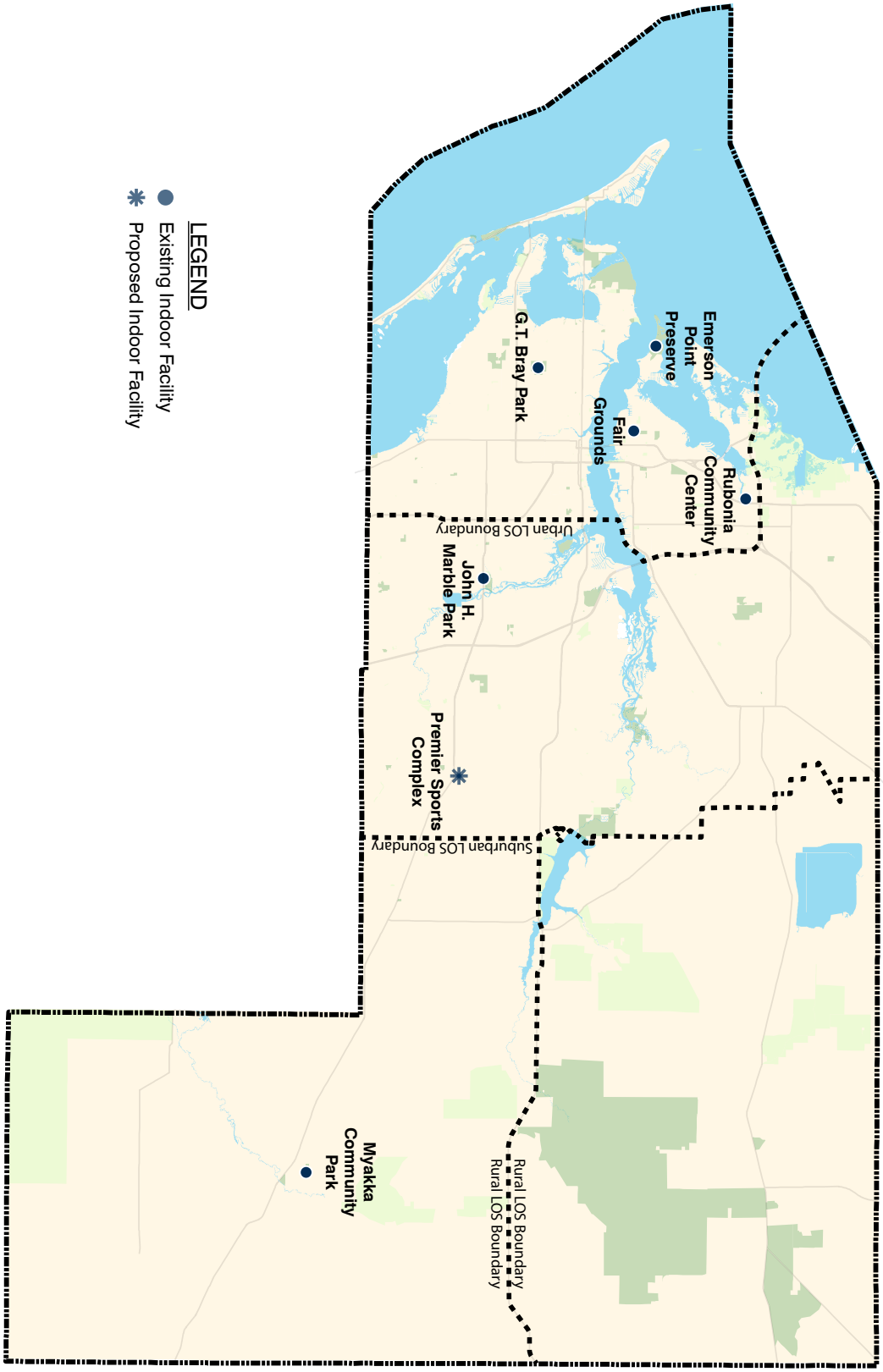


Exhibit 5.3 - Proposed Athletics Level of Service - Baseball/Softball

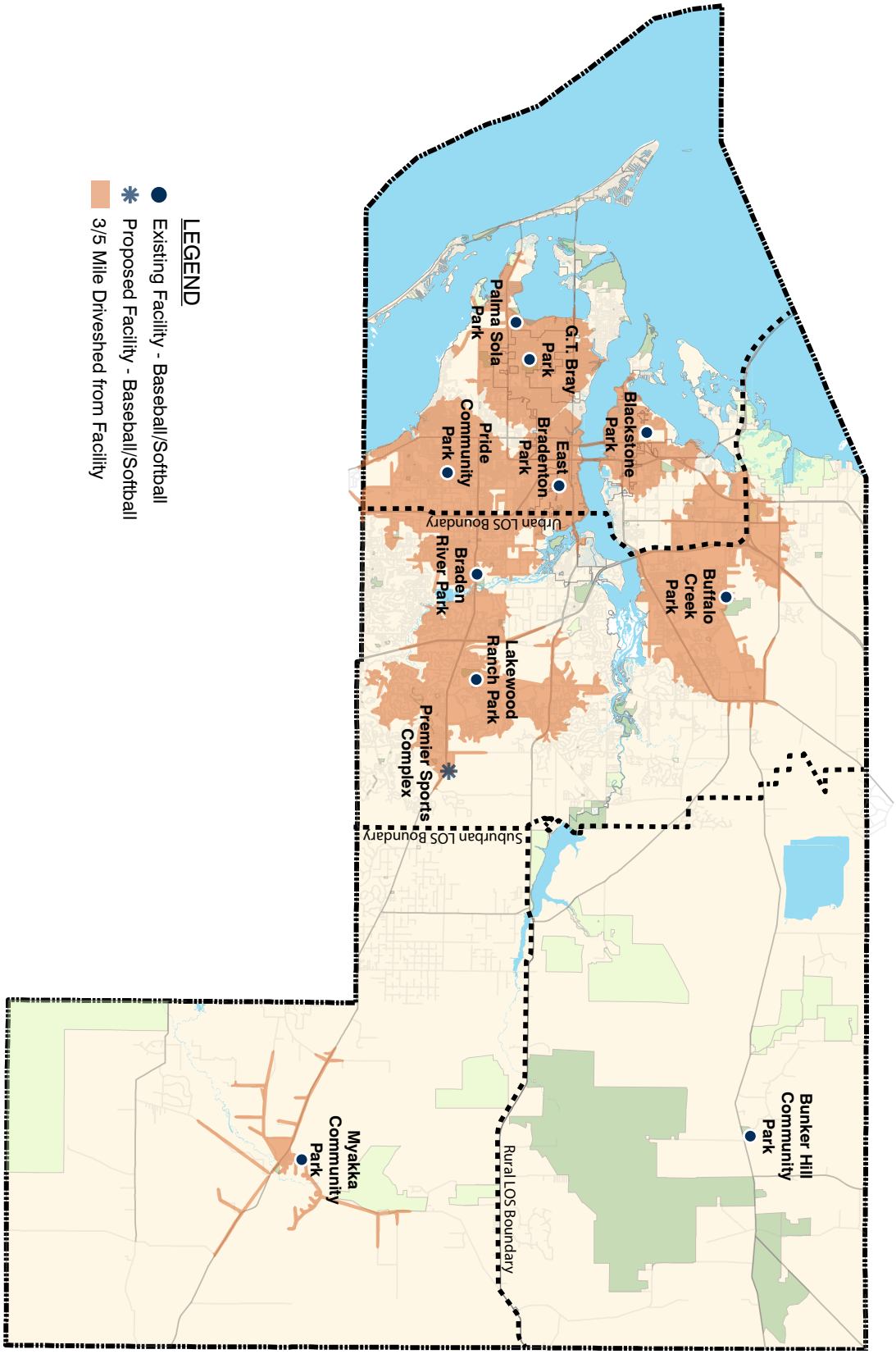


Exhibit 5.4 - Proposed Athletics Level of Service - Basketball

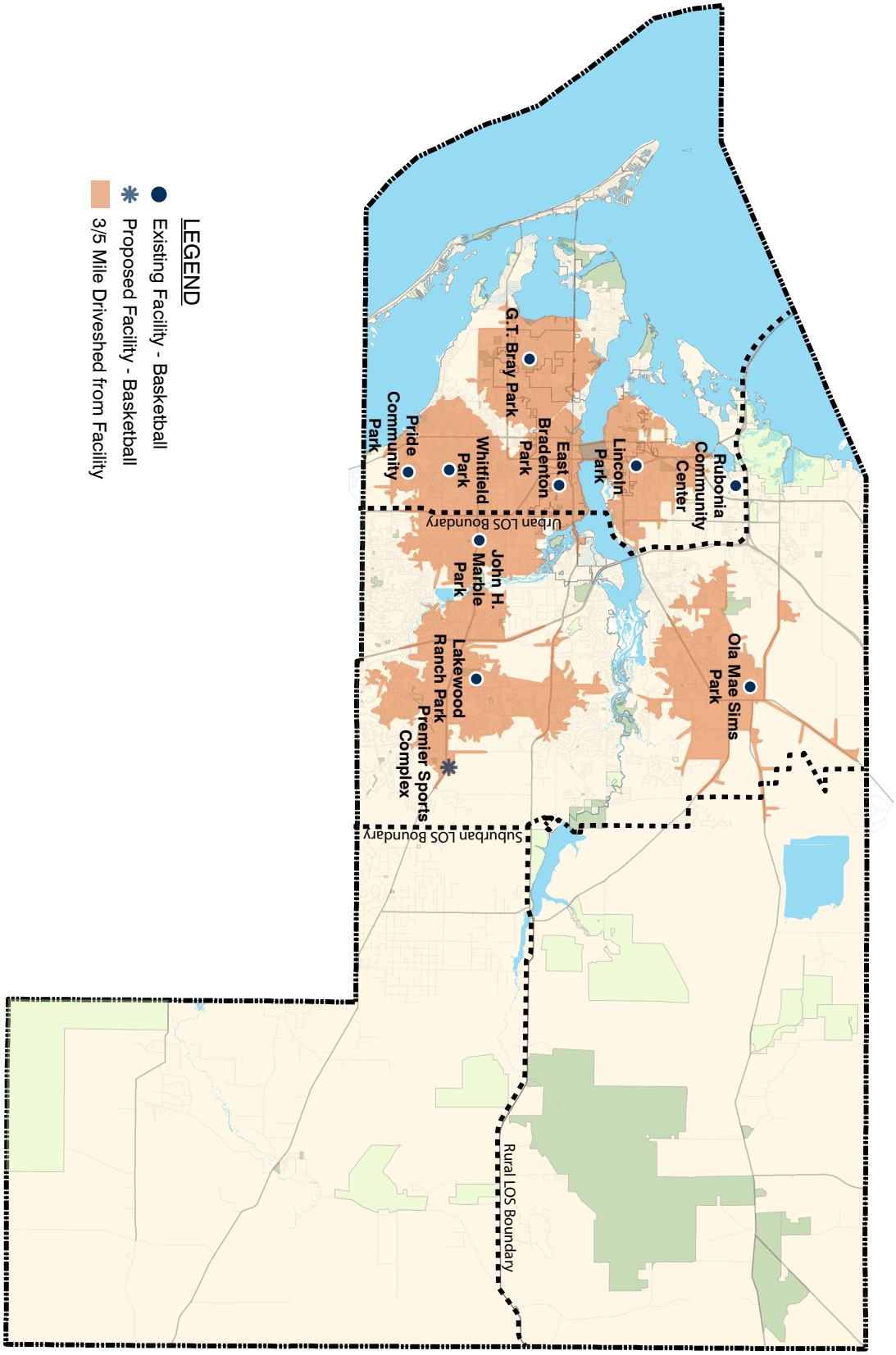


Exhibit 5.5 - Proposed Athletics Level of Service - Football

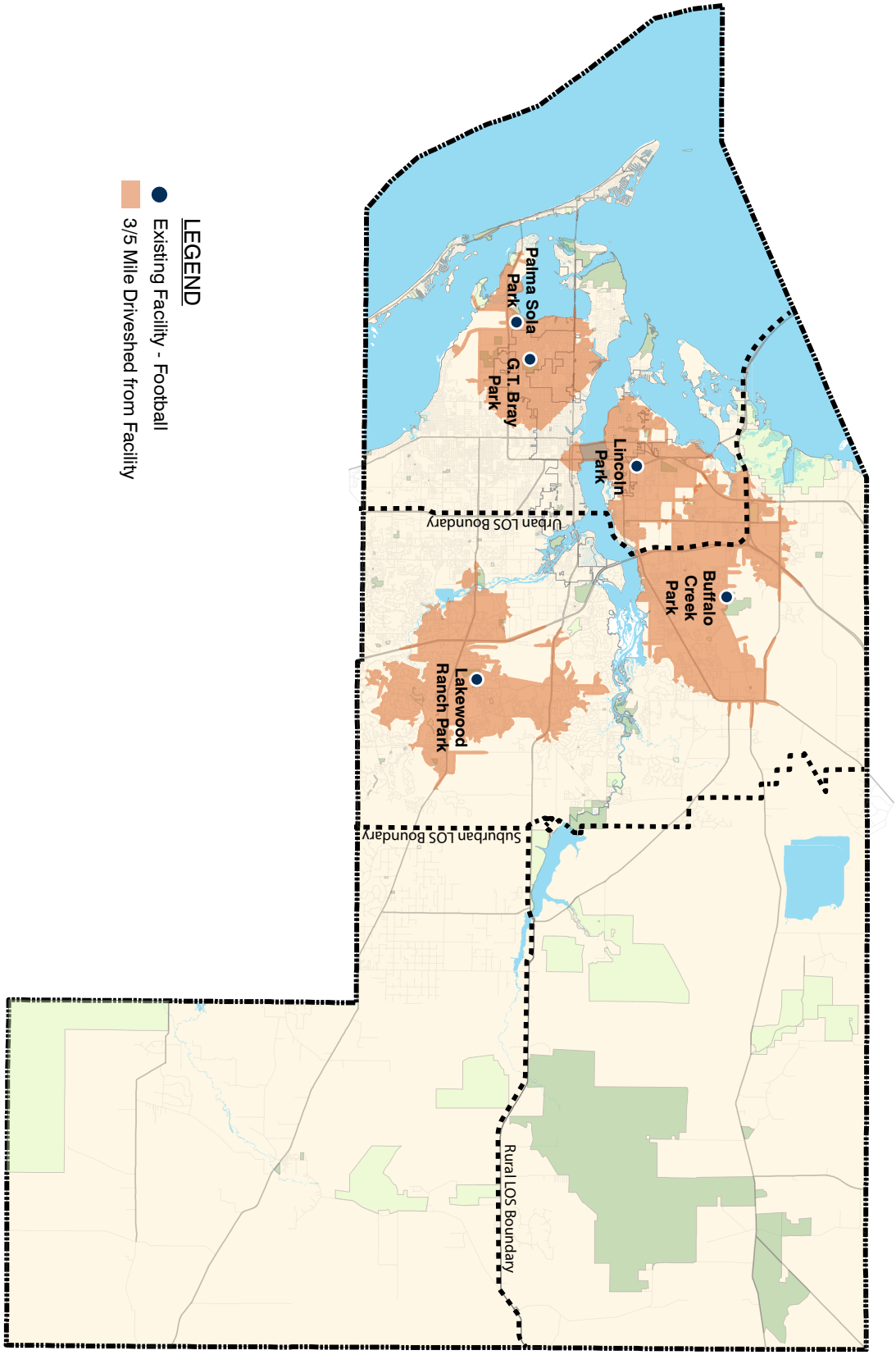


Exhibit 5.6 - Proposed Athletics Level of Service - Soccer/Lacrosse

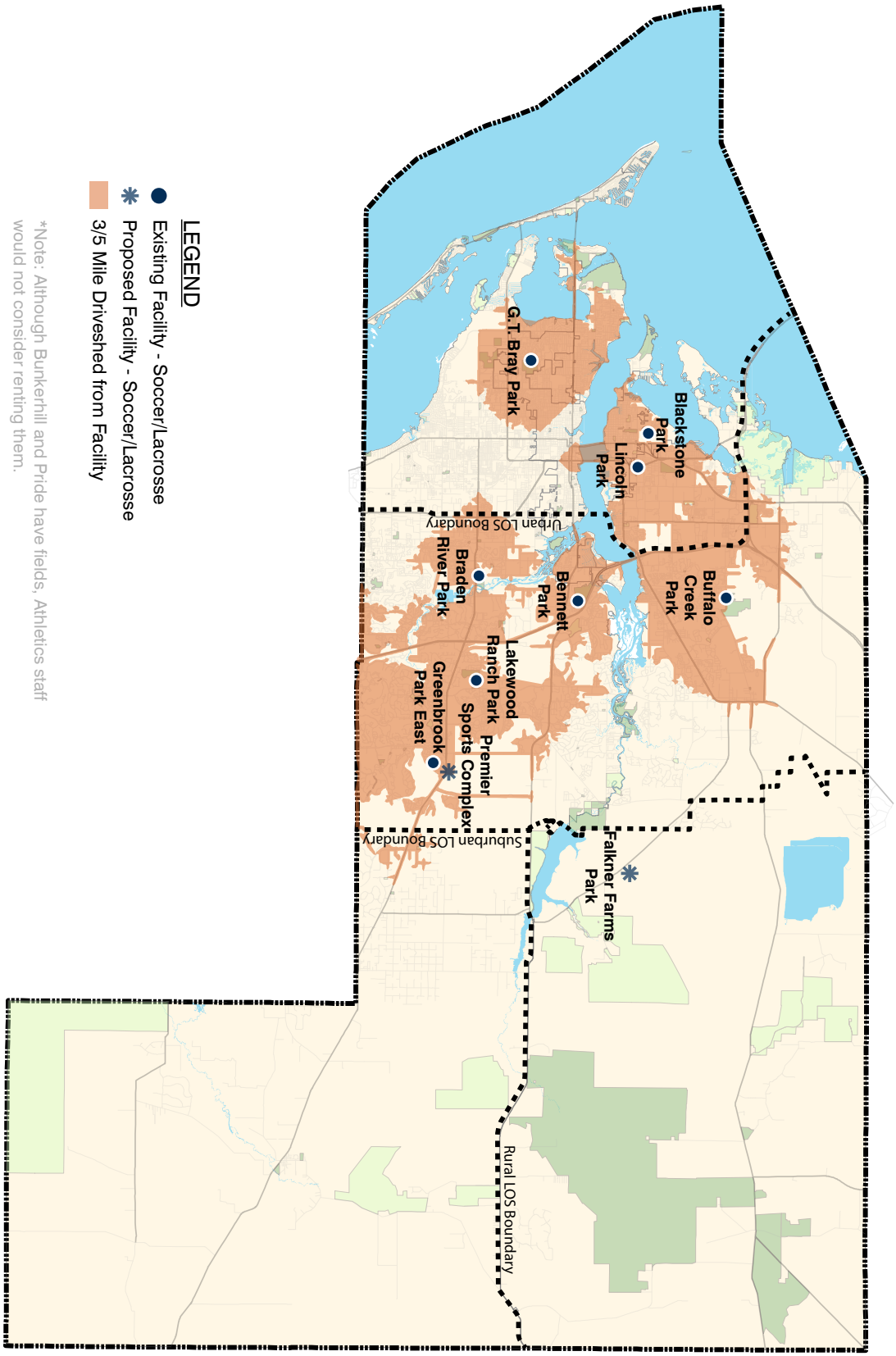


Exhibit 5.7 - Proposed Aquatics (Pool/Splash Pad) Level of Service

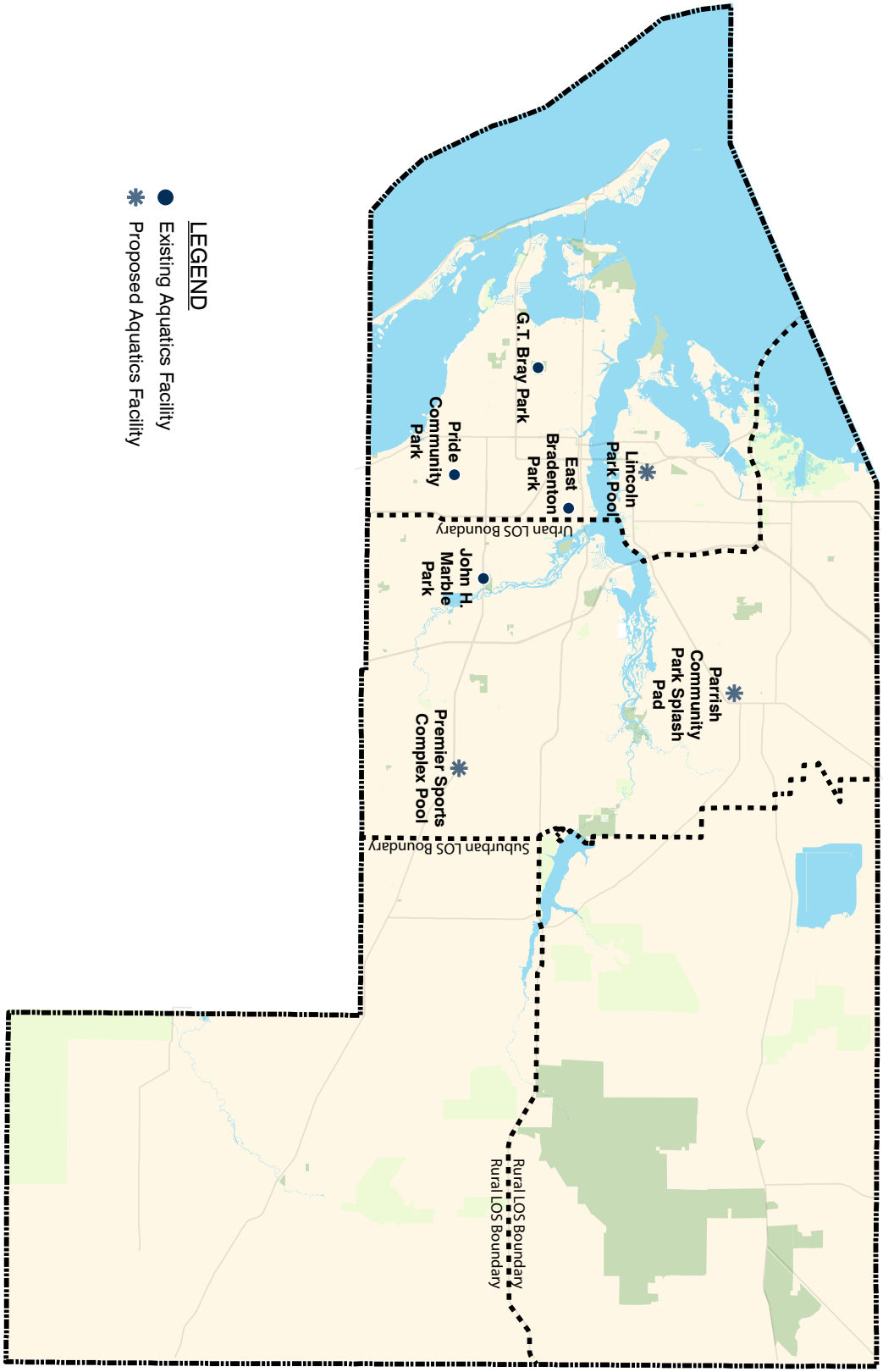
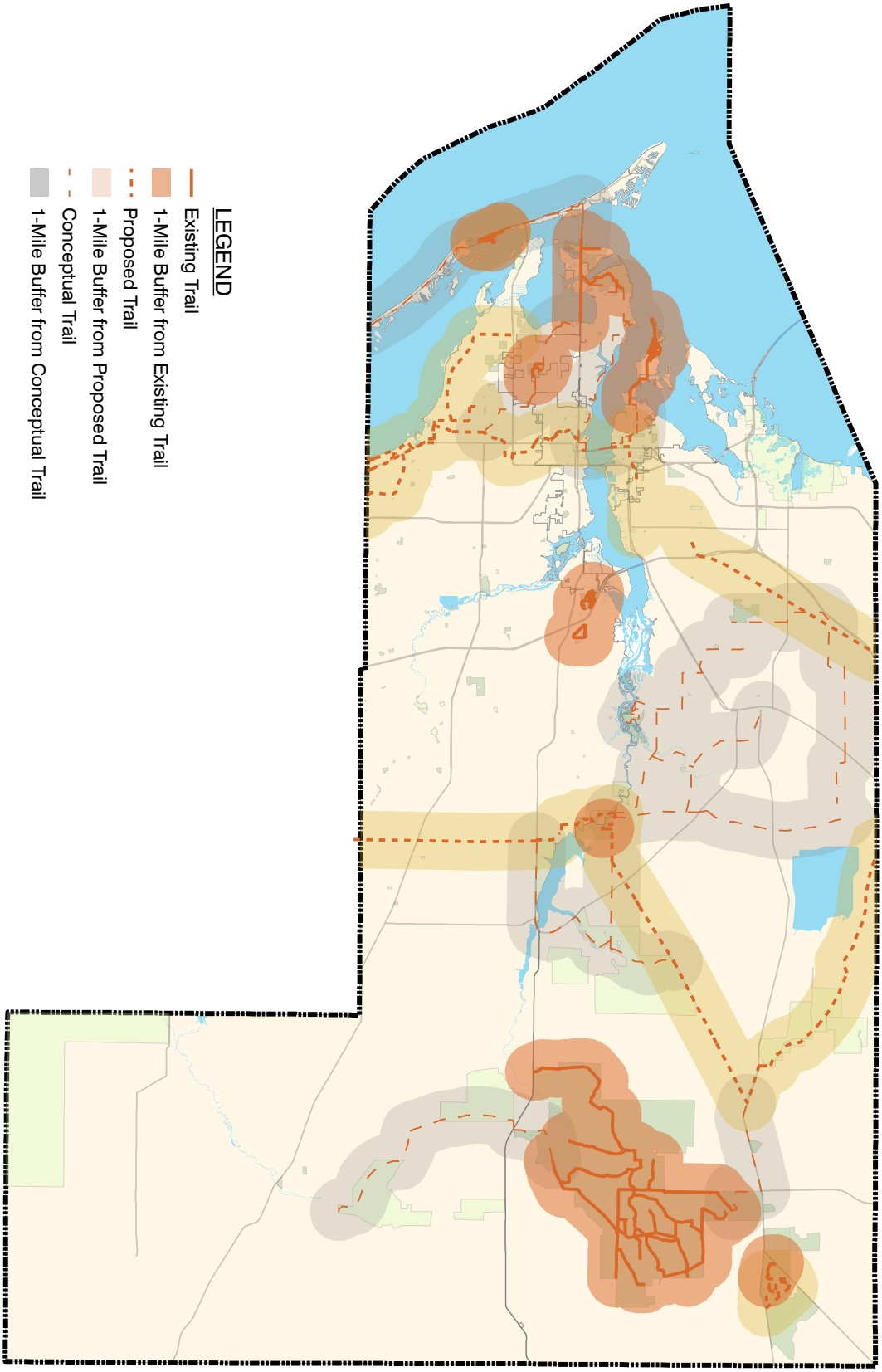
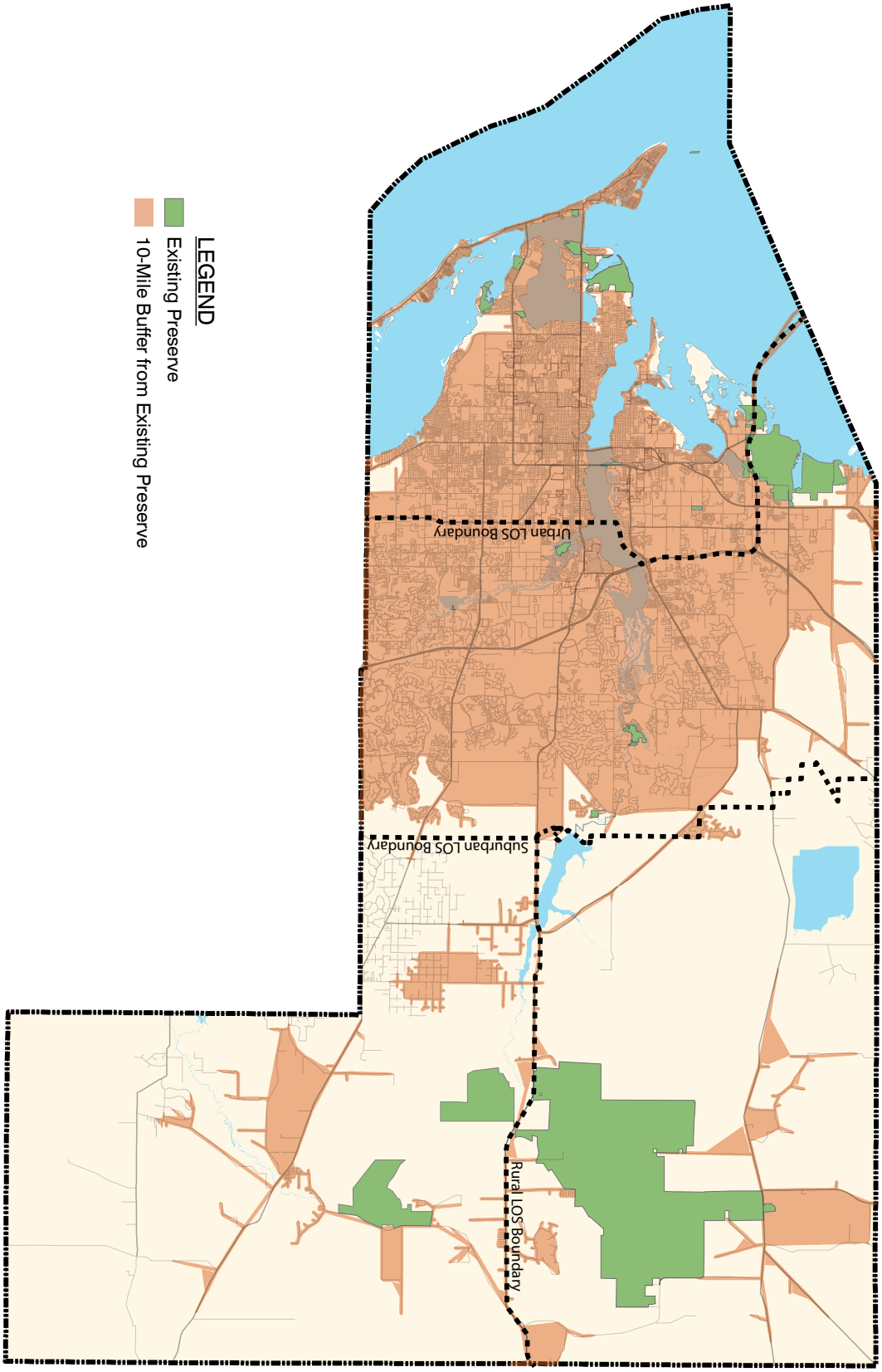


Exhibit 5.8 - Proposed Bikeways and Trails Level of Service



*see figure K for complete list of proposed trails and routes

Exhibit 5.9 - Proposed Greenways and Preserves Level of Service



7

Manatee County defines its parks, preserves, and special facilities in the Comprehensive Plan, and makes use of a Parks Atlas to classify each facility it currently maintains or owns. The current classification system, as well as the park classifications themselves, do not synchronize well with the vision of Manatee County parks.

While classifications may seem like a minor modification, it has several impacts. First, a park classification should clarify the general amount of funds to be invested in certain facilities. A regional park should have the most concentrated capital investment from the county, whereas a local park should not be as large of a financial encumbrance. Consequently, the structure of tiers ensure that the County is not overburdened by the cost of its park system. Second, the modifications align with the service delivery models identified with being the most effective at serving residents of Manatee County. A geographic balance of