

CITY OF CAPE CORAL

Parks Master Plan Update



NOVEMBER 2016



Acknowledgments

City of Cape Coral City Council

Marni Sawicki, Mayor

Jim Burch, Council Member

John Carioscia, Council Member

Marilyn Stout, Council Member

Richard Leon, Council Member

Rana Erbrick, Council Member

Rick Williams, Council Member

Jessica Cosden, Council Member

City of Cape Coral Staff

John Szerlag, City Manager

Stephen Pohlman, Director of Parks and Recreation

Kerry Runyon, Superintendent Parks Division

Keith A. Locklin, Recreation and Facilities Superintendent

Vincent Cautero, Director of Community Development

Wyatt A. Daltry, Planning Team Coordinator

Kelley Fernandez, Business Manager

Heather Plummer, Research Specialist

Alicia Pearce, Senior Administrative Specialist

Barth Associates Team

David Barth, PhD, Barth Associates

Carlos Perez, Perez Planning & Design

Ken Ballard, Ballard*King

Jay Exum, PhD, Exum Associates

Lynn Hayes, Hayesmar

Terry Clark, Staff Connections

Chris Tatham, ETC Institute/LeisureVision

Ron Vine

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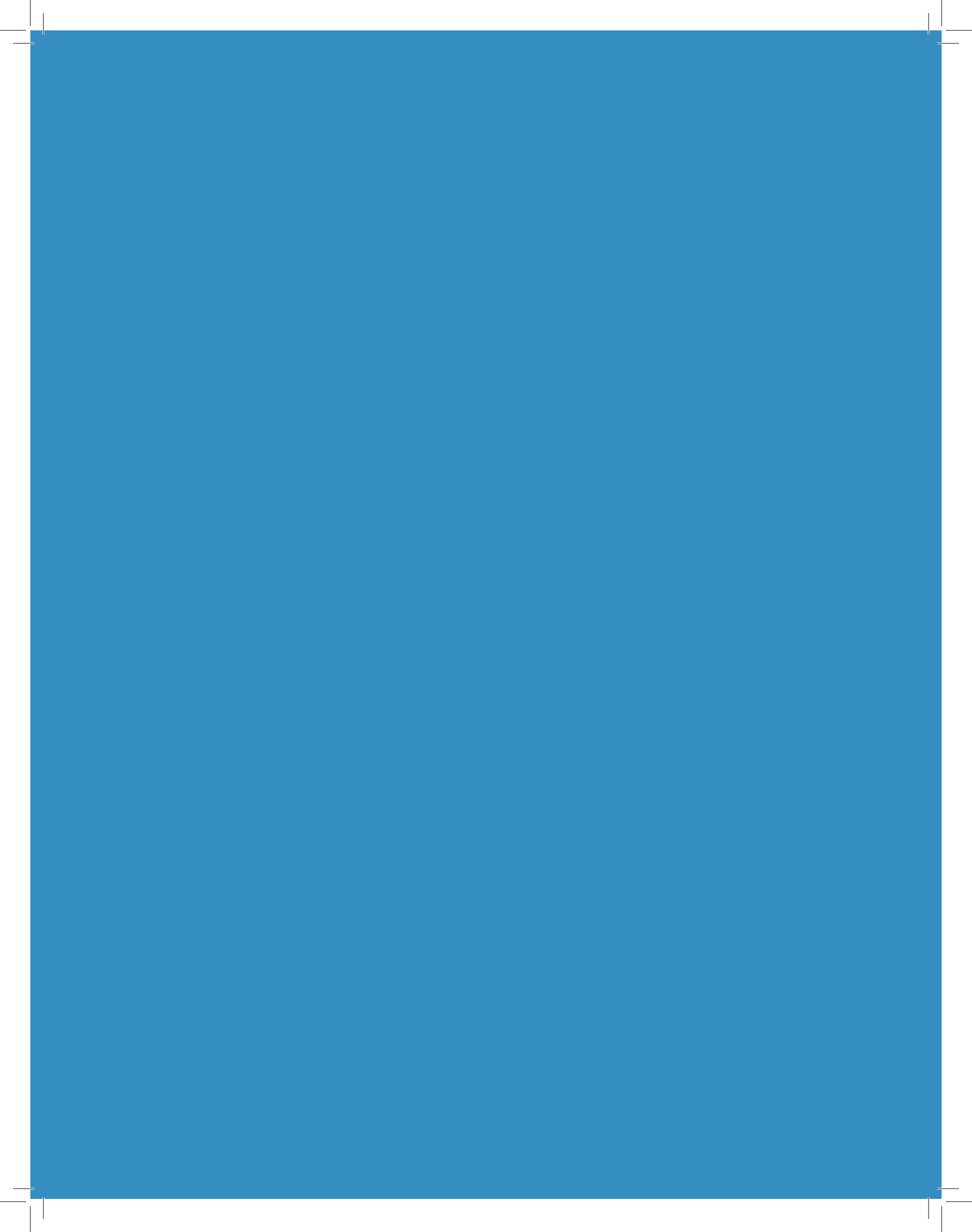
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INTRODUCTION

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1.0 Introduction

Parks, recreation, and natural areas have always been integral to Cape Coral's image and appeal. Early marketing brochures touted the new community as "a waterfront wonderland" featuring golf, boating, fishing, swimming, and sandy beaches.

While "the Cape" was designed and promoted as an ideal place to retire, it was never envisioned as the sprawling, dynamic, multi-generational city it has become today. And while the "miles and miles of paved streets and navigable waterways" promoted in the brochures may have appealed to early residents seeking a quiet retirement lifestyle, the canal/cul-de-sac development pattern is an obstacle to creating an interconnected, walkable, urban lifestyle.

The 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan notes:

"Cape Coral began as a land sales development of 103 square miles just over 40 years ago. The original developers, the Rosen brothers (Gulf American Land Corporation), platted and prepared 89 square miles of land for development—altering the natural landscape, installing roads, digging canals and grading building sites. Unlike traditional cities that were developed in response to trade and transportation, Cape Coral was developed to sell lots in "paradise" to those in the north and throughout the world. Development of the city was driven by dividing the land into as many lots as possible to sell. As such, little land was set aside for public facilities such as parks. The original development of Cape Coral provided for an extensive network of roadways and canals throughout the City. These roads and canals were constructed in anticipation of the rapid buildout of the City.

"However, the City did not develop as originally anticipated or advertised and some roads in the remote areas of Cape Coral are now overgrown with vegetation. As a result of the pre-platting of Cape Coral, the City is characterized by platted lots sized 40 feet wide by 125 feet deep with a minimum of 2 lots required to construct a single-family home... People throughout the world own these lots. Often, the owners bought the lots without ever seeing the lot in person and have

no realistic concept about the lots that they bought 30 or 40 years ago. Similarly, many lots are passed from generation to generation through wills and inheritance without the owner ever seeing the property. Of the 130,000 parcels, less than 1% are 10 acres or greater in size. Considering the geographic size of the City (114 square miles) and the potential buildout population of over 400,000 residents, the lack of large parcels for development is a serious concern. Not only are large parcels needed for parks and recreation but also for public facilities, commercial, industrial and institutional uses needed at buildout."

According to the News Press, Lee and Collier counties ranked in the top 10 of the nation's fastest-growing metro areas based on population increases from July 2013 to July 2014. In April 2012, *CNN Money* described Cape Coral's growth as "meteoric." The City's Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan and South Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Plan all recognize the need for improving and expanding the City's recreation, parks and open space system to keep up with growth, and to help enable the continued transition from "retirement suburb" to "vibrant City."

This Parks Master Plan has been developed to help guide the continued development of the City's green infrastructure. The stated purpose of the Parks Master Plan is to:

- Identify issues, needs, and opportunities of the City's Parks System
- Ensure adequate growth of the Cape Coral Parks System
- Modernize the level of service (LOS) standards in the Comprehensive Plan
- Continue to identify funding opportunities for the parks system

- Provide planning actions and acquisition needs for the Parks and Recreation Department through buildout (2060)

The Master Plan can also help the City meet many of the strategic planning goals established in the City's FY 2015-2017 Adopted Operating Budget:

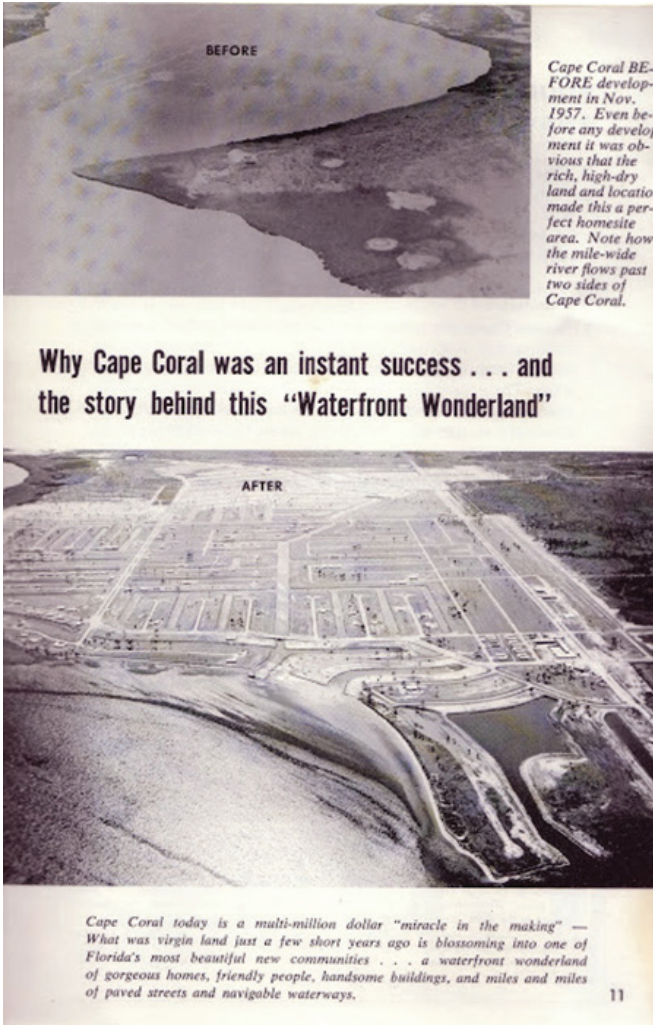
- Increase economic development and development in the City
- Enhance financial sustainability during all economic times
- Invest in community infrastructure, including utilities expansion improvements to enhance the City's ability to meet the needs of its current and future residents

- Improve the City's image with the purpose of building lasting relationships with our residents and valuable partnerships with other organizations
- Increase quality of life for our citizens by delivering programs and services that foster a safe community

This Master Plan was conducted in four phases including 1) documenting existing conditions, 2) identifying needs and priorities using several public and stakeholder engagement methods, 3) developing a conceptual master plan, and 4) outlining specific implementation strategies. Following are the findings, conclusions, and recommendations from each phase of the project.



Early promotional materials for the City of Cape Coral





EXISTING
CONDITIONS
ANALYSIS

2

2.0 Existing Conditions Analysis

The Existing Conditions Analysis includes a review of existing plans, demographics, parks, and recreation facilities, LOS, ecology, and parks operations and maintenance.

2.1 Existing Plans and Context Review

The Barth Associates team reviewed several existing documents to understand the context for the Parks Master Plan including the City's:

- Comprehensive Plan (LOS, Recreation and Open Space Element, Vision Plan)
- Strategic Plan
- South Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Plan

Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cape Coral includes a Recreation and Open Space Element establishing goals, objectives, and policies setting the City's direction related to this Master Plan. The following General Goal, Subordinate Goals, Objectives, and Policy pertain directly to this Master Plan. The Comprehensive Plan also establishes recommended LOS standards related to recreation and open space and are included in this section.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies

General Goal:

Enhance the quality of life in Cape Coral by developing a system of public parks, recreational facilities, and open space which meets the varied needs of present and future populations.

Subordinate Goals:

Acquire and develop a system of park lands, recreational facilities, and open spaces, which keep pace with community growth and changing community needs.

Provide a balanced and varied system of park lands, recreational facilities, and open spaces which are conveniently located, and accessible to all members of the public regardless of age or disability.

Objective 1: The City of Cape Coral will develop and maintain a system of parks and recreational facilities meeting the needs of the City's permanent and functional residents and shall identify and plan park and recreation improvements to 2030.

Policy 1.11: The City shall meet the recreational needs of all population groups through the development of recreational facilities.

Objective 3: The City of Cape Coral will continue to provide a system of parks, recreational facilities, and open space which is accessible to all members of the public.

Objective 5: The City will continue to provide adequate levels of funding to properly and efficiently maintain park and recreation facilities within Cape Coral.

Objective 6: The City will aggressively pursue an increase in private and public funds for the acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation of parks and recreational facilities.

Objective 7: The City will maintain and/or expand public opportunities for participation in the creative and performing arts.

Level of Service Standard

The following LOS standards are part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, Recreation and Open Space Element. They establish minimum guidelines for acres of parks by type per thousand residents in the City.

- Regional park – 4 acres per 1,000 residents

- Community park – 2 acres per 1,000 residents
- Neighborhood park – 2 acres per 1,000 residents
- Specialty parks* – ½ acres per 1,000 residents

** Includes athletic fields, environmental parks, aquatic facilities, and golf courses.*

Strategic Plan

The FY 2015-2017 Strategic Plan includes a Quality of Life statement applicable to the entire City, establishing a “baseline” for this Parks Master Plan:

“In partnership with the community, we are stewards of our unique environment and quality of life, and meet the economic, social, cultural, institutional and environmental needs of our citizens.”

The Strategic Plan also includes a specific section addressing the City’s Parks Master Plan. Below is the language from the Strategic Plan regarding the Parks Master Plan.

Initiative C.2d: Parks Master Plan

Champion: Parks and Recreation Department

Stakeholders: Residents, Parks Visitors, City Council, City Staff, and Friends of Wildlife

Desired Outcome: Update the Parks Master Plan to reflect current state of the parks system and provide a recommendation to City Council with a prioritized list of projects for City at buildout.

Action Steps

- Review resources available to update plan with in-house resources and initiate request for proposals for an outside services contract, if necessary. Identify fiscal resources of up to \$100,000 to complete the plan
- Complete draft of plan update
- Finalize updated plan
- Review plan with City Council and create listing of priority projects
- Finalize funding strategy to accomplish priority projects and create individual timelines for projects

South Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Plan

The City established a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to address economic and commercial development within a specific geographic area of south Cape Coral. The CRA was established pursuant to State Statutes which define the requirements for preparation and adoption of a Redevelopment Plan for CRAs. The South Cape Downtown Community Redevelopment Plan was originally prepared in 2010 and amended in December 2014. Below are key segments from the Redevelopment Plan that pertain to this Parks Master Plan.

Open Space Network

Recreational space in the CRA is limited. Currently there are two within the actual CRA boundary, but there is little connectivity between them. The plan identified the following opportunities to improve open space:

Improving Four Freedoms Park, including modifying structures to have a better orientation to the Bimini Basin waterfront; enhancing the beach area; and programming the park with water-related functions, such as canoe/kayak rentals

- Improving canal ends with small pocket parks
- Enhancing Founders Park
- Creating the ambiance of a linear park within the CRA
- Linking the system with a greenway along Miramar Street

Bicycle Network

Similar to the open space network, the South Cape lacks a connected bicycle network. The large street widths are an opportunity to create a more comprehensive network, with particular opportunities to provide bicycle connections along the following roadways:

- SE 47th Terrace (via a shared lane)
- Vincennes Boulevard
- Del Prado Boulevard/Waikiki Avenue



- Del Prado Boulevard
- Miramar Street (via a multi-purpose greenway)

When combined with streetscape improvements and a more robust system of open space, these improvements will not only add to the character of the CRA, but will also lay the foundation for a system of alternative transportation.

Resiliency

The very characteristics that have made Cape Coral an attractive place to live are the same ones that also make it vulnerable in terms of climate change. According to an analysis conducted by independent organization Climate Central, Cape Coral has a larger population at risk for sea level rise (defined as living 1 to 10 feet above the local high tide line) than larger cities Fort Lauderdale, St. Petersburg, and even Miami. According to the Lee County Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, many roads in Cape Coral could be inundated by 2100, and “By 2200, the worst-case scenario included in this analysis indicates a much greater risk of inundation from sea level rise in Lee County, with all roads to and on barrier islands, and the majority of roads in Cape Coral, Fort Myers, North Fort Myers, being affected.”

Impacts of climate change are already occurring in Florida, such as saltwater contamination of freshwater aquifers, increased flooding, and decreased effectiveness of canal systems. As Cape Coral continues to grow, resiliency and protection of the public’s safety must be at the forefront of all public investments.

Implications for the Parks Master Plan

Both the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan recognize the connection between the Cape Coral’s quality of life and a vibrant, diverse recreation and open space system.

The Comprehensive Plan promotes a system of parks and recreation facilities that meet the needs of both permanent and seasonal residents. The envisioned system would be accessible to all members of the public, and include creative and performing arts components.

The Strategic Plan outlines the direction and action steps necessary to prepare this Parks Master Plan, and specifically notes that the Parks Master Plan should include a list of prioritized projects necessary to meet the needs for the City at buildout.

The South Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Plan links specific improvements to the area’s recreation and parks systems to economic development in south Cape Coral. Recommendations include increasing access to the local waterways and canals; improvements to Four Freedoms Park; and strengthening linkages between greenways and transportation networks. The plan also outlines a strategy for creating an integrated and connected bicycle network.

2.2 Demographic Analysis

The following section analyzes population data for Cape Coral and compares it to that for Lee County and the State of Florida. Key demographics examined include:

- Population
- Age
- Race/Ethnicity
- Household Types
- Household Income
- Housing Occupancy
- Density

In each category, U.S. Census data was used for the benchmark years of 2000 and 2010 unless otherwise noted.

Population Growth

Between the years of 2000 and 2010, the population trend for Lee County (+40.3 percent) was more than twice that of the State of Florida (+17.6 percent), and Cape Coral’s population growth during the same period (+50.9 percent) was even greater than that for Lee County.

Projected population increases between the years of 2010 and 2015 are expected to be more modest, but still strong. Growth for Cape Coral during this same period is estimated to be 13.6 percent, which is almost identical to the estimate for Lee County (+13.5 percent) but significantly outpaces the State of Florida (+7.8 percent).

Figure 2.1 Population 2000–2015

	2000 Population	% Change 2000-2010	2010 Population	% Change 2010-2015	2015 Estimate*
Cape Coral	102,286	+50.9%	154,305	+13.6%	175,229
Lee County	440,888	+40.3%	618,754	+13.5%	701,982
State of Florida	15,982,378	+17.6%	18,801,310	+7.8%	20,271,272

*2015 estimates are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey

Figure 2.2 Population by Age, 2000-2010

	% of 2000 Pop.	% Change 2000-2010	% of 2010 Pop.
Cape Coral			
Ages 0-9	12.0%	-0.5%	11.5%
10-19	12.5%	+0.8%	13.3%
20-34	15.0%	+0.5%	15.5%
35-54	29.5%	-0.7%	28.8%
55-64	11.4%	+2.6%	14.0%
Ages 65+	19.6%	-2.7%	16.9%
Median Age	41.6	+0.6%	42.4
Lee County			
Ages 0-9	10.7%	0%	10.7%
10-19	10.8%	+0.4%	11.2%
20-34	14.8%	+1.1%	15.9%
35-54	25.8%	-1.2%	24.6%
55-64	12.4%	+1.7%	14.1%
Ages 65+	25.4%	-1.9%	23.5%
Median Age	45.2	+0.4%	45.6
State of Florida			
Ages 0-9	12.4%	-0.9%	11.5%
10-19	13.0%	-0.4%	12.5%
20-34	18.8%	-0.1%	18.7%
35-54	28.5%	-1.0%	27.5%
55-64	9.8%	+2.7%	12.4%
Ages 65+	17.6%	-0.2%	17.3%
Median Age	38.7	+5.2%	40.7

Age

Similar to that for Lee County and the State of Florida, none of percentages of age cohorts changed dramatically for Cape Coral between the years of 2000 and 2010. For all three geographic areas, the largest single age group was 35 to 54, with more than a quarter of the total population in this age group. The median age for Cape Coral was 42.4 years, younger than that of Lee County (45.6) but older than that of Florida (40.7). Lee County had a significantly higher percentage of its population in the age 65+ group (23.5 percent). Cape Coral's population for age 65 and older was only 16.9 percent, and Florida's population in this age group was 17.3 percent.

Race and Ethnicity

Similar to Lee County and Florida, Cape Coral's population is predominately white (88.2 percent in 2010). However, the trend in all three geographic areas is towards greater racial and ethnic diversity: the percentage of "all white" residents decreased for Cape Coral, Lee County, and the State of Florida between 2000 and 2010. This trend is consistent with Cape Coral's vision of "a vibrant, culturally diverse waterfront community."

Although small at 4.3 percent in 2010, the percentage of Black and African-American residents in Cape Coral more than doubled from 2.0 percent to 4.3 percent between 2000 and 2010. In the same period, Lee County's Black and African-American population grew from 6.6 percent to 8.3 percent and Florida's from 14.6 percent to 16.0 percent. The greatest increase for all three geographic areas was in the ethnic group of Hispanic/Latinos (any race), which grew from 8.3 percent to 19.5 percent between 2000 and 2010 for Cape Coral; from 9.5 percent to 18.3 percent for Lee County; and from 16.8 percent to 22.5 percent for Florida.