park classifications ensures equity and access for all. Third, is a reclassification allows for a better understanding of the vision of what will exist and/or what currently exists at each facility. This lays the framework for planning individual parks and preserves, and allows for consistency throughout the system.

As part of the reclassification process the County should identify underutilized or under-performing parks/parkland for potential listing as surplus property as noted on page 132.

Strategy Actions: Revisit the current park classifications in order to align with the Facility Classification System detailed in *Chapter 4*. Proposed classification definitions and changes are listed below:

Proposed Park Type Definitions:

Regional Park: the top tier of parks, low in quantity but large in size, Regional Parks exist to serve 100,000+ people and residents and visitors alike.

District Park: the middle tier of parks, District Parks are designed to serve several neighborhoods and sometimes contain specialized facilities.

Local Park: the base tier of parks, Local Parks are large in number, but small in size or facility investment. They exist to fill the gaps between Regional and/or District Parks and provide open space or play areas for communities at a neighborhood level.

Preserve: a facility focused on the conservation of land for ecological, educational, or passive recreational benefit.

Special Park: a park facility that has a unique purpose and provides a special benefit to the park system, i.e. boat ramp, festival grounds, beach, kayak launch.

Proposed Classification List:

Park	Classification
Alderwood Park	Undeveloped
Anna Maria Bayfront Park	Local
Bennett Park & Preserve	District*
Bishop Point Park	Local
Blackstone Park	District*
Johnson Preserve at Braden River	Preserve*
Braden River Park	District