Figure 2.3 Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2000-2010

	% of 2000 Pop.	% Change 2000-2010	% of 2010 Pop.
Cape Coral			
White	93.0%	-4.8%	88.2%
Black or African American	2.0%	+2.3%	4.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.3%	-	0.3%
Asian	0.9%	+0.6%	1.5%
Other Race	2.3%	+1.1%	3.4%
Two or More Races	1.6%	+0.7%	2.3%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	8.3%	+11.2%	19.5%
Lee County			
White	87.7%	-4.7%	83.0%
Black or African American	6.6%	+1.7%	8.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.3%	+0.1%	0.4%
Asian	0.8%	+0.6%	1.4%
Other Race	3.1%	+1.9%	5.0%
Two or More Races	1.6%	+0.5%	2.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9.5%	+8.8%	18.3%
State of Florida			
White	78.0%	-3.0%	75.0%
Black or African American	14.6%	+1.4%	16.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.3%	+0.1%	0.4%
Asian	1.7%	+0.7%	2.4%
Other Race	3.0%	+0.6%	3.6%
Two or More Races	2.4%	+0.1%	2.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	16.8%	+5.7%	22.5%

Household Types

Consistent with the population growth of 50.9 percent in Cape Coral between 2000 and 2010, total households in the city also increased by 49.1 percent, compared to an increase in the total households in Lee County of 37.8 percent and in Florida of 17.1 percent during the same time period. Corresponding to the younger median age in Cape Coral than Lee County, Cape Coral had a higher percentage of households with individuals under age 18 (32.3 percent compared to 25.2 percent), and a lower percentage of households with individuals over age 65 (30.7 percent compared to 38.4 percent). Both average household size and average family size were slightly higher in Cape Coral than in Lee County.

Figure 2.4 Population by Household Types, 2000-2010

	% of 2000 Pop.	% Change 2000-2010	% of 2010 Pop.
Cape Coral			
Total Households	40,768	+49.1%	60,767
% Family Households	74.1%	-2.5%	71.6%
% Non-Family Households	25.9%	+2.5%	28.4%
% Household with Own Children Under 18 Years	29.5%	-0.5%	29.0%
% Households with Individuals Under 18 Years	32.1%	+0.2%	32.3%
% Households with Individuals Over 65 Years	32.9%	-2.2%	30.7%
Average Household Size	2.49	+0.04%	2.53
Average Family Size	2.85	+0.07%	2.92
Lee County			
Total Households	188,599	+37.8%	259,818
% Family Households	67.7%	-1.9%	65.8%
% Non-Family Households	32.3%	+1.9%	34.2%
% Household with Own Children Under 18 Years	22.4%	-0.1%	22.3%
% Households with Individuals Under 18 Years	24.8%	+0.4%	25.2%
% Households with Individuals Over 65 Years	39.6%	-1.2 %	38.4%
Average Household Size	2.31	+0.04%	2.35
Average Family Size	2.73	+0.8%	2.81
State of Florida			
Total Households	6,337,929	+17.1%	7,420,802
% Family Households	66.4%	-1.2%	65.2%
% Non-Family Households	33.6%	+1.2%	34.8%
% Household with Own Children Under 18 Years	28.1%	-1.3%	26.8%
% Households with Individuals Under 18 Years	31.3%	-1.5%	29.8%
% Households with Individuals Over 65 Years	30.7%	+0.7%	31.4%
Average Household Size	2.46	0.8%	2.48
Average Family Size	3.0	-	3.0

Household Income

The residents of Cape Coral, Lee County, and the State of Florida saw increased incomes between 2000 and 2010. The median household income increased in Cape Coral by 21.5 percent to \$52,761 in 2010. Lee County's median income increased by 24.0 percent to \$50,014 in 2010, slightly higher than for Florida as a whole (\$47,661). In general, the percent of the population making less than \$74,999 decreased for both Cape Coral and Lee County, while, Cape Coral's percentage of residents making more than \$200,000 in 2010 increased from 1.4 percent to 2.0 percent between 2000 and 2010. This was less than half of the percentage that Lee County had (2.8 percent to 4.1 percent) and was lower than that for the State of Florida (2.3 to 3.6 percent).

Figure 2.5 Household Income, 2000–2010

	% of 2000 Pop.	% Change 2000–2010	% of 2010 Pop.
Cape Coral			
Median Income	\$43,410	+21.5%	\$52,761
Less than \$10,000	5.5%	-1.2%	4.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.1%	-1.4%	3.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12.0%	-1.5%	10.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	15.0%	-3.2%	11.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	20.3%	-3.6%	16.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	24.8%	-2.0%	22.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	9.2%	+5.0%	14.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5.3%	+6.4%	11.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.6%	+0.8%	2.4%
\$200,000 or more	1.4%	+0.6%	2.0%
Lee County			
Median Income	\$40,319	+24.0%	\$50,014
Less than \$10,000	7.3%	-1.5%	5.8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.1%	-1.1%	5.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14.2%	-3.3%	10.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	15.0%	-3.2%	11.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	19.1%	-2.6%	16.5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.5%	+0.4%	19.9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8.2%	+4.0%	12.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6.0%	+4.7%	10.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.8%	+1.3%	3.1%
\$200,000 or more	2.8%	+1.3%	4.1%
State of Florida			
Median Income	\$38,819	+18.6%	\$47,661
Less than \$10,000	9.6%	-2.3%	7.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.7%	-1.1%	5.6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	14.5%	-2.7%	11.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	14.2%	-2.4%	11.8%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	17.4%	-1.8%	15.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.5%	+0.4%	18.9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8.7%	+2.8%	11.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6.3%	+4.2%	10.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.8%	+1.6%	3.4%
\$200,000 or more	2.3%	+1.3%	3.6%

Housing Occupancy

Between 2000 and 2010 the number of housing units in Cape Coral grew by 72.9 percent, surpassing the growth in housing units for Lee County (51.2 percent) and for the State of Florida (23.1 percent). In 2010, the number of vacant housing units in Cape Coral accounted for 23.0 percent of the total, which was double the percentage of vacant units in 2000, but still lower than the 30.0 percent of vacant units that were in Lee County in 2010. The most significant variance between Cape Coral and Lee County was in the percentage of housing units designated for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use; in Cape Coral in 2010, this percentage accounted for only 8.5 percent of the total, while in Lee County this percentage was more than half (55.8 percent) of the units.

Figure 2.6 Housing Occupancy, 2000–2010

	% of 2000 Pop.	% Change 2000-2010	% of 2010 Pop.
Cape Coral			
Total Housing Units	45,653	+72.9%	78,948
% Housing Units Occupied	89.3%	-13.8%	77.0%
% Housing Units Vacant	10.7%	+115.0%	23.0%
% For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	6.2%	+37.1%	8.5%
% Units Owner-Occupied	80.0%	-7.5%	72.5%
% Units Renter-Occupied	20.0%	+7.5%	27.5%
Lee County			
Total Housing Units	245,405	+51.2%	371,099
% Housing Units Occupied	76.9%	-9.0%	70.0%
% Housing Units Vacant	23.1%	+29.9%	30.0%
% For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	69.5%	-19.7%	55.8%
% Units Owner-Occupied	76.5%	-7.2%	71.0%
% Units Renter-Occupied	23.5%	+23.4%	29.0%
State of Florida			
Total Housing Units	7,302,947	+23.1%	8,989,580
% Housing Units Occupied	86.8%	-4.3%	82.5%
% Housing Units Vacant	13.2%	+4.3%	17.5%
% For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	6.6%	+0.7%	7.3%
% Units Owner-Occupied	70.1%	-2.7%	67.4%
% Units Renter-Occupied	29.9%	+2.7%	32.6%

Density

Considering the recent growth experienced by Cape Coral, population density has become an important characteristic to monitor. In 2010, Cape Coral's population density was considerably greater than Lee County's and more than three times that of Florida. Similarly, housing density in Cape Coral surpassed both Lee County and the State.

Tapestry Segments

An alternative approach to understanding a community's demographics is to use Tapestry segmentation. Tapestry segmentation is an integrated look at an area's population based on over sixty socio-economic data points. The data points are aggregated into 65 segments that represent typical lifestyles and spending habits. At a national scale, each segment represents approximately 2 to 3 percent of the population.

A total of 55.5 percent of Cape Coral's population falls into one of these five categories.

People who are part of "The Great Outdoors" typically are older couples with active lifestyles, and are similar to "Midlife Constants" but slightly more affluent. These groups usually own single-family homes with substantial yards, and are likely have more general recreation needs such as access to community parks and trails. Members of the "Great Outdoors" may also have a greater desire for nature-based recreation such as hiking and boating.

"American Dreamers" are younger families from a diversity of backgrounds, many of whom are foreign-born and/or of Hispanic origin. This group is similar to "Up & Coming" families, who are also young families but are slightly less diverse and more affluent. Both of these groups typically have needs for youth sports programming, playgrounds, rectangle fields, diamond fields, and picnic areas/community centers that can host family gatherings.

The fifth segment, "Rustbelt Traditions," is more mixed, with a variety of married couples and single adults living in older developments of single-family homes. Free time in this segment is typically spent at home with family, and recreation needs are modest.

Figure 2.7 Population Density 2010

	Area (Sq. Miles)	2010 Density (Pop./Sq. Mile)	2010 Total Housing Units/Sq. Mile
Cape Coral	134.0	1,254.2	662.5
Lee County	764.5	788.7	473.0
State of Florida	53,624.76	350.6	167.6

Figure 2.8 Tapestry Segments

Segment Name	Percent of City	Median Age	Median Household Income
The Great Outdoors	13.4%	46.3	\$53,000
American Dreamers	12.0%	31.8	\$48,000
Up & Coming Families	10.1%	30.7	\$64,000
Midlife Constants	10.1%	45.9	\$48,000
Rustbelt Traditions	9.9%	38.4	\$49,000

Implications for the Parks Master Plan

Demographics for the City of Cape Coral are defined by growth, youth and density. The combination of weather, water and affordability have resulted in “meteoric growth” from the year 2000 population of 102,286 to an estimated 175,229 in the year 2015, or 71.3 percent rate of growth. If this growth continues, the City may need to focus on ensuring that ample and appropriate facilities, activities, and programs are provided to meet the growing needs and desires of new residents—while maintaining the quality of services that existing residents are accustomed to. This suggests that the City has a need to expand access to park land, facilities, and programs.

The median age for Cape Coral in 2010 was 42.4 years, a 0.6 percent increase from the year 2000 median age of 41.6. This median age is younger than that for Lee County (45.6) but older than that for Florida (40.7). Corresponding to the younger median age in Cape Coral than Lee County, Cape Coral had a higher percentage of households with individuals under age 18 (32.3 percent compared to 25.2 percent), and a lower percentage of households with individuals over age 65 (30.7 percent compared to 38.4 percent). This suggests that the City will need to continue to provide a variety of parks and recreation programs and activities for residents of all ages, with special attention given to adult and youth programs.

In 2010, Cape Coral’s population density was considerably greater than Lee County’s and more than three times that of Florida. Similarly, housing density in Cape Coral surpassed both Lee County and the State. As the City continues to grow and density increases, the City will be challenged to increase the amount of park land, facilities, and programs with increasingly less land available for acquisition.

The Tapestry segments support findings of a diverse population of households ranging from young families from different ethnic backgrounds to active, affluent adults. This diversity suggests that Cape Coral will need to continue to provide a variety of recreational facilities and programs.

2.3 Inventory

The City of Cape Coral owns and operates 43 parks and recreation facilities totaling approximately 829 acres. These parks and recreation facilities are organized into four classifications: regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, and specialty parks. Specialty parks include athletic facilities, attractions, boat ramps, and golf courses. Following are descriptions of these park classifications as described by the 2013 Florida Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the 2010 City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the City of Cape Coral Comprehensive Plan.

Regional Parks

The Florida SCORP defines a regional park as a park that is designed to serve two or more communities. The 2010 City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Master Plan describes a regional park as a large resource-based park of 200 acres or greater. The identified recreation uses are primarily passive and includes activities such as water-based recreation, camping, fishing, trails, nature study and education, gardens, and play areas. The location of a regional park is dependent on the availability of high quality natural resources capable of being responsibly developed and used for outdoor recreation.

The City of Cape Coral contains one regional park, Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve, totaling 365 acres.

Community Parks

The Florida SCORP defines a community park as a park located near major roadways and designed to serve the needs of more than one neighborhood. The 2010 City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Comprehensive Plan further note that a community park should contain a variety of active recreational uses such as community centers, ball fields, tennis courts, racquetball courts, picnicking, trails, boat ramps, beaches, boardwalks, fishing and swim areas, and is often a gathering place for area residents.

The City of Cape Coral contains two community parks totaling 59 acres: Lake Kennedy Community Park and Yacht Club Community Park. These

community parks contain six of the City’s nine indoor recreation facilities. These nine facilities provide City residents with approximately 88,302 square feet of indoor recreation and cultural space. They include two senior centers, one youth center, an arts studio, a gymnasium, and six indoor facilities that offer indoor recreation and meeting space.

Neighborhood Parks

The Florida SCORP defines a neighborhood park as a park that serves the population of a neighborhood and is generally accessible by bicycle or pedestrian walkways. The 2010 City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Master Plan describes a neighborhood park as a park that is typically less than 5 acres in size. It suggests that locating a neighborhood park adjacent to an elementary school is desirable because they serve the same population, share compatible land uses, and contain recreation facilities that are of mutual benefit. Facilities in neighborhood parks are typically limited and usually include playgrounds, open play areas, picnic areas, and outdoor courts. The City of Cape Coral’s Comprehensive Plan further notes that these parks should include restrooms and other features as identified by the surrounding neighborhood.

The City of Cape Coral contains 10 neighborhood parks totaling 59.65 acres.

Specialty Parks

Specialty parks typically describe parks that do not fit into any one category or provide a single-purpose use. The City of Cape Coral’s specialty parks include athletic facilities, boat ramps, cultural facilities, and environmental parks. Specialty parks comprise 74 percent of the City’s park land.

The City of Cape Coral contains 23 specialty parks totaling approximately 346 acres. Unique facilities include a BMX bicycle course and a park for flying model planes.

Within the City’s 43 parks, there are a variety of recreation facilities. Figure 1.9 contains an inventory of the City’s Parks and Recreation Facilities listed alphabetically by park name.

Implications for the Parks Master Plan

While the City of Cape Coral was not originally envisioned as the dynamic, multi-generational city it has become today, it has a traditional park system structure based on the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) classification system established in the mid-20th century. This structure is typical of suburban communities all across the country. Although Cape Coral follows this typology, it has a uniquely high amount of parks and acreage identified as specialty parks. Because of the sprawling nature of the city and the relatively limited amount of neighborhood and community parks, these specialty parks may be forced to provide additional amenities to ensure that residents throughout Cape Coral have equitable access to everyday parks and recreation facilities, activities, and programs.



William “Bill” Austen Youth Center

Figure 2.9 City of Cape Coral Parks Inventory Map

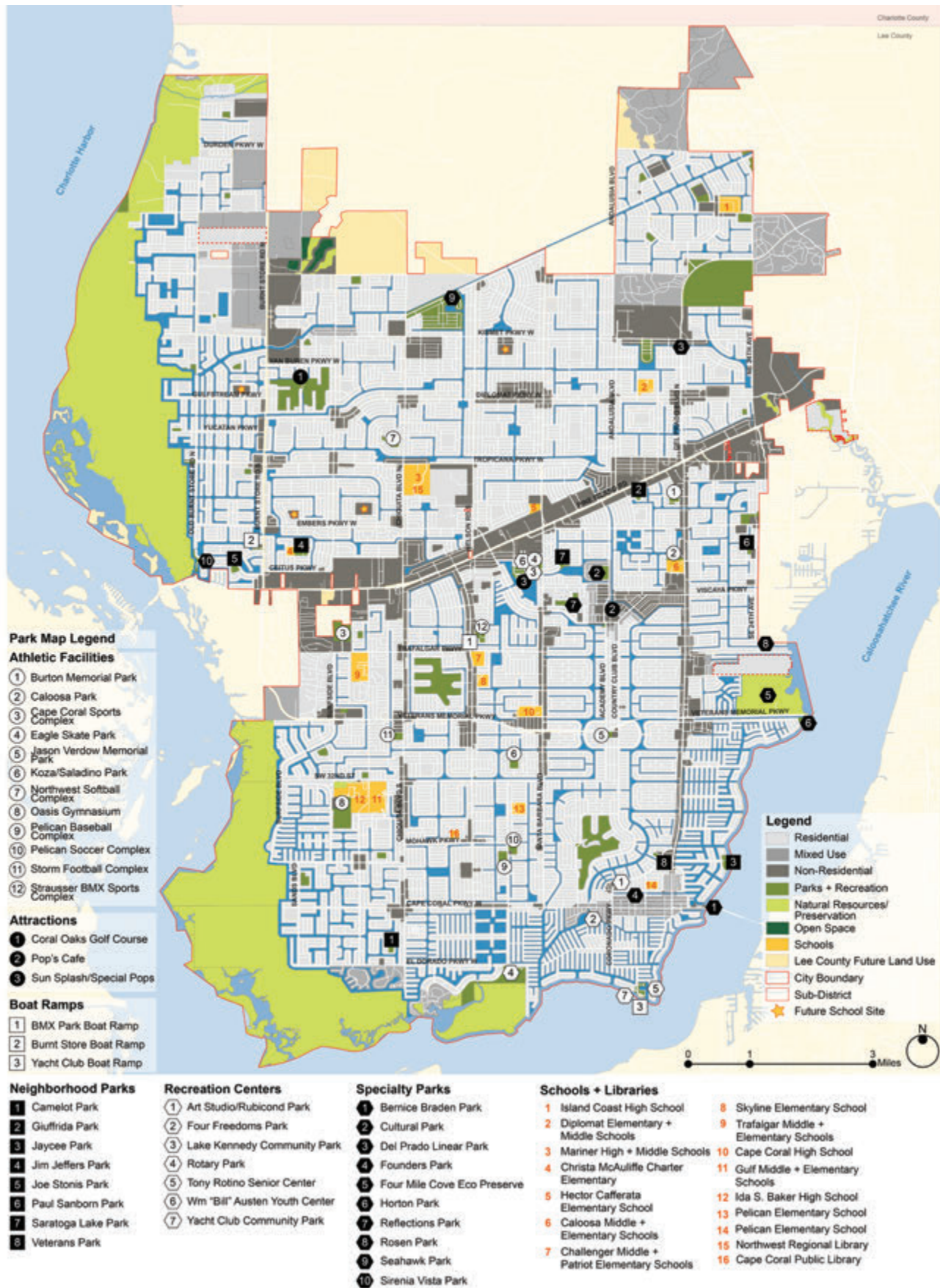


Figure 2.9 Park Inventory

Park name	Acres	Recreation center square footage	Park type	Restrooms	Parking lot	Vending/ concession stand	Green space	Picnic tables	Outdoor grills	Pavilion/Gazebo/ Shelter	Playground	Walking trails/ Fitness stations	Basketball court	Tennis court	Racquetball court	Volleyball court	Skate park	Shuffleboard court	Boat ramp	Baseball fields	Soccer fields	Football fields	Multi-purpose playing fields	Canoe and kayak launch	Softball fields	Swimming area	Bocce courts	Horseshoe pits	Batting Cages
Arboricultural Park Nursery	5.10		Specialty Parks	1	1		1																						
Art Studio/Admin Bldg (Com.ctr)	2.20	13,641	Recreation Centers	1	1																								
Bernice Braden	9.80		Specialty Parks		1		1	1																					
Burnt Store Boat Ramp	4.50		Boat Ramps	1	1		1	5		1									1										
Burton Memorial Park	8.50		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		11		1			1	1											4				1
Caloosa Park	15.00		Athletic Fields	2	1	1					1											3							
Camelot Park	6.40		Neighborhood Parks	1	1		1	11	2	2	1	1		2														1	
Cape Coral Sports Complex	52.00		Athletic Fields	2	1	2		36		2	1									4	5				5				
Coral Oaks Golf Course	-		Attractions																										
Cultural Park	16.00		Specialty Parks		1		1																						
Del Prado Linear Park	1.00		Specialty Parks				1					5																	
Founders Park	0.75		Specialty Parks				1	2				1																	
Four Freedoms Park	3.20	5,790	Neighborhood Parks	1	1		1	24		1	3																		
Four Mile Cove Eco. Preserve	365.00		Regional Park	1	1		1	12	1	2		1													2				
Giuffrida Park	3.70		Neighborhood Parks	1			1	10	4	2	1		2																
Horton Park	5.00		Specialty Parks	1	1		1	3				1							1										
Jason Verdow Park	5.50		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		14	1	1	1									3									1
Jaycee Park	8.00		Neighborhood Parks	2	1		1	41	6	3	3	1																	
Jim Jeffers Park	18.50		Neighborhood Parks	1	1	1		12	3	3	1	1	1	2						4					1				
Joe Stonis Park	7.40		Neighborhood Parks	1	1		1	12	3	2	1	1						2											
Koza/Saladino Park	11.00		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		4		1	1									4									2

Figure 2.9 Park Inventory, continued

Park name	Acres	Recreation center square footage	Park type	Restrooms	Parking lot	Vending/concession stand	Green space	Picnic tables	Outdoor grills	Pavilion/Gazebo/Shelter	Playground	Walking trails/Fitness stations	Basketball court	Tennis court	Racquetball court	Volleyball court	Skate park	Shuffleboard court	Boat ramp	Baseball fields	Soccer fields	Football fields	Multi-purpose playing fields	Canoe and kayak launch	Softball fields	Swimming area	Bocce courts	Horseshoe pits	Batting Cages
Lake Kennedy Park	46.00		Community Parks		1		1	6		1	1																		
- Eagle Skate Park		1,400															1												
- Lake Kennedy Senior Center		9,490																											
- Sun Splash/Special Pops		7,844																											
- Wm "Bill" Austen Youth Center		10,319																											
Northwest Softball Complex	15.00		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		10		1															5				
Oasis Gymnasium		14,904																											
Paul Sanborn Park	3.00		Neighborhood Parks	1	1		1	8	2	1	2	1	2															2	
Pelican Baseball	16.20		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		6												4								1	
Pelican Soccer	14.30		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		3			2										4								
Reflections Park	0.25		Neighborhood Parks		1		1	3																					
Rosen Park	14.40		Specialty Parks	1	1		1	6	3	3									2										
Rotary Park	97.00	2,713	Recreation Centers	2	1		1	8	3	3	1	1																	
Saratoga Lake Park	5.00		Neighborhood Parks	1	1		1	10	2	1	1	1	2															7	
Seahawk Park	14.30		Specialty Parks		1			2																					
Sirenia Vista Park	8.40		Specialty Parks		1		1	6				1												1					
Storm Football Complex	10.00		Athletic Fields	1	1	1		14		1	1											3							
Strausser BMX Sports Complex	20.00		Athletic Fields	2	1			13	1	1	1								1						3				
Veterans Park	4.20		Neighborhood Parks	1	1		1	8	1	1	1																6		
Yacht Club Community Park	13.00	14,925	Community Parks	2	1		1	46	4	1	1			5	2				2							1			
- Tony Rolino Senior Center		7,276																											
TOTAL	829.60	88,302		33	32	11	22	347	36	35	24	17	8	10	2	0	1	2	7	15	13	6	0	3	18	1	6	10	5

2.4 Existing Level of Service Analysis

There is no industry standard or regulation regarding how a community should establish LOS for parks and recreation services. Both the NRPA and the Florida SCORP have discontinued the use of traditional population-based LOS standards such as acres and facilities per 1,000 residents.