Buffalo Creek Golf Course	Special*
Buffalo Creek Park	District
Bunker Hill Community Park	Local
Conservatory Park & Preserve	Local
Coquina North & South Boat Ramp	Special*
Coquina Beach Park	Regional
Curiosity Creek Preserve	Preserve
Cortez Beach	Regional
Country Club East Park	Local
Emerson Point Preserve	Preserve
Crane Park	Local
Creekwood Park	Local
Flamingo Cay Conservation Area	Preserve
Devil's Elbow Preserve	Preserve
Duette Preserve	Preserve*
East Bradenton Park	District*
Ft. Hamer Park & Boat Ramp	Special*
G.T. Bray Park	Regional*
Gateway North Park	Undeveloped
Geraldson Community Farm	Preserve
Greenbrook Park East	Local
Greer Island Park	Preserve*
Headwaters at Duette Preserve	Preserve*
Hidden Harbor Park	Undeveloped**
Highland Shores Boat Ramp	Special*

*Denotes classification change
**Proposed or Conceptual Park

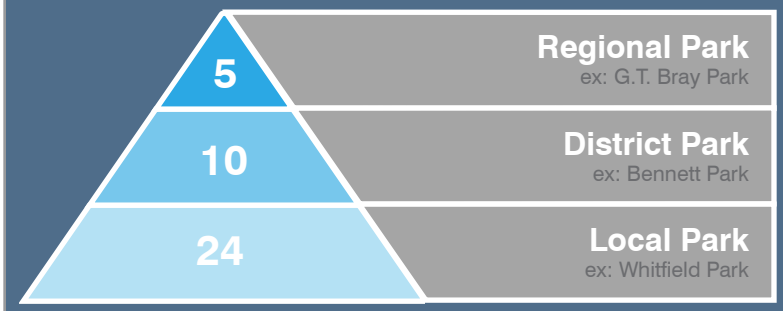
Park	Classification
Jiggs Landing Preserve & Boat Ramp	Preserve
John H. Marble Recreation Complex	District*
Kingfish Boat Ramp	Special*
Kinnan Park	Local**
Lakewood Ranch Park	District
Leffis Key Preserve	Preserve
Lincoln Park	District
Magellan Park	Undeveloped*
Manatee County Golf Course	Special
Manatee Palms Park	Local
Manatee Public Beach	Regional
McArthur Park	Local
Moody Branch Preserve	Preserve*
Myakka Community Park	Local
Neal Preserve	Preserve
Ola Mae Sims Park	Local
Palma Sola Boat Ramp	Special*
Palma Sola Causeway Park	Local
Palma Sola Park	Local
Palma Sola Scenic Highway Butterfly Garden	Special*
Perico Preserve	Preserve
Pillsbury Mound Archaeological Site	Preserve
Pine Island Preserve	Preserve
Pomello Park	Undeveloped
Portosueno Park	Local
Premier Sports Complex	Undeveloped**
Pride Community Park	District*
Riverview Pointe Preserve	Preserve
Robinson Preserve	Preserve
Rose Park	Local
Rubonia Park	Local
Rye Preserve	Preserve*