Instead, cities are encouraged to conduct community-wide needs assessments and benchmark themselves against other similar communities in order to establish their own LOS standards. NRPA has developed its benchmarking website PRORAGIS, and SCORP publishes regional LOS averages around the state to assist local communities in establishing their LOS.

For the City of Cape Coral, four different LOS methods were used to determine how well the City's parks and recreation system is meeting residents' needs:

- **Acreage LOS:** Measures the quantity of parkland acreage that is available per 1,000 residents
- **Indoor Recreation Facility Square Footage LOS:** Measures the quantity of indoor recreation center square footage per capita
- **Facilities LOS:** Measures the number of residents that have access to a single recreation facility such as a soccer field, baseball field, pool, etc.
- **Access LOS:** Illustrates where in the city residents have access to a park or recreation facility within a given distance from their home

Acreage Level of Service

The City's Comprehensive Plan establishes a total LOS target of 8.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This target LOS is spread across the four park classifications that the City uses. Figure 2.10 illustrates these targets per park classification.

Based on the City's 2015 population estimates, Figure 2.11 on the following page suggest that the City needs an additional 660 acres to meet the City's established LOS standard of 8.5 acres per 1,000 population. It would also need 336 acres of regional park land, 291 acres of community park land, and 291 acres of neighborhood park land. Once the City reaches its buildout population of 400,000, the City will need 2,570 acres: 1,235 acres of regional Park land, 741 acres of community park land, and 741 acres of neighborhood park land. The City appears to have a surplus of specialty park land, which will continue through the City's build-out.

Figure 2.10 Cape Coral LOS Targets

Park Classification	Acres per Service Population
All Parks	8.5 acres per 1,000 population
Regional park	4 acres per 1,000 population
Community park	2 acres per 1,000 population
Neighborhood park	2 acres per 1,000 population
Specialty parks*	0.50 acres per 1,000 population

* Includes athletic fields, environmental parks, aquatic facilities, and golf courses

Figure 2.11 Cape Coral Acreage LOS Analysis

		2015 population estimate 175,229			City buildout population 400,000	
Park acreage calculation	City of Cape Coral Comprehensive Plan Acreage LOS Target	Acreage	2015 target acreage	Acreage need / surplus	City buildout target acreage	Acreage need / surplus
Total park acreage	8.50	829.60	1,489.45	(660)	3,400.00	(2,570)
Regional park	4.0	365.00	700.92	(336)	1,600.00	(1,235)
Community park	2.0	59.00	350.46	(291)	800.00	(741)
Neighborhood park	2.0	59.65	350.46	(291)	800.00	(740)
Specialty park	0.5	345.95	87.61	258	200.00	146

Indoor Recreation Facility Level of Service

Indoor recreation center space is equally important as total park acreage, especially considering Florida's hot summer months and inclement weather. Industry benchmarks suggest that agencies should provide 1.5 square feet of indoor recreation center space per capita. Figure 2.12 compares the City's existing indoor recreation center square footage to this target. Based on the City's 2015 population estimates, Figure 2.12 suggests that the City needs an additional 174,542 square feet of indoor recreation center space to meet the industry benchmark. Once the City reaches its buildout population, it would need 511,698 square feet of indoor recreation center space than it currently has.

Figure 2.12 Cape Coral Acreage LOS Analysis

	Industry benchmark (square feet per capita)	City of Cape Coral recreation center square footage	2015 benchmark target	Square footage need /surplus	City buildout benchmark target	Square footage need /surplus
City of Cape Coral indoor recreation center space	1.5	88,302	262,844	(174,542)	600,000	(511,698)

Facilities Level of Service

Each community must establish its own standards for Facilities LOS, expressed as the number of facilities required to serve the population. The City of Cape Coral's Comprehensive Plan contains target facilities LOS for twenty different recreation facilities. Figure 2.13 lists these targets and uses 2014 and city buildout population estimates to determine needs and surpluses. Based on the City's existing facilities LOS targets and 2015 population estimates, it appears that the City is deficient in most recreation facilities except BMX bicycle courses, bocce courts, exercise courses, picnic tables, and playgrounds. Once the City reaches its buildout population, the City will be deficient in all the listed recreation facilities except BMX bicycle courses and exercise courses.

Figure 2.13 Cape Coral Facilities LOS Analysis

Recreation facility type	City of Cape Coral Comprehensive Plan Facilities LOS Target (1 per x persons)	Number of Cape Coral facilities	2015 population estimate 175,229		City buildout population 400,000	
			2015 target facilities	Facilities need /surplus	City buildout target facilities	Facilities need / surplus
Basketball goals	2,500	16	70	(54)	160	(144)
BMX bicycle course	400,000	1	0	1	1	0
Boat ramp lanes	10,000	7	18	(11)	40	(33)
Bocce courts	30,000	6	6	0	13	(7)
Diamond field sports	4,000	33	44	(11)	100	(67)
Exercise course	50,000	17	4	13	8	9
Golf course	100,000	1	2	(1)	4	(3)
Gridiron - soccer	10,000	13	18	(5)	40	(27)
Gridiron - football	20,000	6	9	(3)	20	(14)
Horseshoe pits	15,000	10	12	(2)	27	(17)
Picnic tables	725	347	242	105	552	(205)
Playgrounds	10,000	24	18	6	40	(16)
Racquetball courts	25,000	2	7	(5)	16	(14)
Senior center	50,000	2	4	(2)	8	(6)
Shuffleboard courts	25,000	2	7	(5)	16	(14)
Swimming pools	50,000	1	4	(3)	8	(7)
Tennis courts	7,500	10	23	(13)	53	(43)
Volleyball courts	25,000	-	7	(7)	16	(16)
Nature trails (miles)	50,000	-	4	(3)	8	(8)
Bicycle/Jogging paths (miles)	0.56 miles per 1,000	17	98	(81)	224	(207)

Access Level of Service

Similar to other LOS metrics, each community must determine its own standards. Access LOS may be determined based on recreational lifestyles, land use patterns, transportation networks, population densities, and/or other variables.

While the City of Cape Coral's Comprehensive Plan does not specify any access LOS standards, the 2010 Parks and Recreation Master Plan used a 1-mile access LOS for neighborhood parks and a 3-mile access LOS for community parks. Informed by these standards and industry best practices, the following access LOS analysis parameters were established to conduct an access LOS analysis of the City's park system:

- All parks 1 mile, 2 miles, and 3 miles
- Neighborhood parks 1 mile, 2 miles
- Community parks 3 miles, 5 miles
- Recreation centers 3 miles, 5 miles
- Athletic facilities 3 miles, 5 miles
- Playgrounds 1 mile, 2 miles

Figures 2.14 – 2.26 show where the gaps are in the community based on the above noted access LOS analysis. The results vary significantly by the different distances. For example, using a traditional access LOS parameter of 1 mile to reach a park does not provide equitable access of park land for City residents. Using an access LOS parameter of 2 or 3 miles does achieve equitable access. Using 5 miles access LOS parameters for athletic fields also achieves equitable access to parks. The rest of the access LOS parameters used suggest that the City lacks equitable access to neighborhood parks, community parks, recreation centers, and playgrounds.



Jim Jeffers Park

Figure 2.14 Access LOS - All City Parks, 1 Mile

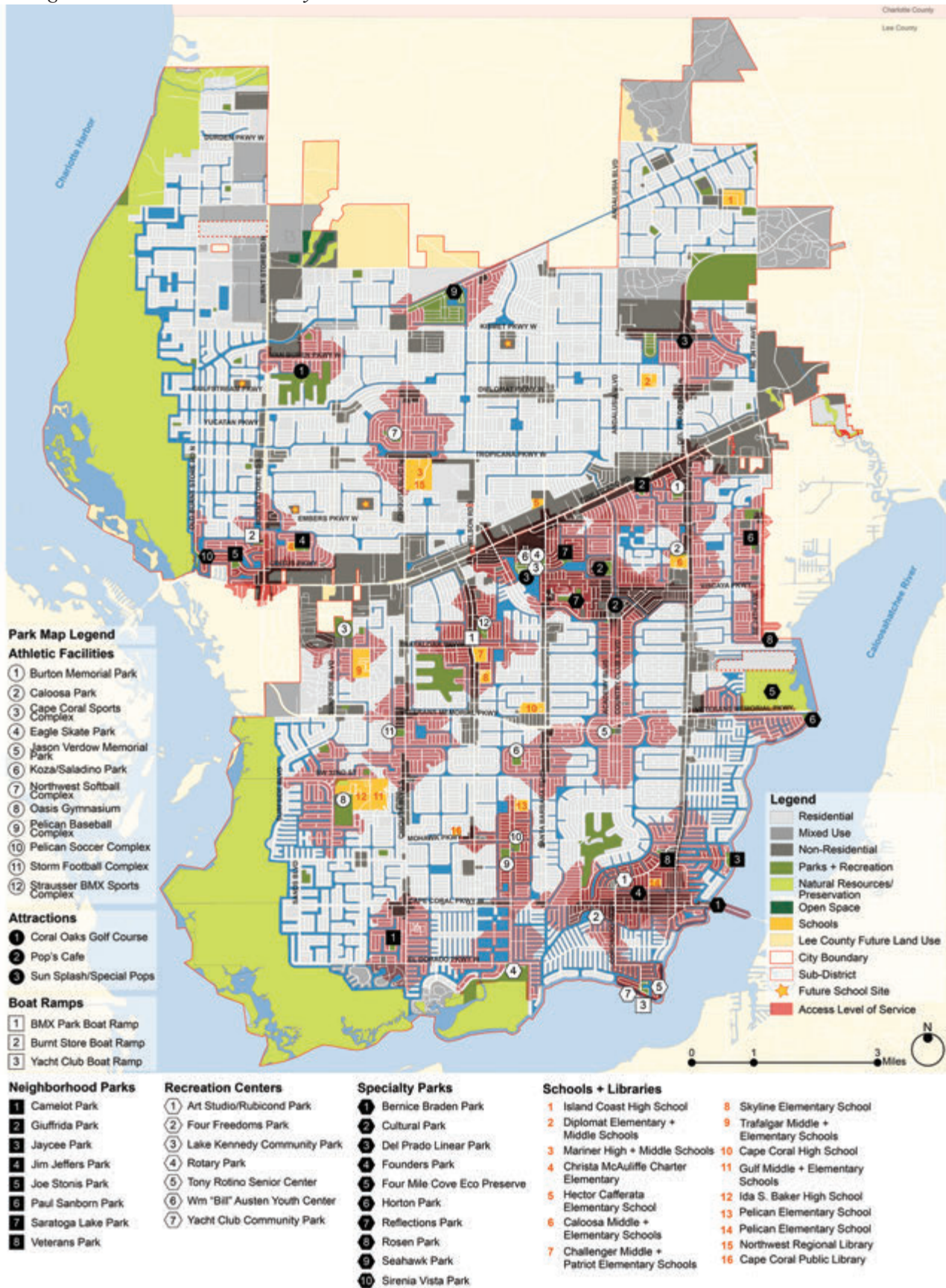


Figure 2.15 Access LOS - All City Parks, 2 Miles

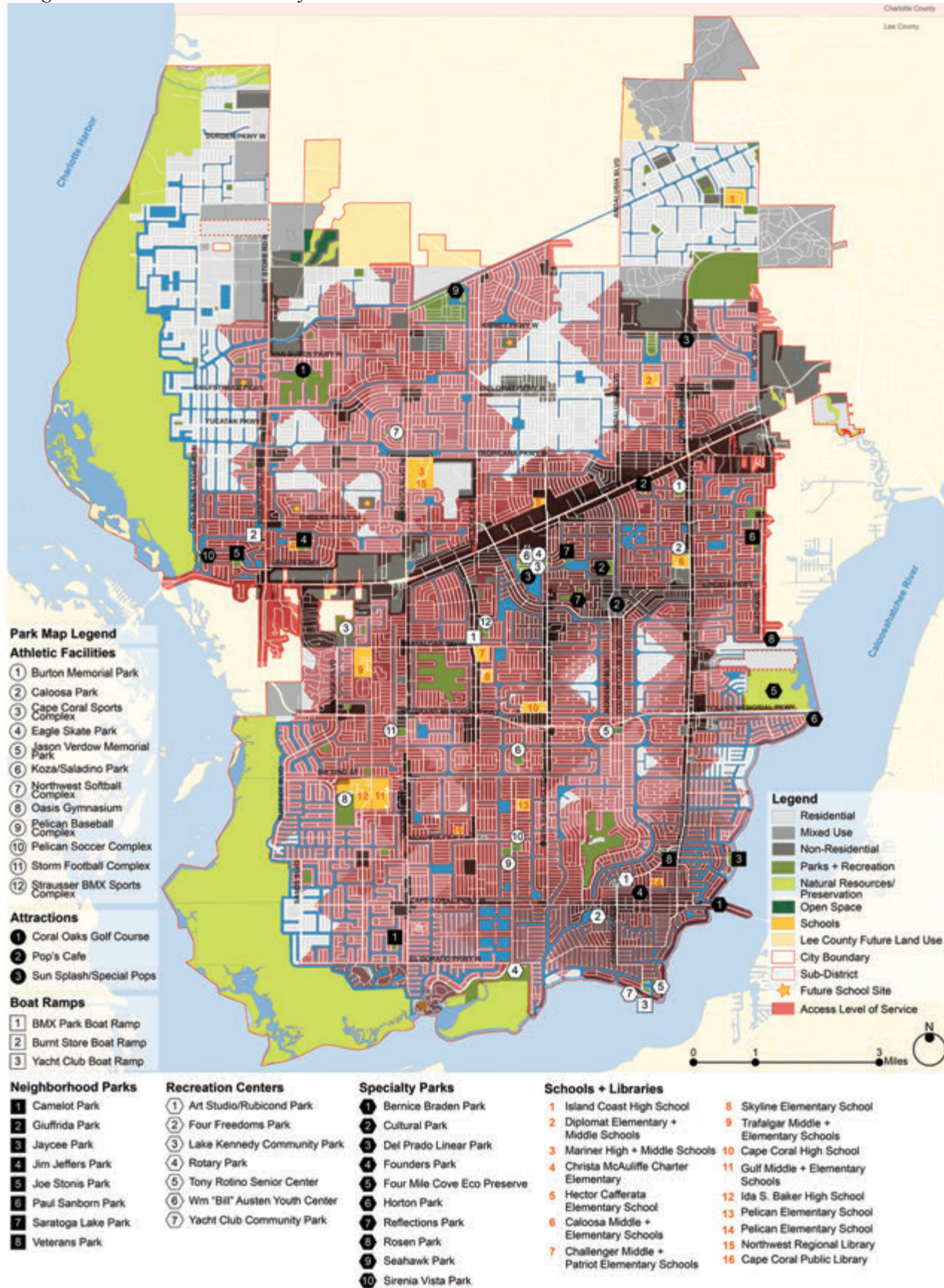


Figure 2.16 Access LOS - All City Parks, 3 Miles

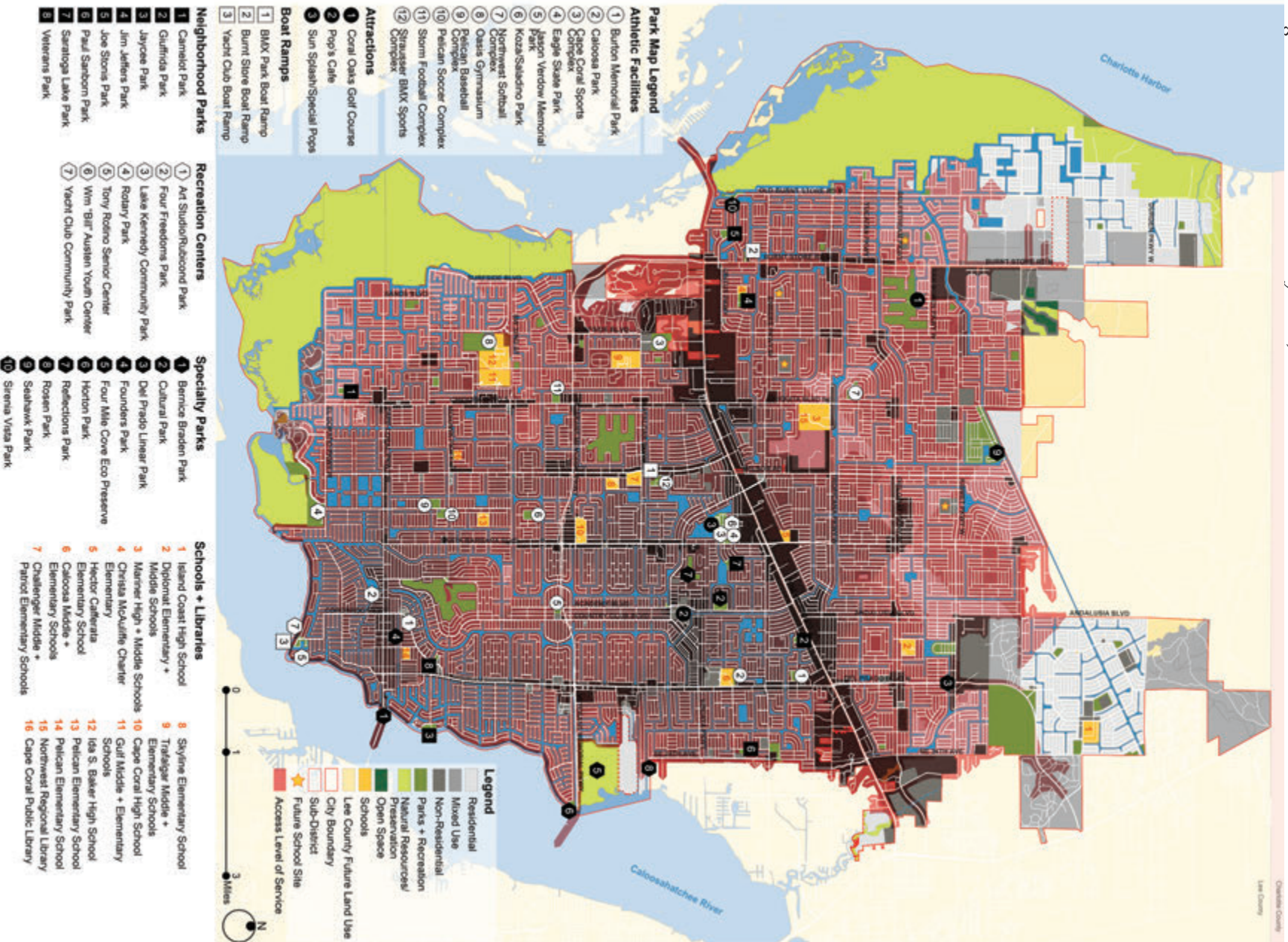