(continued)

Park	Classification
Senrab Park	Local
Seville Park	Local
Sixty-sixth Street Park	Undeveloped
State Road 64 Boat Ramp	Special*
Sunny Shores Park	Local
Sylvan Oaks Park	Local
Tara Park	Undeveloped*
Twin Rivers Preserve at Gamble Creek	Preserve
Ungarelli Preserve	Preserve
University Place Community Park	Local
Parrish Community Park	Undeveloped**
Walker Crews Conservation Area	Preserve
Warner Bayou Boat Ramp	Special*
Washington Park & Preserve	Undeveloped**
Whitfield Park	Local

*Denotes classification change
**Proposed or Conceptual Park

Park	Classification
Winston Tract Preserve	Preserve
Airport Perimeter Trail	Undeveloped**
Falkner Farms Park	Undeveloped**
Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project	Undeveloped**
Peninsula Bay Boat Ramp	Undeveloped**
Terra Ceia Boat Ramp	Undeveloped**
Skyway Boat Ramp	Undeveloped**
Manatee Riverwalk Boat Ramp	Undeveloped**



The reclassification of the parks balances the facility delivery model. The previous Manatee County Parks Atlas lists 9 Regional Parks and only 5 District Parks. The missing middle tier of parks could lead to issues with funding regional parks and establishing an equitable delivery service model. The graphic shown to the left reflects the new parks classifications.

Preserves are protected areas of importance for wildlife, flora, fauna or features of geological or other special interests. They are reserved and managed for conservation and to provide special opportunities for education or passive recreation. Manatee County Preserves are one of the few places you can enjoy the landscapes and coastlines of Old Florida.

Special Parks are the outliers in the park system. They include boat ramps, golf courses, and historical parks that Manatee County retains for public use. They have their own needs and should not be constrained to any particular system.

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Capital Improvement Plan 7

1 - Proposed Projects

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Project Development

The proposed projects listed in *Section 1*, Proposed Projects, represent a delivery of recreation services to a broad range and spectrum of parks, preserves and open spaces across the County. This listing is provided as part of the recommended Parks and Natural Resources Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and is based on the information obtained through the public involvement process, stakeholder meetings as well as the assessments of the County's facilities. The CIP represents projects in all five Commission Districts of the County and includes five primary areas: Parks, Preserves, Boat Ramps, Beaches, and Greenways.

The CIP reflects financial support from two primary funding sources, Impact Fees and the adopted Infrastructure Sales Tax. Other funding sources including grants, general fund expenditures, interdepartmental loans, and in-kind (volunteer) services in support of this CIP. Based on estimates provided by Manatee County, the total revenue collected during the 15 years of this initial CIP total approximately $90 million, consisting of approximately $45 million in Impact Fees and approximately $45 million in Infrastructure Sales Tax. The projects listed do not comprise all known or unforeseen capital projects for recreation and construction as additional projects, including ongoing projects, will become known with continuing input from the Board of County Commissioners and the public throughout and beyond the 15-year term of this CIP.

Funding Options

The County has several funding strategies which can fund projects; paying for projects as sufficient funds are received; or long-term bond financing pledging Infrastructure Sales Tax (IST) revenues for repayment, or combination of both strategies. There are inherent advantages and disadvantages to both of these approaches. The "pay-as-you-go" approach reflects a conservative financial perspective that has the advantage of avoiding long-term costs of financing. However, pay-as-you-go extends the time frames requested to make needed and desired improvements within the community. Pursuing long-term financing can expedite projects and allow for an immediate impact on the community and stay ahead of inflationary cost increases. However, bond funding will also carry additional costs for interest payments, which hopefully are less than the rate of the inflationary prior increases bonded revenues are intended to avoid. Long-term financing also has the benefit of addressing the following concerns expressed by the public in community meetings (1) providing an influx of funding for pent up demand for parks and facility improvements, and (2) desires to have parks and related facilities early versus 5, 10 or 20 years in the future. Because many transportation IST projects require extensive design and permitting before right-of-way and construction can begin, many Parks IST projects are being funded by borrowing from funds dedicated for transportation infrastructure in the early years of the IST, for repayment back to transportation funds in later years over a 15 year cycle.

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

These following projects have been identified as consistent with the PROS Master Plan to this point. The projects respond to the Needs Assessment, follow the Vision, and use the Implementation Strategies to improve the Parks and Natural Resources of Manatee County. The next section provides a list of proposed projects, which have been completed since 2019 or will ultimately lead to the Recommended CIP.

These following projects have been identified as consistent with the PROS Master Plan to this point. The projects respond to the Needs Assessment, follow the Vision, and use the Implementation Strategies to improve the Parks and Natural Resources of Manatee County. The next section provides a list of proposed projects, which have been completed since 2019 or will ultimately lead to the Recommended CIP.

DISTRICT 1 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Blackstone Park	**Skate Park Replacement/Rebuild:** Remove/replace and upgrade existing skate park equipment. Project Completed	$273,000		
	Dog Park: Construct fenced-in dog park to include pavilion, water, signage and additional accoutrements to accommodate large and small dogs. Project Completed		$120,750	
	Soccer Concession & Restroom: Design and construct soccer concession stand and restrooms. (Operating Budget: Non-Personnel - $ 7,000) Project Completed	$892,000		
	Softball Concession & Restroom Replacement: Remove and replace the existing softball concession stand and restrooms. Project Completed	$989,500		
	Ballfield Dugout Replacements: Replace six dugouts. Project Completed	$269,000		
	Soccer Field: Evaluate current field conditions with the expectation to bring in fill and raise the fields creating drainage around the perimeter of the field re-sodding . Install perimeter fencing to restrict access from cars and prevent soccer balls from being kicked into the road. Purchase 1-2 sets of regulation goals and 2-4 sets of bleachers and install shade for weather. Project Completed	$160,000		
Buffalo Creek Park	**Phase I Soccer Fields Expansion:** Complete the purchase or exchange of land and make surface changes to accommodate additions. Construct six Soccer Fields, with Lights, parking lot and restroom/concession facility. Purchase 2-3 sets of regulation soccer goals. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$7,589,135	
	Phase II Baseball /Softball Renovation: Phase I of this project is to expand the current soccer fields with restrooms and parking. Upon the completion of Phase I, Phase II will include the design and construction to remove the two soccer fields and one existing softball field, allowing for the construction of four softball fields and one baseball field; a relocated parking lot with +/- 185 spaces with a drop off area; lighting; a concession building with restrooms (separate men and women walk in facilities to accommodate the softball and baseball players) in the center of the quad softball field complex. (Operating Budget: Personnel - $45,168 / Non-Personnel - $26,000 /Revenue - $25,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$6,419,943	
Hidden Harbor Park	**Wetland/Upland Maintenance:** Maintain created/ enhanced wetland and upland habitats through exotic vegetation removal (mechanical or herbicidal) and replanting as needed based on field evaluations. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$841,980	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 1 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Hidden Harbor Park	**Hidden Harbor (Fort Hamer East of New Bridge):** Development/construction to include restoration of drainage ditches; landscaping and irrigation; utilities; entry and circulation road; maintenance access shell drive; entrance sign; parking lot (+/- 50 spaces); up to three pavilions which should include picnic tables, electrical service and lightning protection; restrooms; fishing/nature observation pier with boardwalk; interpretive signs; site amenities; sidewalks connecting recreational amenities; multi-use nature trail (+/- 2.8-miles) with trail benches and shelters with lightning protection, bike racks, and trash receptables; exotic plant removal and site work and stormwater ponds; ADA-compliant playground with safety surfacing; shade canopy; up to three sand volleyball courts; skate park and pump track; south road extension with approx. 5-space shell parking with a kayak launch facility at Ft. Hamer Bridge/Manatee River; FF&E; open play field area for future development to include a performance pavilion with festival infrastructure and shaded shelter. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $213,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$2,800,000	
Parrish Community Park	**Parrish Community Park:** Plan, design, and construct a park to include a performance pavilion, picnic pavilions, restrooms, parking, walking trails, 20 fitness stations with equipment, boardwalk in wetland and observation platforms, festival seating infrastructure, playground, splash pad, disc golf, site grading and prep, landscaping/turf irrigation, field electrical outlets. Successfully negotiate the land swap/purchase of the FDOT owned property in Parish (adjacent to the County owned property) for Phase II of the Parrish Community Park. (Operating Budget: Personnel - $143,329 / Non-Personnel - $129,650) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$1,000,000	$5,277,476	$4,440,115
Falkner Farms Park	**County Road SR 675 Soccer Fields:** Work with the County Attorney's office to draft up an agreement between Manatee County and a developer who will oversee the design and construction of the 6 soccer fields with lights, parking, restroom facilities and concessions and other amenities. Manatee County would be expected to maintain and operate the six soccer fields once completed. (Operating Budget: Personnel - $157,797 / Non-Personnel - $191,231/Revenue - $90,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$3,000,000	
Duette Preserve	**Wetland Mitigation:** Ecological restoration and enhancement of approximately 100-acres of wetland and upland areas impacted by historical agricultural uses at Duette Preserve. The project will include removal of ditches and re-grading to restore wetland hydroperiods and restoration of wetland and upland habitats. Funding from grants and contributions. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$2,000,400