Figure 2.17 Access LOS - Neighborhood Parks, 1 Mile

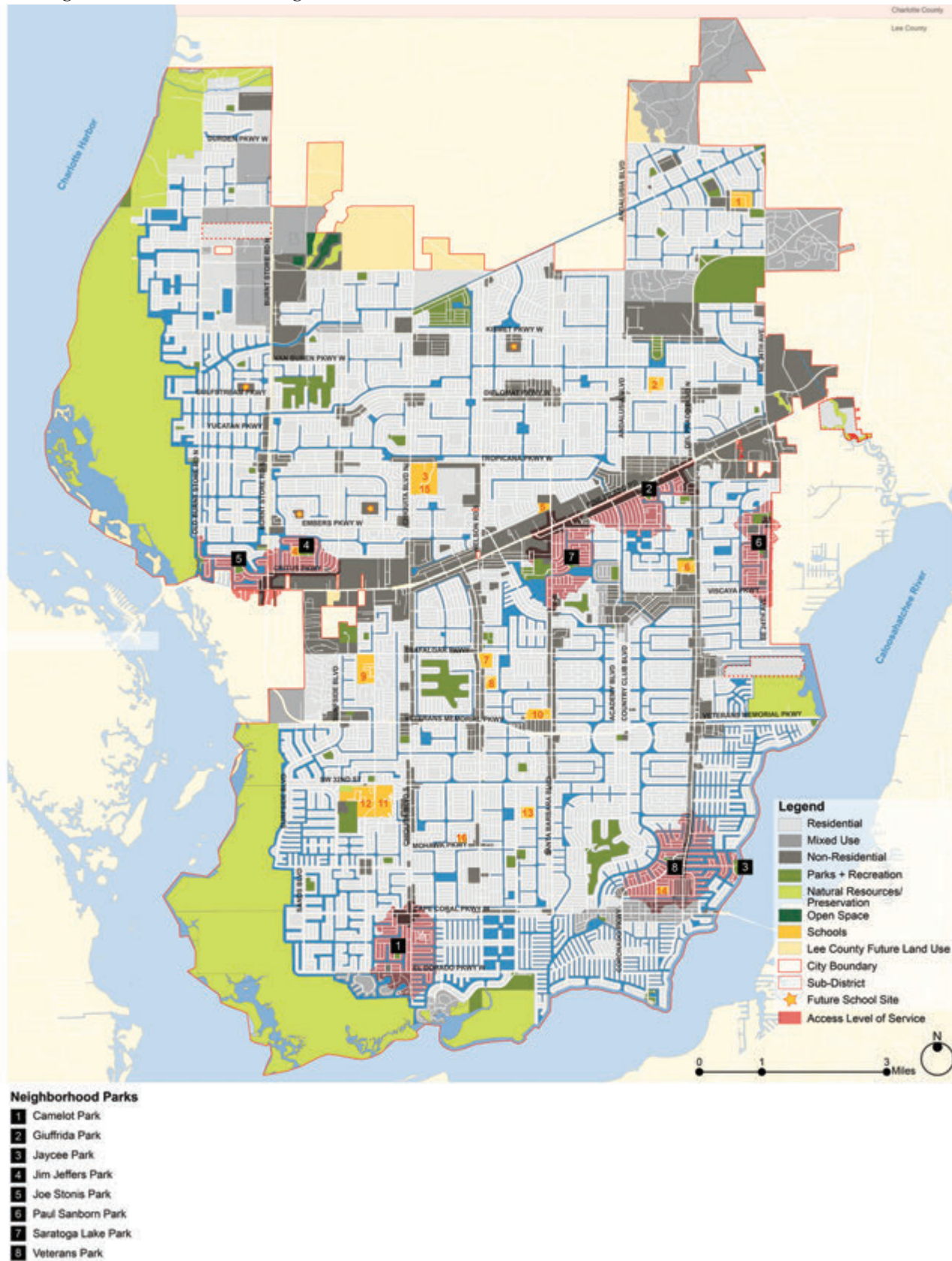


Figure 2.18 Access LOS - Neighborhood Parks, 2 Miles

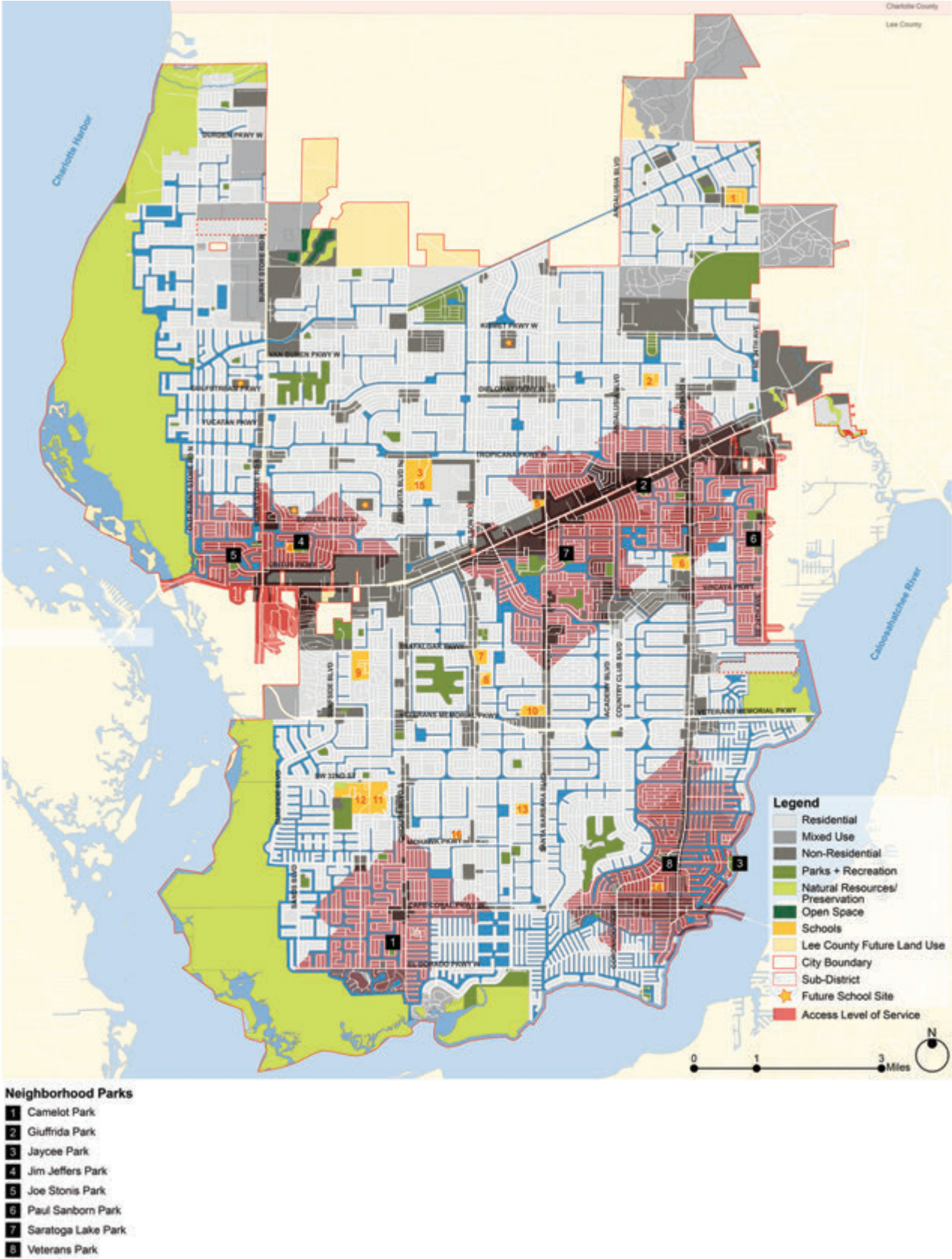


Figure 2.19 Access LOS - Community Parks, 3 Miles

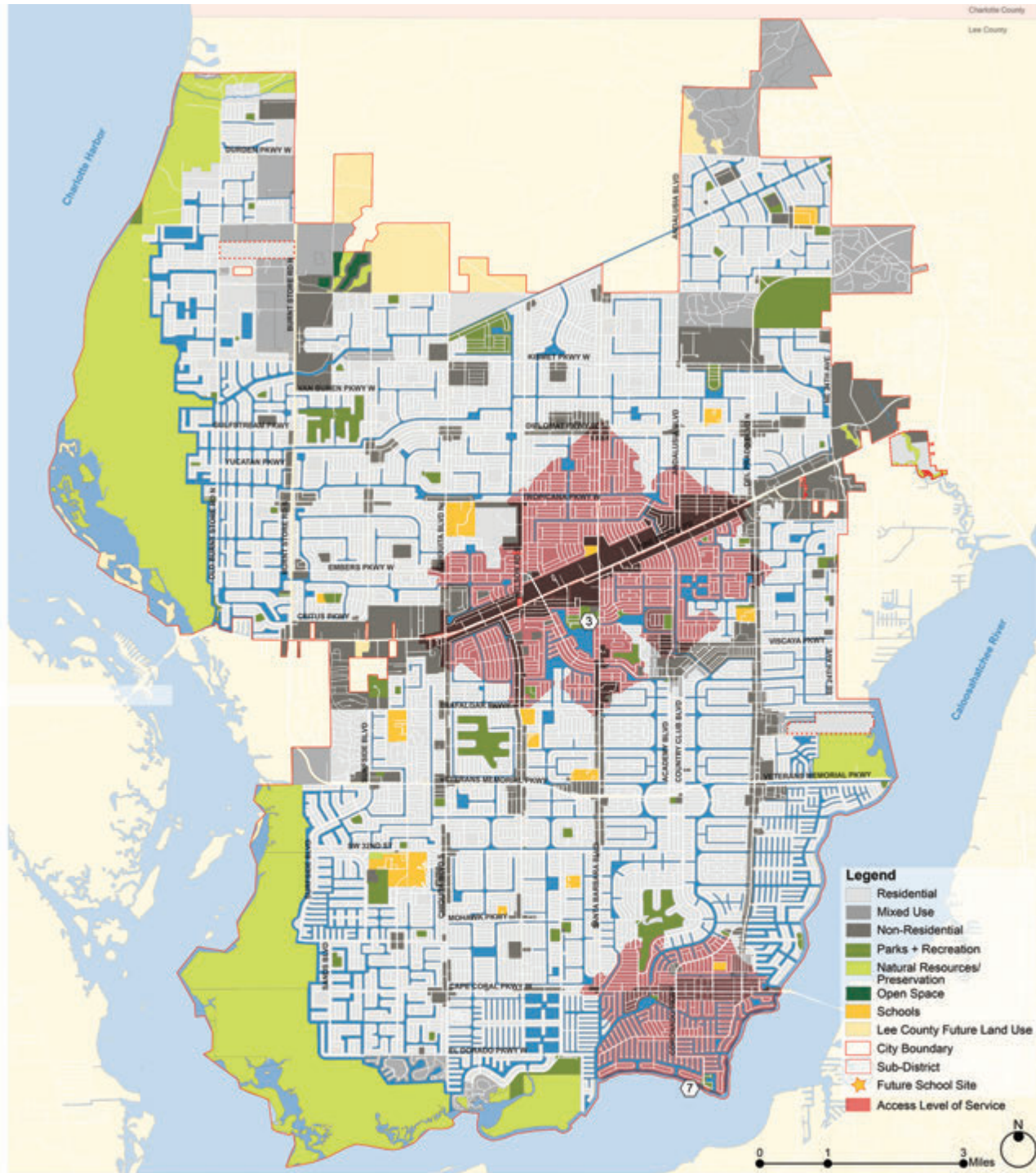
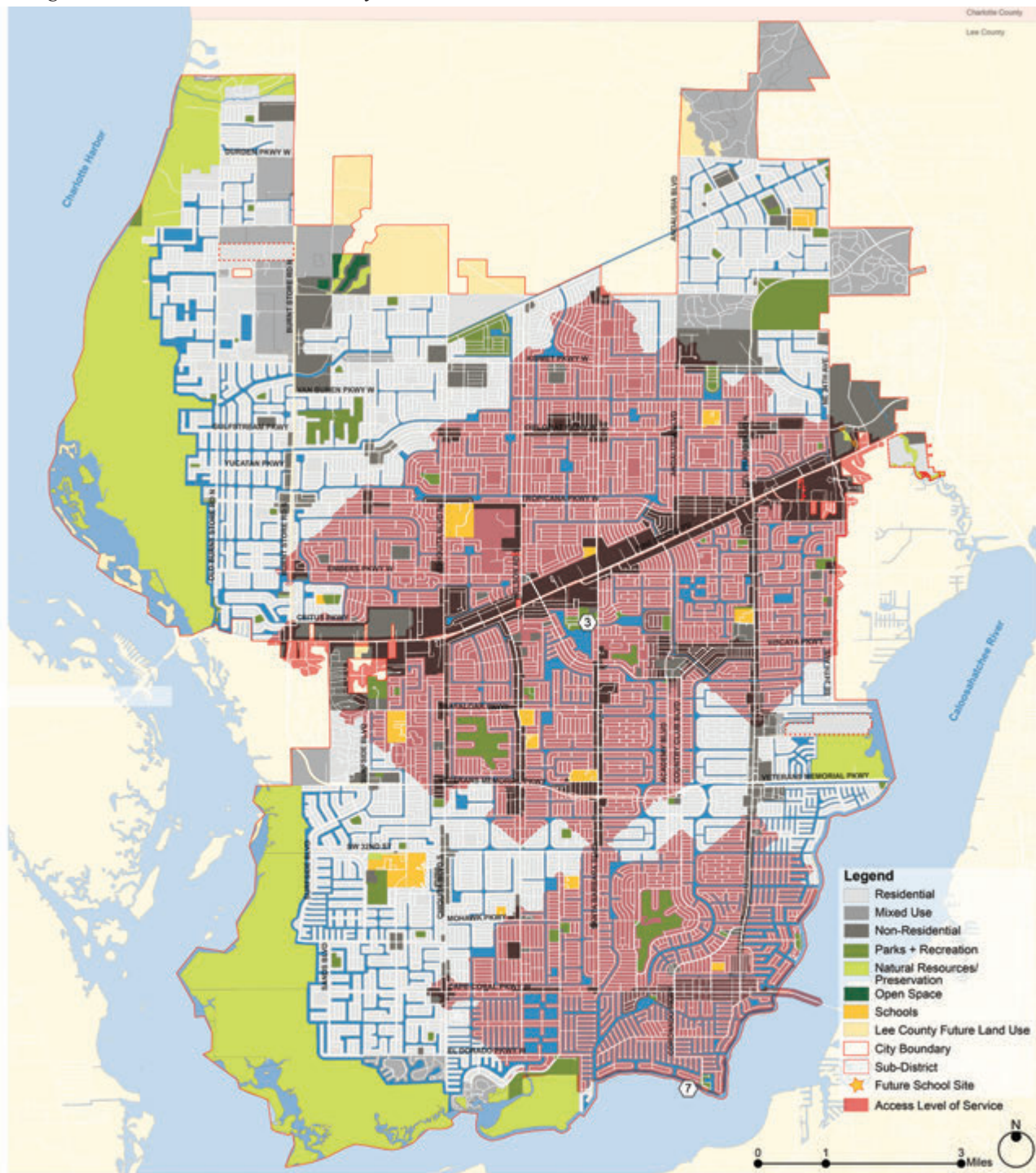