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 1 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Duette Preserve	**Lake Manatee Watershed Improvement Phase 2B:** Project activities include site-specific surveys, watershed study and drainage model, collecting baseline vegetation and wildlife data, environmental permitting, construction plans and bid documents and community education. Funding from Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) Grant. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$175,000
	Bridges Replacement: Remove and replace vehicular bridge 80'x12' on trail 14 at the North Fork of the Manatee River. Remove and replace pedestrian suspension bridge 180'x4' over the Manatee River at Petericks historic youth camp. Substantial replacement of components of metal catwalk bridge along waterpipe on trail 14 and the East fork of the Manatee River. Remove and replace washed out culvert crossings with small pedestrian bridges (x2) approx. 25'x8'. Remove and replace failed suspension pedestrian bridge at Petericks historic youth camp approx. 180'. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$263,250		
	Pedrick Campground: Construction of primitive group campground. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$250,000
Emerson Point Preserve	**Boardwalk Repair:** Reconstruct boardwalk decking. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$350,000		
Rye Preserve	**Scenic Trail & Amenities Improvement:** Design and permit three pedestrian bridges, to include wetland impact mitigation costs (on-site wetland habitat improvement). Acquire inholding parcel of approximately 9.7-acres and begin mitigation work for wetland impacts associated with trail and bridge construction. Construct pedestrian trail approximately three miles in length; Install electric gate at entrance, double swing aluminum gate with automated openers with entry code/card access. Install wireless bridge to nearby water treatment plant to modernize the office and camp store internet connection and provide staff work functionality at the Rye Nature Center and to allow for interactive displays/ exhibits. Install additional native plants to improve campground privacy. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$718,000	
		$4,196,750	$26,767,284	$6,865,515
	DISTRICT 1 - PARKS & PRESERVES TOTAL		**$37,829,549**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 2 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
East Bradenton Park	**East Bradenton Park Improvements:** Resurface, upgrade and expand the basketball courts from one to two courts in open space directly south of existing court (capacity issue), add 10' to outside dimensions of base pad to give more room between out of bounds line and fence installation, adding lights to both courts (will increase capacity with nighttime play), six goals in total and fencing around courts; add a 4-6 table picnic shelter with electric service and multiple BBQ grills installed on north side of shelter (water not needed but could be trenched to connect existing line serving existing water fountain if affordable); add a chilled water fountain. Add an extension of approximately .30 miles of the existing asphalt fitness walking trail desired by resident input. (Operating Budget: Personnel & Non-Personnel - $10,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$800,000	$50,000	
	East Bradenton Park Playground Equipment: Installation of a new playground along with rubber safety playground base material next to the existing playground. The community has expressed, in several informal neighborhood gatherings, the desire to have upgraded playground equipment in keeping with investments made in other county parks, meets this request. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$200,000		
	Clemons Pool Pump Room Subsurface Soil Weakness Remedy: Pump room is failing, with underground voids and needs to be repaired/replaced. Hire a Construction Manager to facilitate the repairs in accordance with the Plans and Specifications. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$128,000
	Pool Expansion: Expand and upgrade splash area, pool decking, seating and shade structures. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$835,125		
Lincoln Park	**Pool:** Design and build a 25-yard competitive swimming pool with lane markers, lane lines, starting blocks, a separate zero depth entry recreation pool, locker rooms, restrooms, parking, shaded pool deck, picnic pavilions. Both pools will have pool and deck lighting. Project will include water treatment items including filtration, aeration, heating and cooling equipment for both pools. The setting will dovetail into the existing splash pad area. Relocation of existing basketball courts to the Southwest corner of the Lincoln Park property near the tunnel and next to the existing pavilion is within the Lincoln Park Basketball Courts Replacement project. (Operating Budget: Personnel - $303,073 / Non-Personnel - $217,304 /Revenue - $15,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$2,151,793	$2,505,201	$3,792,986
	Basketball Courts Replacement: Construct two regulation basketball courts at Lincoln Park. Courts should mirror the existing courts in terms of size, fencing, lighting, benches, trash cans and more, as determined during the design phase. Please consider additional amenities that would add greater value to the overall facility, such as improved backboards, padding, water fountains, parking, LED lights, and more. With the scheduled expansion to the aquatics components at Lincoln Park with a new community pool, the existing basketball courts will need to be removed and replaced at a different location. To minimize those affected, we are requesting the replacement of two basketball courts with lighting be constructed to the Southwest corner of the Lincoln Park property near the tunnel and next to the existing pavilion. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$300,000		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 2 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Lincoln Park	**Lincoln Park Improvements:** Design and construct park improvements which include the Lincoln school tunnel upgrades to incorporate historic façade; build a walking bridge between the Sylvan Oaks development connecting to Lincoln Park; install a fence at the, bleachers, scoreboard, press box, and a restroom. (Operating Budget: Non-Personnel - $27,054) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$2,160,000	$201,000	
Washington Park	**Phase I - Park Amenities:** Construction of a playground, two pavilions, parking lot and other park amenities including sidewalks, bike racks, and landscaping. This is the first phase of a three phase project which includes design, permitting, and construction of playground equipment, parking lot, pavilion/restroom combination and a recreational trail. This includes a future Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) approved for $600,001 towards construction of the playground, shade structure, two picnic shelters, and restrooms. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $94,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$1,175,000	$1,750,000	$20,000
	Phase II: Site restoration including placement and contouring of approximately 300,000 cubic yards of dredged material from Port Manatee for filling approximately 20 acres of marsh land to create a community asset for recreation and stormwater quality improvements. Washington Park is designed to be completed in three phases. This project is for Phase II which consists of final design and site stabilization for park in-fill project, in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$644,350	$136,943	
	Phase III: Development of passive trails, boardwalk, observation platforms and interpretive signage atop Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) project. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $5,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$287,500		
	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funded: This project is in conjunction with the first phase of the three phase Washington Park project. This project includes design, permitting, and construction of the playground, shade structure, two picnic shelters, and restrooms. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$560,000
		$8,553,768	$4,643,144	$3,940,986
	DISTRICT 2 - PARKS & PRESERVES TOTAL		**$17,137,898**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Coquina Beach Park	**Restroom Replacement:** Remove and replace existing restroom facility with six-stall and shower facility. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$250,000		
	Parking Drainage Improvements: Identify site specific flood alleviation alternatives and water quality best management practices within the Coquina Beach public parking areas. The project extends from the landward side of Longboat Pass to north of the beach restroom facility parking area (approximately 4,200-feet), with location specific internal site improvements to be determined during the conceptual design alternatives evaluation. Tourist Development Tax funding. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Public Works Project			$5,000,000
	South Improvements: Build an additional concession/restroom facility and a pavilion/tiki hut facility at the south end of Coquina Beach to accommodate the increase of beachgoers at this location. Proceeds from Tourist Development Tax, Infrastructure Sales Tax, Impact Fees, and Excess Beach Concession Funds. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$5,700,000
G.T. Bray Park	**Enlarge Existing Dog Park:** Enlarge existing fenced dog park, includes large and small dog areas, /pavilions, picnic tables, benches, water fountains, signage, sidewalks, seating and tree planting. Project Completed	$170,256		
	Skate Park Amenity Replacement: Remove, replace and upgrade existing skate park equipment. Project Completed	$249,968		
	Recreation Center Overhang Expansion: Construct a standalone shade structure to the outdoor fitness area adjacent to the outlook playground and fitness area, matching the current design of the building. Project Completed		$301,875	
	Reconstruct Wildcats Football Building: Remove and reconstruct a concession/restroom support facility for the G.T. Bray football field. Project Completed	$1,211,000		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
G.T. Bray Park	**Remove/Replace Softball/Baseball Backstops:** Remove and replace backstops for softball fields and baseball fields. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed	$550,000		
	Soccer Building Replacement: Remove and replace the G.T. Bray soccer building. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed	$876,306		
	Replace Baseball/Large Concession Building: Demolish and remove existing baseball concession building and construct ADA and fire code compliant building. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed	$1,084,625		
	Replace Softball Concession Building: Demolish and remove existing softball concession building and construct ADA and fire code compliant building. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed	$786,654		
	Ballfield Dugout Replacement: Dugout replacements for eight softball fields and eight baseball complex. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed	$413,187		
	LED Lighting for Park/Ballfields: Install lighting (LED) for one football field and skate park area lighting. Add three new lights at the south soccer field. The preceding lighting has been completed. While the following lighting is in progress: add lighting to the tennis courts and the new pickleball courts. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$970,000		
	District Park Pickleball: Pickleball has become one of the fastest growing sports in the nation. Its growth over the last 2-years since the original concept plan was prepared has surpassed that of the supply of courts needed to accommodate those who play the sport. With this growth in mind, there is a tremendous need to increase the number of pickleball courts throughout the County and especially at G.T. Bray. The plans at G.T. Bray to accommodate the public demand would be to convert the existing 8 hard tennis courts to 20 pickleball courts with covered shade structures over up to 20 courts with lighting, player seating and fans. (Operating Budget: Revenue - $32,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$3,000,000		
	Tennis Court Replacement: Refurbish, add subsurface irrigation, and resurface existing clay courts. Enlarge the footprint of the four southern linear clay courts to allow for seating and shade structures for the players and participants, resulting in meeting USTA standards over a larger four court footprint. Replace lighting, fencing and sidewalks that will be removed during construction. (Operating Budget: Revenue - $19,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$1,205,307		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
G.T. Bray Park	**Bright Outlook Restroom:** Construction of an ADA restroom facility, including sufficiently sized male, female and family facility and a chilled water fountain within the Bright Outlook Pavilion/Playground area. Factory built and delivered modular restroom facilities should be investigated for cost savings. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$280,490		
	Recreation Center Playground: The designated area (approx. 3,500 sf) will be covered in synthetic turf with a rubber perimeter trail surrounding the space with benches and lighting. A large playground structure would be constructed in the center, that is either covered by the existing tree canopies or a shade structure installed to protect youth from the heat and sun. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$509,864		
	GT Bray Dive Well - Learn to Swim Pool: Remodel the pool the pool to exclude it as a dive well and to convert it to a shallow, learn to swim pool (lesson pool). Work off of the conceptual plan which includes shade structures, lounge chairs, basketball goals or volleyball goals. Reserves Funding (Design Only) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$205,000
	GT Bray Decking & Subsurface Soil Weakness Remedy: Hire a company to design the required repair strategy to remedy the structural failures and subsurface soil weakness, and prepare construction plans and specifications. Hire a Construction Manager to facilitate the repairs and incorporate with the dive well replacement project. Besides identifying and correcting the underground issues, we also want to replace the existing pool decks with new concrete and tile depth markers. Reserves Funding (Design Only) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$102,500
	Aquatic Center: Installation of submersible bulkheads in the 50-meter pool. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$1,003,750		
	Security Lighting: Add security lighting along the access roads to the softball complex and baseball complex. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$20,000		
	Improve Trail System: Add outdoor lighting along the trail path of G.T. Bray as well as signage and fixed exercise equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$250,000		
	Destination Playground: Add a destination ADA playground to include fitness element. (Pending Project of Record)	$250,000		
	Renovate T-Ball & Add Baseball Fields: Renovate and expand the two t-ball fields into little league fields to accommodate more users. (Pending Project of Record)	$1,000,000		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Palma Sola Park	**Parking Lot Drainage Pipe:** Improve drainage. Constant issue with high rain amounts. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$100,000		
Portosueno Park	**South Seawall - West of Weir:** Design, permitting and bid support; Project Management and CEI (Construction, Engineering, Inspection) Services; Demolition and removal of existing seawall; Disconnection and reconnection of dock slips; Construction of new seawall. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Public Works Project Completed	$13,598		$768,438
	North Seawall - West of Weir: Design, permit, and removal of existing seawall and construction of living shoreline. RESTORE Act funding. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$650,000
	Living Shoreline Restoration: $650,000 - RESTORE ACT (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$100,000
Leffis Key	**Boardwalk Repair & Replacement:** Reconstruct boardwalk decking and stabilize existing structure. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$225,000		
Neal Preserve	**Boardwalks & Bridge Replacement:** Reconstruct and/or replace boardwalk and bridge elements and stabilize existing structure. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$150,000		
Perico Preserve	**Pericó/Robinson Preserve Trail Connector:** Land purchase and construction of multi-modal trail to connect Robinson Preserve and Perico Preserve with directional and interpretive signage and benches. (FY22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$329,738	
	Seagrass Mitigation Area: Create an approximate 15 acre seagrass mitigation area with access trail and boardwalk at the Perico Preserve on land owned by Manatee County. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 2021)			$1,904,526
	Boardwalk Repair & Replacement: Reconstruct and/or replace boardwalk and bridge elements and stabilize existing structure. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$35,000		
	Trailhead Facilities: Construct restrooms, water fountain, and kiosk at Perico Preserve parking lot/trailhead. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$400,000		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Robinson Preserve	**Trail Shelters:** Design, permit, and build eight trail shelters. Project Completed	$113,987		
	Nature Discovery Zone: Construct accessible all-ages Nature Discovery Zone in the wooded area in and around the environmental classroom incorporating climbing boardwalks, connecting towers, accessible rubber trails and ground level tactile and immersive play/learning equipment constructed using unconventional and natural materials at Robinson preserve. (Operating Budget: Non-Personnel - $2,000) Project Completed	$1,153,281		
	Expansion Environmental Center: Construction and furnishing of the Mosaic Environmental Center. Funding from Phosphate Severance Tax, General Revenues and Impact Fees. (Operating Budget: Non-Personnel - $15,000) Project Completed			$1,908,780
	Kayak Storage Units: Construction of kayak storage rental units. Project Completed	$230,614		
	Expansion Restoration: Restoration of the expanded property to include excavation, exotic plant removal, soil placement, grading & compaction, land clearing, planting, etc. Grants and Tree Trust Funds. Project Completed December 2020			$4,895,816
	Kayak Storage Units: Construction of kayak storage rental units. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed		$447,109	
	Kayak Restroom: Construction of a restroom facility. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $6,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Project Completed		$1,140,142	
	Boardwalk Repair & Replacement: Reconstruct boardwalk decking. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$925,000		
	Pavilions: Design, permit, and build four screened picnic pavilions following the construction men's and methods utilized in the construction of the large picnic pavilions installed at the Jiggs Landing Preserve,. Fixtures include electrical outlets, overhead ceiling fans (timers), LED lights (timers) and a spigot. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $9,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$650,000		
	Volunteer/Education Division Office Portable: A pre engineered building to be used as an office for the Volunteer & Education Division, including HVAC, water, electric, and utility hook-ups. This office will house the division's six full-time staff members, and two part-time staff/interns and will include sufficient office space as well as restrooms, storage and meeting areas. Additional equipment requested includes a shower to allow staff to rinse after aquatic programs, washer/dryer and hookup to wash program supplies, and staff kitchen. The office would need to be connected to the County fiber, present at the Environmental Center, with phone jacks in each office. Communication equipment including PC's, phones, and copier are currently owned by the Division and would need to be relocated to the new office. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $1,500) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$665,000		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Robinson Preserve	**Boardwalk & Trails Enhancements:** $300,000 - RESTORE ACT funding. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			
Ungarelli Preserve	**Recreational Improvements:** Construct boardwalk and trail system. Include kayak launch, parking areas, signage, and a pavilion. Cost and funding source to be determined. (Pending Project of Record)			
		$18,742,887	$2,218,864	$21,235,060
	DISTRICT 3 - PARKS & PRESERVES TOTAL	**$42,196,811**		

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 4 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
John H. Marble Park	**Pool Renovations Phase I:** Install gas lines and separate gym and pool electric and water meters, purchase and install two gas pool heaters, overhead lighting, and starting block. Project Completed	$147,000		
	Pavilion Remove/Replacement: Remove existing pavilion and replace with a pavilion/restroom facility. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$250,000		
	Facility Retrofit Phase I: Expand deck on existing pool deck and construct a picnic pavilion. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$500,000		
	Gymnasium Removal/Replacement Demolish: Remove and replace existing Gymnasium. This project is combined with a CIP project that will address any expansion issues. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $1,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$3,580,000	$4,500,000	
	Repave Parking Lot: Repave existing parking lot. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$150,000		
	Splash Pad: The splash pad will be approximately 4,000 sq. ft. and it will require the appropriate piping and electrical run throughout the site, in order for the construction to be full completed. (Operating Budget: Personnel - $51,393 / Non-Personnel - $700) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$400,000	
	Replace Tennis Courts: Replace the current tennis courts, fencing and lighting that will be demolished during construction of the new gymnasium. Replace the two current courts with two new courts. Pending Project of Record)	$915,700		
Kinnan Park	**Park Improvement:** Tentative construction of a fitness trail a small dog park~~,~~ with one small shelter, two pickleball course with shade structure, and parking lot (less than 12 cars and ADA) with improved access to trail and dog park, based upon a final site design and environmental constraints. (Operating Budget: Non-Personnel - $33,114) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$1,500,000	
Pride Park	**Trail Expansion:** Evaluate the current use and the conditions of the existing basketball court to determine if there is a need for the courts to be renovated, replaced or expanded. Create a trail system to include benches, shade, fitness equipment, water fountains and security lighting. TIF Funding (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$200,000
		$5,395,700	$6,400,000	$200,000
	DISTRICT 4 - PARKS & PESERVES TOTAL		**$11,995,700**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 5 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Bennett Park	**Playground Shade Structure:** Install appropriate shade structure for existing playground. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$30,000		
	Bennett Park Master Improvements: Design and construct multi-purpose sports fields, concession stands, tennis pickleball courts, restroom, parking, picnic pavilions and lighting to the existing sand volleyball courts. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)		$2,500,000	
Braden River Park	**Braden River Park Improvements:** Master Plan will identify phases of the construction of a new soccer concession building with restrooms. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$400,000	
	Pump Track and Skate Park: Remove existing perimeter fencing, backstops and dugouts but leave the lighting. Bring in recommended cubic yards of fill which will be either clay or dirt or a mixture of both. Install split-rail fencing around the perimeter of the new pump track with access gate on the exterior as well as four within the track to control flow and traffic. Install park benches, save the baseball bleachers, install a chilled water fountain, and two bike repair stations. Install 4 lockable hose bibs around the track. One shed for track repair equipment. In addition, construct a skate park in similar size at G.T. Bray. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$435,000		
Greenbrook Park	**Parking Lot Install:** Install parking lot and construct two additional soccer fields with irrigation and lighting. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$100,000		
Lakewood Ranch Park	**Tennis Court Replacement:** Remove and replace existing tennis courts. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$493,205		$41,146
	Tennis Courts - Upgrade/LED Lighting: Retrofit existing lighting systems to accommodate LED lighting. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$100,000		
	Lakewood Ranch Park Improvements: Establishment of a Lakewood Ranch Park Master Plan will provide the structure for development of several phases. Phases will include lighting, ADA restroom, removal of existing handball courts and replacement with Pickleball courts, and dog park. Additional LED lighting will provide for a more efficient cost effective way for lighting soccer fields. An additional ADA restroom closer to the soccer fields is planned. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$300,000	$1,270,000	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 5 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Lakewood Ranch Park	**Destination Playground:** Design and construct a fully accessible health and wellness multi-generational shaded playground structure. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$937,500	
	Park Restrooms & Water Fountain for Tennis/Pickleball: Construction of an ADA restroom facility, including sufficiently sized male, female and family facility and a chilled water fountain, within the LWR Tennis/Pickleball area. Investigation into factory built and delivered modular rest-room facilities should be investigated for cost savings. (Operating Budget: Non-Personnel - $15,100) (FY 22-26 Project of Record)		$749,000	
	Paved Parking Lots: Pave northeast corner of soccer parking lot and northwest corner of softball field parking lot and along Malachite Dr. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$1,000,000		
	Improved Turf Conditions: The north half of multipurpose fields #8 and #9 is crab grass turf, considered to be unplayable turf for soccer competitions and should be replaced. Remove existing sod and replace with a more durable Bermuda type turf. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$100,000		
	Lakewood Ranch Park Soccer & Tee Ball Playground Replacements: Replace soccer and tee ball playground equipment with added shade structure. (FY22-26 Projects of Record)	$280,000		
	Drainage Improvements: Improve drainage of the soccer, softball, T-ball, and little league field complex at Lakewood Ranch athletic fields. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)	$603,750		
Myakka Park	**Drinking Water Supply Well:** Replace drinking water supply well. Project Completed	$200,000		
Premier Sports Complex	**Premier Sports and County Service Center & Improvements:** Creation of an overall site plan for the entire 200 +/- acre County property which could include potential enhancements to the existing Premier Sports Complex, a new East County District park, library and a County Services Center. The site plan is to ensure the proposed uses complement each other, fit on the site and take advantage of potential shared infrastructure opportunities(e.g., stormwater, parking, maintenance facilities, etc.) to maximize the efficiency of the site. The plan will include construction of a portion of the recreation amenities. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$560,000	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 5 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Premier Sports Complex	**Pickleball/Racquet Center:** Construct up to 24 pickleball courts, and cover up to 10 courts, contingent on the design professionals. Construct a small administration office with restrooms and the capability to operate a membership based racquet facility and aquatics center with fee paying members checking in to use the courts and pool. Lighting, fencing, seating, water fountains, landscaping, sidewalks, a marquee and FF&E are also needed. A shade structure with fans and lighting over at least 10 of the pickleball pods is desired on the design professionals. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$4,885,257	
	Swimming Pool: Design, permit and construct a competitive lap pool which should be a 25-yard pool with 10 lap lanes and a side shallow area for aqua fitness and swim lessons. The pool should also include associated facilities and appurtenances to include locker rooms with showers and restrooms, first aid and life guard office, starting blocks, lane lines, in pool and deck lighting. Water heating & cooling system / Filtration system. Deck seating and shade structures. (Operating Budget: Personnel - $328,509 / Non-Personnel - $190,904 / Revenue - $30,000) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$13,592,000	
	Premier Sports Recreation Administration Building and Gymnasium: Construct up to a 5 court gymnasium, hardened for hurricane protection. Include restrooms, locker rooms, showers, IT support, office capable of holding up to 10 staff members, basketball hoops, score boards, generators - all dependent on the stipulations for the hurricane grant. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)		$35,900,000	
	Clay Tennis Courts: Build clay tennis courts including subsurface irrigation, lighting, fencing, seating, sidewalks, water fountains, landscaping, FFE. Construct a practice wall and maintenance shed. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)		$4,736,000	
	Hard Tennis Courts: Build 4 hard covered tennis courts with lighting, fencing, seating, sidewalks, water fountains, landscaping and FF&E. The shade structure should include lighting and fans. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)		$1,832,500	
	Amphitheater: An amphitheater to accommodate tournament style events, concerts, etc. (FY 22-26 Project of Record) Cost to be determined.			
	Skate Park: Construct a skate park. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)		$300,000	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

DISTRICT 5 - PARKS & PRESERVES		IST	IF	OTHER
Premier Sports Campus	**Soccer Multi Purpose Building:** Capital Enhancement to include: Purchase and installation of an enclosed multi-purpose permanent framed tent for meetings, registration, dining room and EMT/training room. Included in this project would be climate controlled trailer restrooms, emergency backup generator, parking lot improvements with signage package and lighting, water/sewage, electric hook-up to the tent, fire suppression system. Funded by Tourist Development Tax and General Revenues. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$6,460,850
	Remote Parking: Design and build out for a 200 space remote parking lot to be designed, permitted, and constructed ahead of the future planned park on the Premier Sports Complex property. This will include a topographic and tree survey for 200 space parking lot to be performed separate of the future planned park. Site lighting is also included for freestanding electrical services not conducive for natural gas utilities. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)		$759,500	
Braden River Preserve	**Braden River Preserve:** Acquisition and development of the Johnson Preserve (aka Braden River Preserve), a new County preserve. Improvements include entryway, parking area, nature trails, pavilion with picnic tables, kiosk with informational signage. Funding from Unincorporated Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) Fund & Contribution-Conservation Foundation of Gulf Coast. Project Completed			$3,039,828
	Johnson Preserve at Braden River Recreation Amenities: Survey of portions of property boundary where possible encroachments exist. Design an permitting of trail, parking lot and pavilion. Construction of picnic pavilion, parking lot, kiosk, trail system. Construction of select portion of perimeter and parking lot fence. Installation of parking landscaping. (Operating Budget: Initial year costs - $3,100) (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021)			$337,620
		$3,641,955	$68,421,757	$9,879,444
	DISTICT 5 - PARKS & PRESERVES TOTAL		**$81,943,156**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

COUNTY-WIDE - PARKS & PRESERVES PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENTS		IST	IF	OTHER
District 1 Playground Replacements	**Rye Preserve:** Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$60,000		
		$60,000	$0	$0
	District 1 - Playground Replacements Total		**$60,000**	
District 2 Playground Replacements	**Blackstone Park:** Replace playground equipment with added shade structure. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$150,000		
	Lincoln Park: Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$125,000		
		$150,000	$0	$0
	District 2 - Playground Replacements Total		**$150,000**	
District 3 Playground Replacements	**Anna Maria Bayfront Park:** Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$60,000		
	Coquina Gulfside Park - Ship Playground: Replace playground equipment with added shade structure. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$175,000		
	G.T. Bray 51st Street Park: Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$60,000		
	John H. Marble Park - Large Playground: Replace large playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$130,000		
	John H. Marble Park - Swing and Small Playground: Replace small playground equipment and swing sets. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$150,000		
	Manatee Beach: Replace the playground equipment with added shade structure. (FY 22-26 Projects of Record)	$150,000		
	Robinson Preserve: Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$40,000		
		$765,000	$0	$0
	District 3 - Playground Replacements Total		**$765,000**	
District 4 Playground Replacements	**Jiggs Landing Preserve:** Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$40,000		
	Pride Park - Splash Pad Playground and Swing Set: Replace splash pad playground equipment and swing sets. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$75,000		
		$115,000	$0	$0
	District 4 - Playground Replacements Total		**$115,000**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

COUNTY-WIDE - PARKS & PRESERVES PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENTS		IST	IF	OTHER
District 5 Playground Replacements	**Country Club East Park:** Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$75,000		
	Crane Park: Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$25,000		
	Greenbrook Park: Replace playground equipment. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$100,000		
	Lakewood Ranch Park - Soccer Playground and Tee Ball Playground: Replace soccer and tee ball playground equipment with added shade structure. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$280,000		
	University Community Park: Replace playground equipment with added shade structure. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)	$110,000		
		$590,000	$0	$0
	District 5 - Playground Replacements Total		**$590,000**	
	COUNTY-WIDE - PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENTS TOTAL		**$1,680,000**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

COUNTY-WIDE - BOAT RAMPS		IST	IF	OTHER
Bradenton Riverwalk Boat Ramp	**Bradenton Riverwalk Boat Ramp:** Construction of a boat ramp and associated amenities. (FY 22-26 Project of Record) - District 2			$5,500,000
Coquina South Boat Ramp	**Coquina South Boat Ramp Waterside Renovation:** Design and permitting of one double lane launch with extended armoring to prevent ramp scour from propeller wash, replacement of the launch ramp, minor dredging within the ramp area, replacement of both north and south accessory docks to increase docking capacity, addition of an ADA compliant walkway access and accessory lighting, and replacement of the concrete seawalls. FBIP and WCIND funding. (FY22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) Work in Progress as of May 20, 2021 - District 3			$1,815,000
Ft. Hamer Boat Ramp	**Boat Ramp Expansion:** Expand the Ft. Hamer boat ramp by an additional two launch lanes to the west of current lanes. (Pending Approval) - District 1			$500,000
Kingfish Boat Ramp	**Kingfish Boat Ramp Renovation:** Complete replacement and expansion of the boat ramp including reconfiguration and expansion of parking spaces and drive aisles, resurfacing of parking areas, replacement of seawall and seawall cap, expansion of concrete launch ramp and replacement and expansion of docking system to new standards. FBIP, Grant and RESTORE ACT Funding (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) - District 3			$4,950,000
Palma Sola Causeway Boat Ramp	**Dock Renovation:** This project involves renovating wooden docks at the Palma Sola Boat Ramp. Dock elevation will be adjusted to make use easier during low tides. (FY 21-25 CIP - Adopted 9/21/2020) Project Complete - District 3			$105,000
Peninsula Bay Boat Ramp	**Peninsula Bay Boat Ramp:** Construction of a boat ramp and associated amenities. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) - District 3	$2,849,125	$4,245,625	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

COUNTY-WIDE - BOAT RAMPS		IST	IF	OTHER
Skyway Boat Ramp	**Skyway Boat Ramp:** Construct a regional boat ramp on the south side of I-75 adjacent to the sunshine skyway fishing pier. This area requires construction of fill on bay bottom to accommodate up to 200 trailer spaces, 40 additional car spaces and 8-10 launch lanes. Construction means and methods to be determined but will likely require a fill pad to support parking with fill material from Port Manatee or other source. Other construction costs will include possible channel dredging, seagrass/mangrove mitigation, stormwater treatment, sea wall and rip rap break water protection, restrooms and pay stations, lighting, utilities, sewer, garbage receptacles, landscaping. Construction costs support should be sought from neighboring Hillsborough County and possibly Pinellas County whose residence would likely share this boat ramp. Paid trailer and automobile parking would also be implemented at this location. (FY 22-26 Project of Record) - District 1			$42,950,000
Terra Ceia Boat Ramp	**Feasibility Study:** A partnership with Manatee Fruit Company for a public boat ramp at Terra Ceia Bay and Peterson Bayou. (Pending Approval) - District 1			$25,000
Warner's Bayou Boat Ramp	**Warner's Bayou Boat Ramp South Parking Lot:** Concrete paving of the southern overflow parking lot of Warner Bayou boat ramp, includes striping parking lot to the parking plan. -FBIP and WCIND funding. (FY 21-25 CIP - Adopted 9/21/2020) Project Completed - District 3			$457,183
	Dock Extension & Shoreline Stabilization: FBIP and WCIND funding - $400,00 with land match. (FY 22-26 Project of Record) - District 3			
		$2,849,125	$4,245,625	$50,802,183
	COUNTY-WIDE - BOAT RAMP TOTAL		**$57,896,933**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

COUNTY-WIDE - GREENWAYS & TRAILS		IST	IF	OTHER
Airport Perimeter Trail	Development of a phased multi-use trail, initially extending 2.5-miles from the northern Sarasota-Bradenton Airport perimeter at US 41 to the 15th Street East Airport Viewing Area. Completion of a feasibility concept design, planning, permitting, construction phase services, and construction of the Airport Perimeter Trail. Consider appropriate alignments and widths, taking into consideration participation by the Sarasota-Bradenton Airport, University of South Florida, Sarasota County, and the City of Sarasota to complete segments beyond the jurisdiction of Manatee County. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) - District 4			$1,460,000
Gateway Greenway - Segment 1	Multi-purpose, non-motorized paved trail for pedestrians and equestrian use, using existing 25-feet of right of way. (FY 22-26 CIP - Approved 9/14/2021) - District 5		$1,438,370	
Gateway Greenway - Segment 2	Construct a 5-mile, 12' wide shell multi-use non-motorized recreational and equestrian trail from Rye Preserve through Lake Manatee State Park to SR 64. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$2,108,000
Palmetto Trails Connectivity & Mobility Project	The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will use the BUILD grant funds awarded to hire a design team and manage construction which will result in; Construction of 3.6-miles of local trail network; Rehabilitation of the historic tunnel under US 41; Addition of four major connectivity improvements, including one grade-separated crossing, one canal bridge an two trail underpasses; Construction of 14 transit stop improvements; Improvement of nine trail/pedestrian crossings; Construction of buffered bike lanes/complete street and trail connection to the existing transit station; Introduction of 65 new streetlights, landscaping, intersection, and traffic calming treatments; create seven multimodal connections between local schools, parks, and community activity centers. Manatee County's matching funds for this grant is estimated at $700,000. (FY 22-26 Project of Record) - District 1			$700,000
Willow-Ellenton Greenway - Segment 1	Construct a 12-foot wide paved multi-use non-motorized trail from 113th Ave E to US 301 along road and utility ROW corridors approximately 4-miles in length. (Metropolitan Planning Organization - Transportation Improvement Plan). Funds include Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Grants. (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$1,200,000
		$0	$1,438,370	$4,268,000
	COUNTY-WIDE - GREENWAYS & TRAILS TOTAL		**$5,706,370**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

COUNTY-WIDE - ADDITIONAL PROJECTS		IST	IF	OTHER
Urban Park	Stormwater Improvement Utility Funding: Multi-purpose stormwater treatment/passive recreation park facility at multiple locations to be determined in conjunction with stormwater basin management plans in consultation with the Public Works Department. 2020-2034/RESTORE ACT (FY 22-26 Project of Record)			$1,500,000
		$0	$0	$1,500,000
	COUNTY-WIDE - ADDITIONAL PROJECTS - TOTAL		**$1,500,000**	

ALL PROPOSED PROJECTS	IST	IF	OTHER
	$45,060,185	$114,135,044	$98,691,188
TOTAL		**$257,886,417**	

** Projects and costs are subject to change.*

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The proposed **Lincoln Park Pool: Master Plan.**

Legend

1. Filtration/Pumphouse
2. Bath House/Locker Room
3. Entry Plaza
4. Shade Structure
5. Office/Entry Building & Warm Up Kitchen
6. Existing Sidewalk
7. Zero Depth Beach Entry Children's Pool
8. Six Lane Lap Pool
9. Service Access to Filtration Building
10. Grass Overflow Parking for Swim Meets/Events
11. Security Access & Turnaround
12. Forever Lawn Turf
13. Existing Building
14. Existing Soccer Field

Bid Alternates

- A Lesson/Plunge Pool (Bid Alternate)
- B Waterslide (Bid Alternate)
- C Shade Structure w/Lounge Seating (Bid Alternate)
- D Shade Structure w/Spectator Seating (Bid Alternate)
- E Additional Parking (Bid Alternate)
- F Basketball Courts (Bid Alternate)

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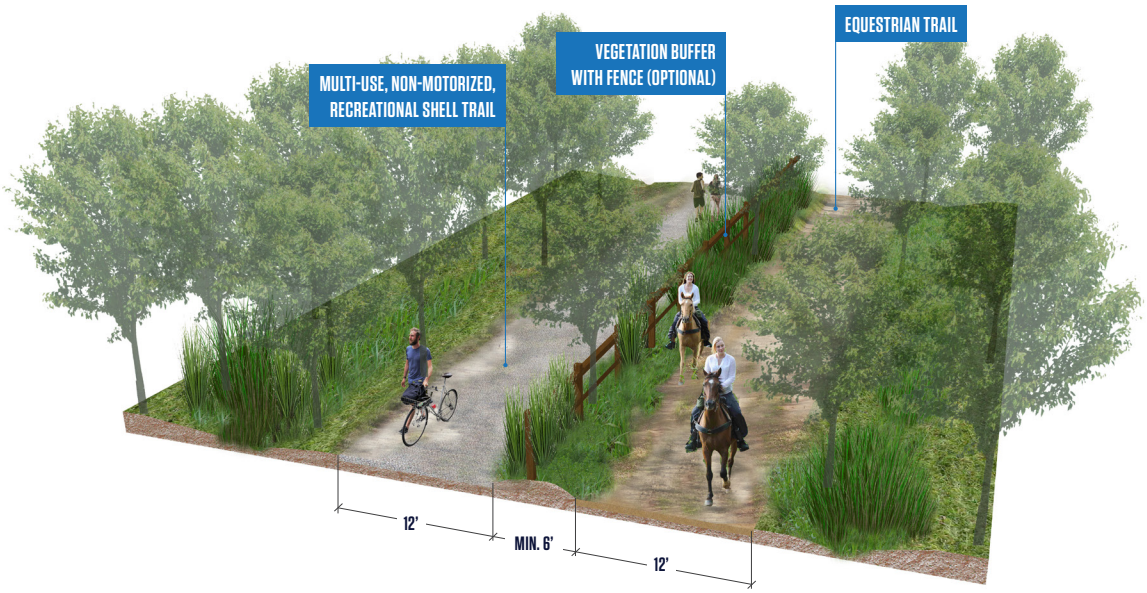
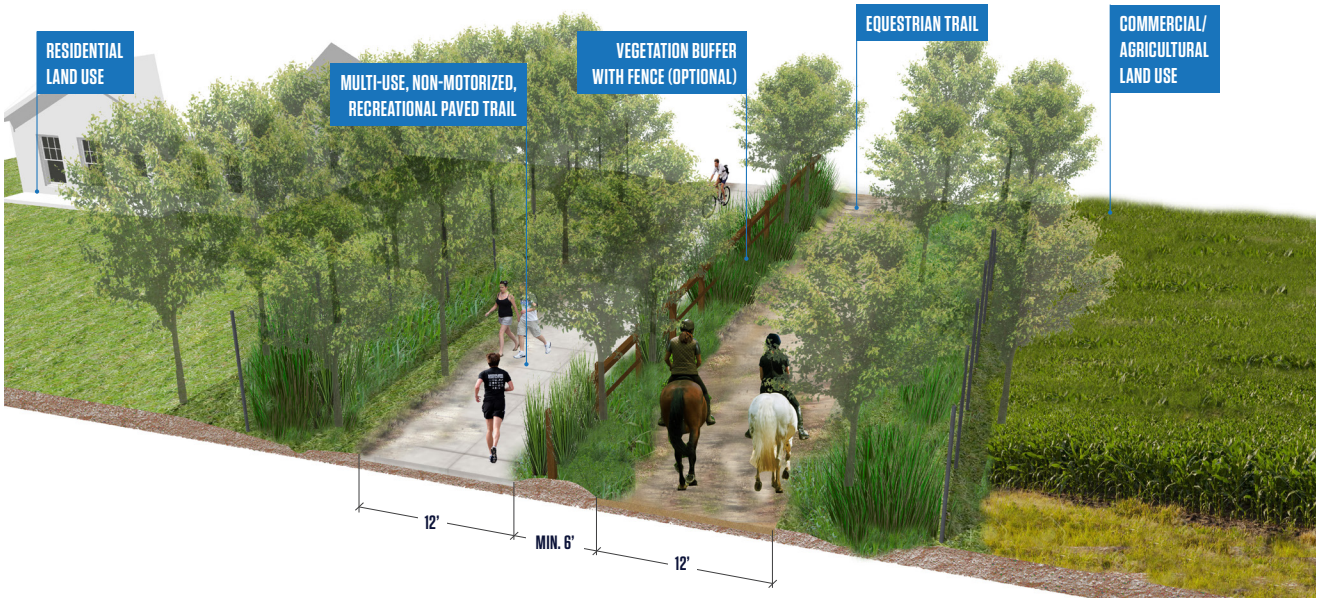
LINCOLN PARK POOL: MASTER PLAN Kimley»Horn Manatee County FLORIDA

Proposed multi-use recreational trail and equestrian trail running through Manatee county are of high priority. The conceptual sections below show possible trail layouts through the varying existing conditions of the proposed routes.

RECREATIONAL + EQUESTRIAN TRAIL - ALT 1

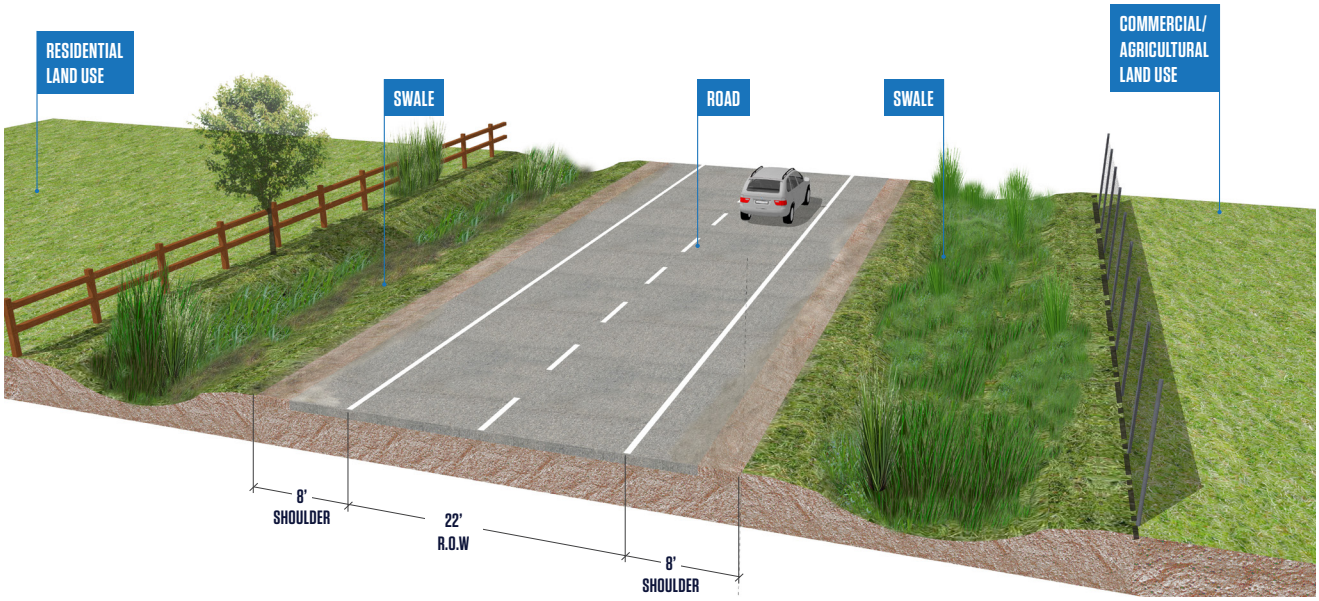


RECREATIONAL + EQUESTRIAN TRAIL - ALT 2

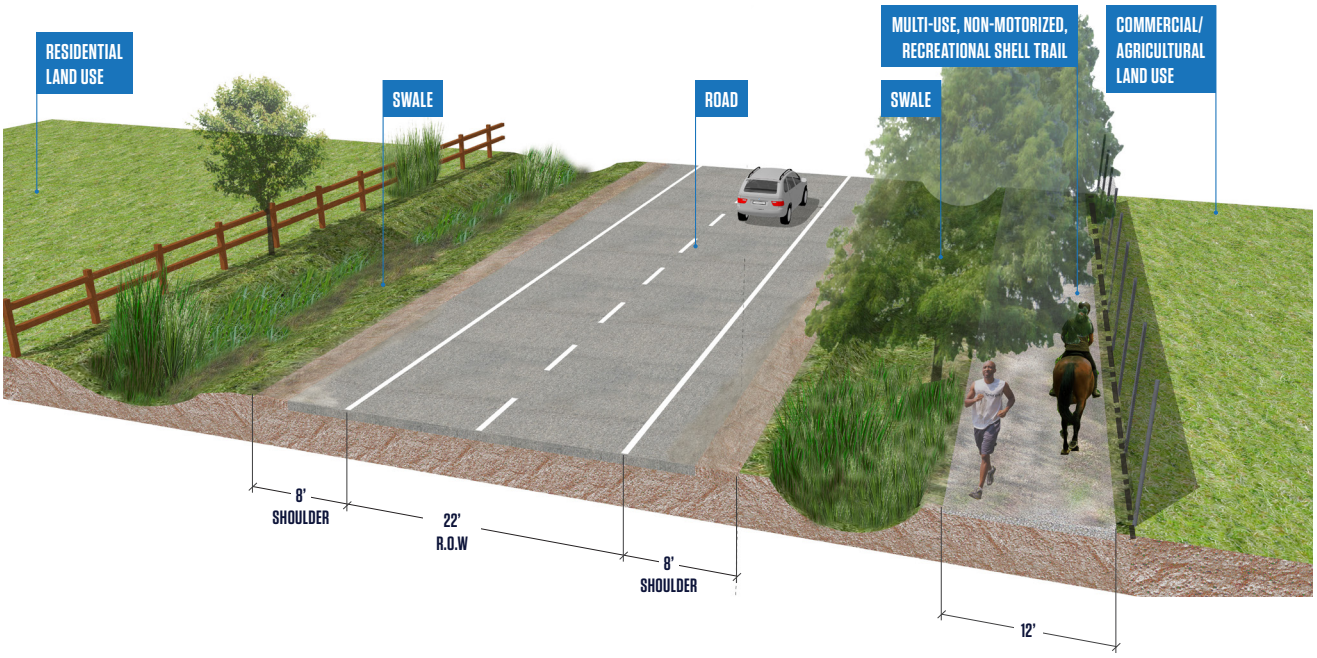


TYPICAL SECTIONS

MULTI-USE RECREATIONAL TRAIL - EXISTING CONDITION

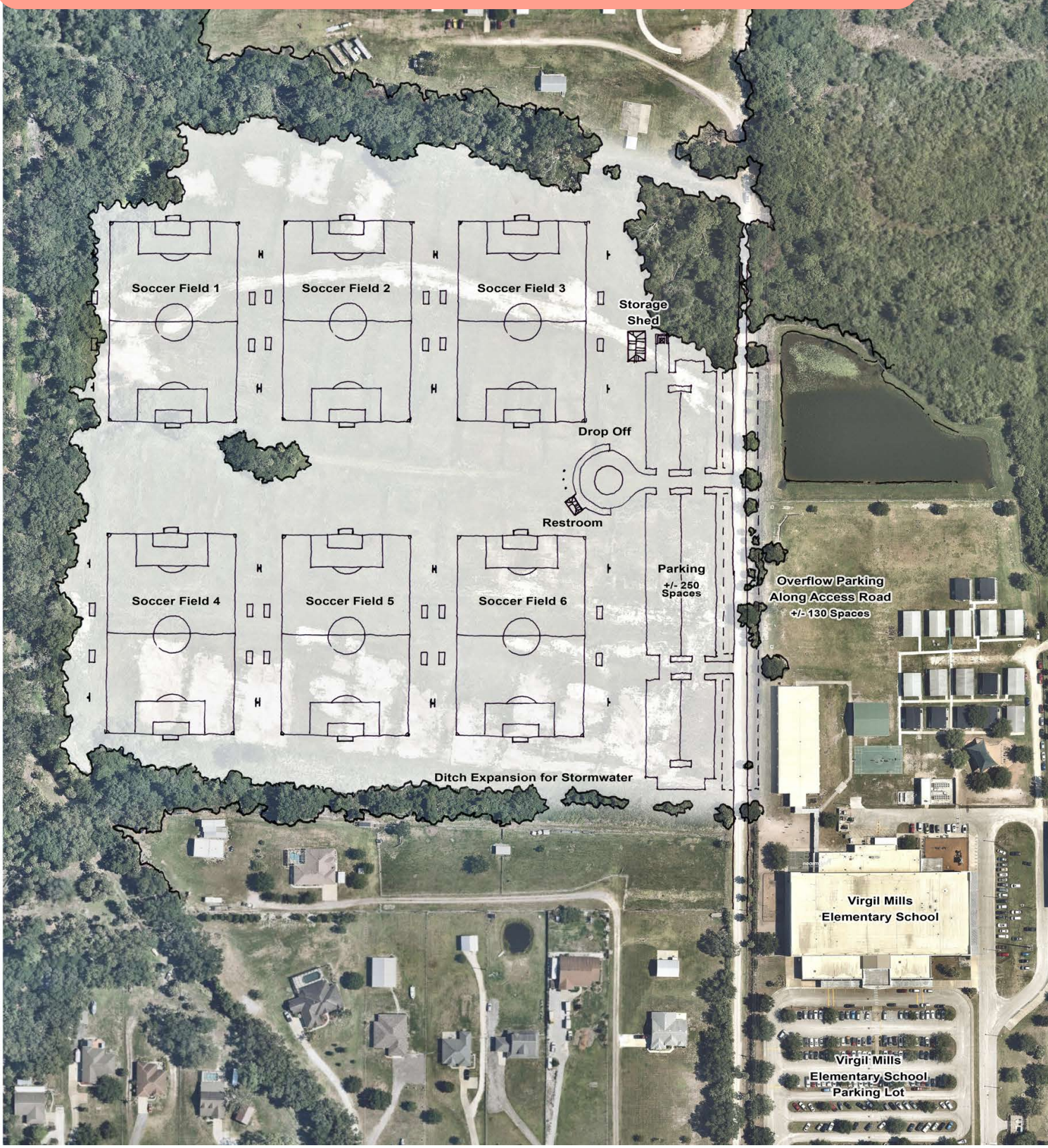


MULTI-USE RECREATIONAL TRAIL - PROPOSED CONDITION



Conceptual renderings of the proposed Parrish Community Park.

The expansion of Buffalo Creek Park to incorporate additional sports facilities would help to serve residents in the NE portion of the County. **Concept 1** is shown below.



NORTH
GRAPHIC SCALE IN FEET
0 50 100 200
Existing Flex Field
Existing Tennis / Basketball
Existing Football Field 1
Existing Baseball / Softball Field 2
Existing Baseball / Softball Field 1
Existing Basketball Court
Existing Baseball / Softball Field 3
Existing Baseball / Softball Field 4
Existing Playground
Buffalo Creek Middle School
Baseball / Softball Field 6
Baseball / Softball Field 5
Baseball / Softball Field 9
Drop Off
Baseball / Softball Field 7
Baseball / Softball Field 8
Buffalo Creek Middle School Parking Lot
Parking
+/- 185 Spaces
New Vehicular