Figure 2.20 Access LOS - Community Parks, 5 Miles



Recreation Centers

③ Lake Kennedy Community Park

⑦ Yacht Club Community Park

Figure 2.21 Access LOS - Recreation Centers, 3 Miles

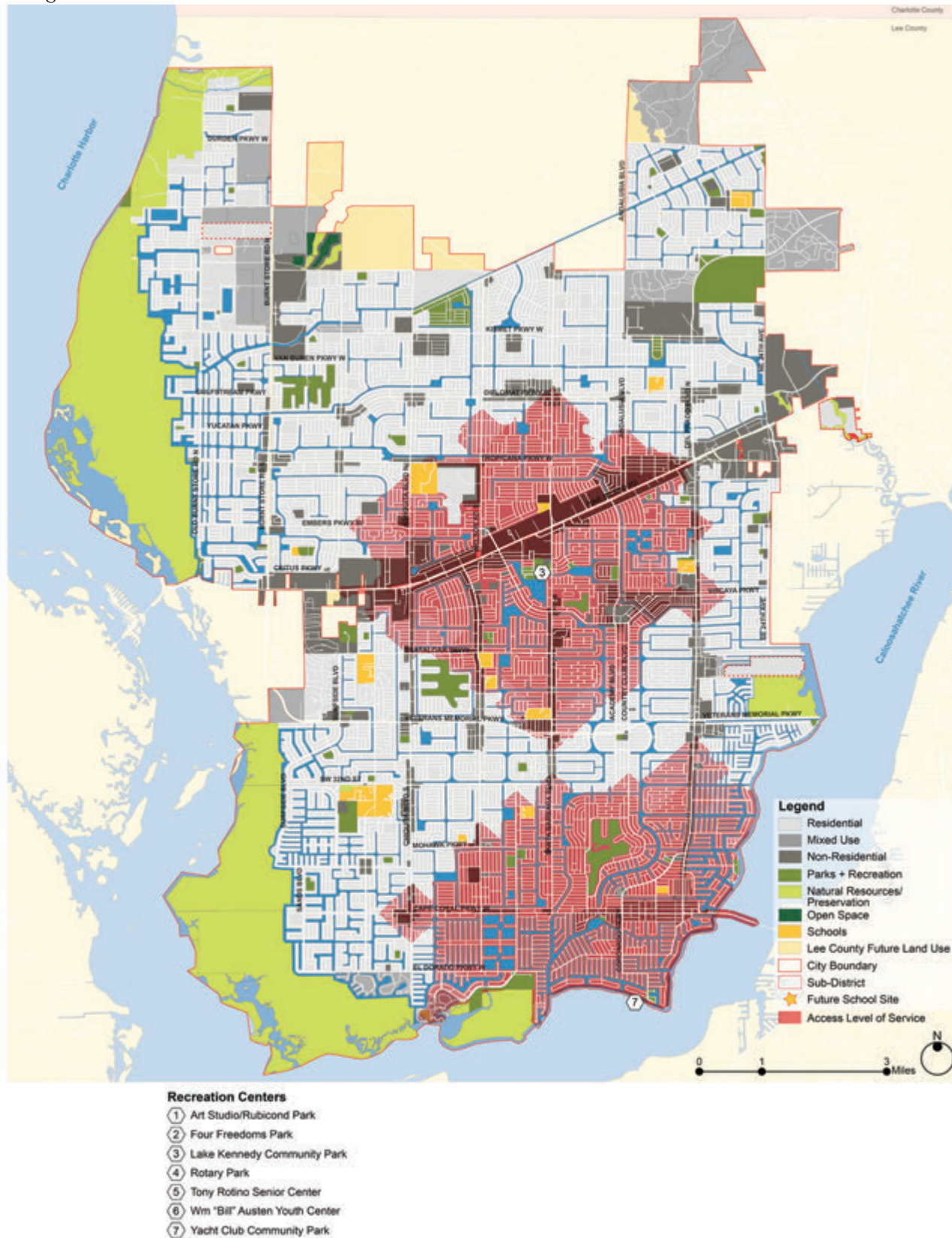


Figure 2.22 Access LOS - Recreation Centers, 5 Miles

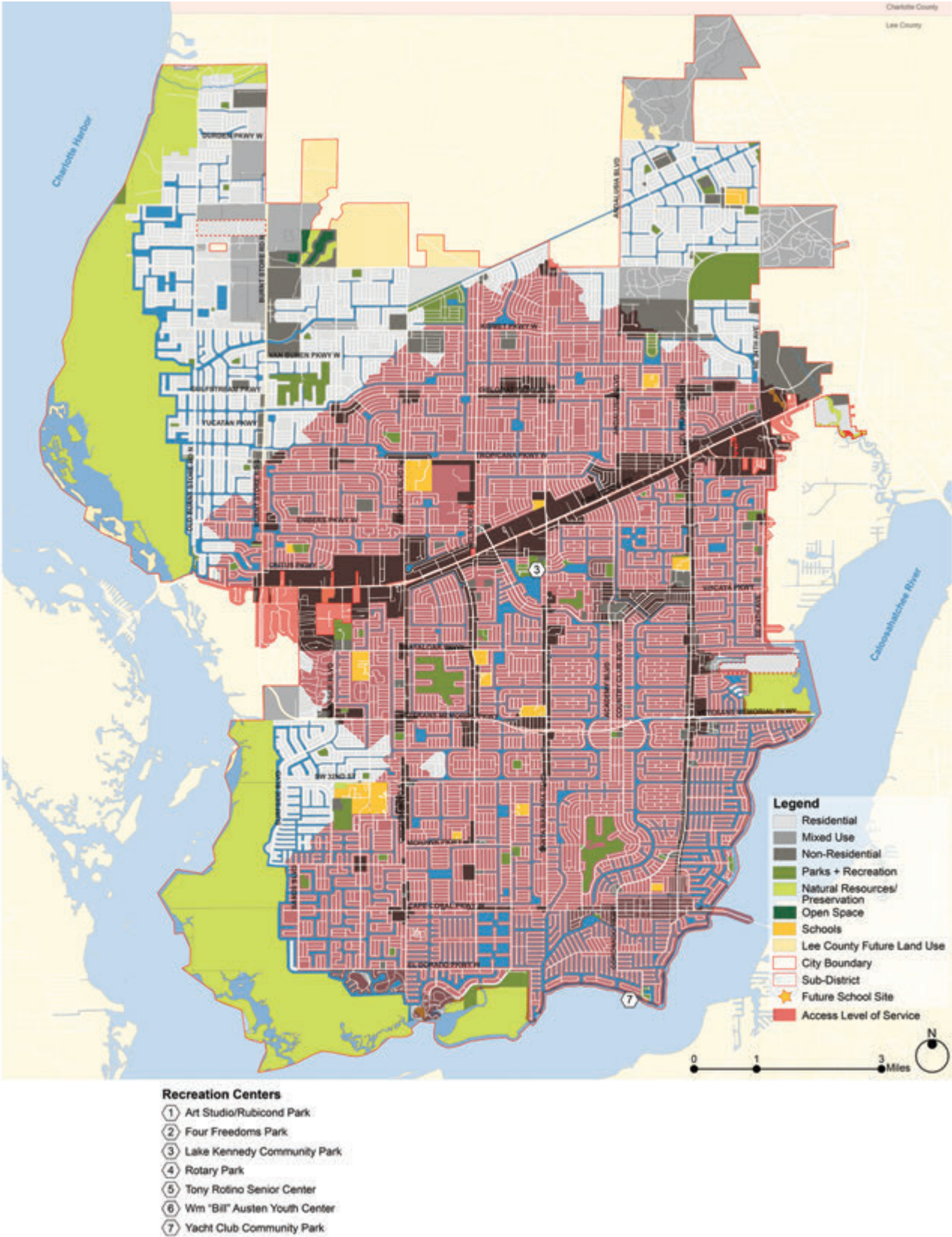


Figure 2.23 Access LOS - Athletic Facilities, 3 Miles

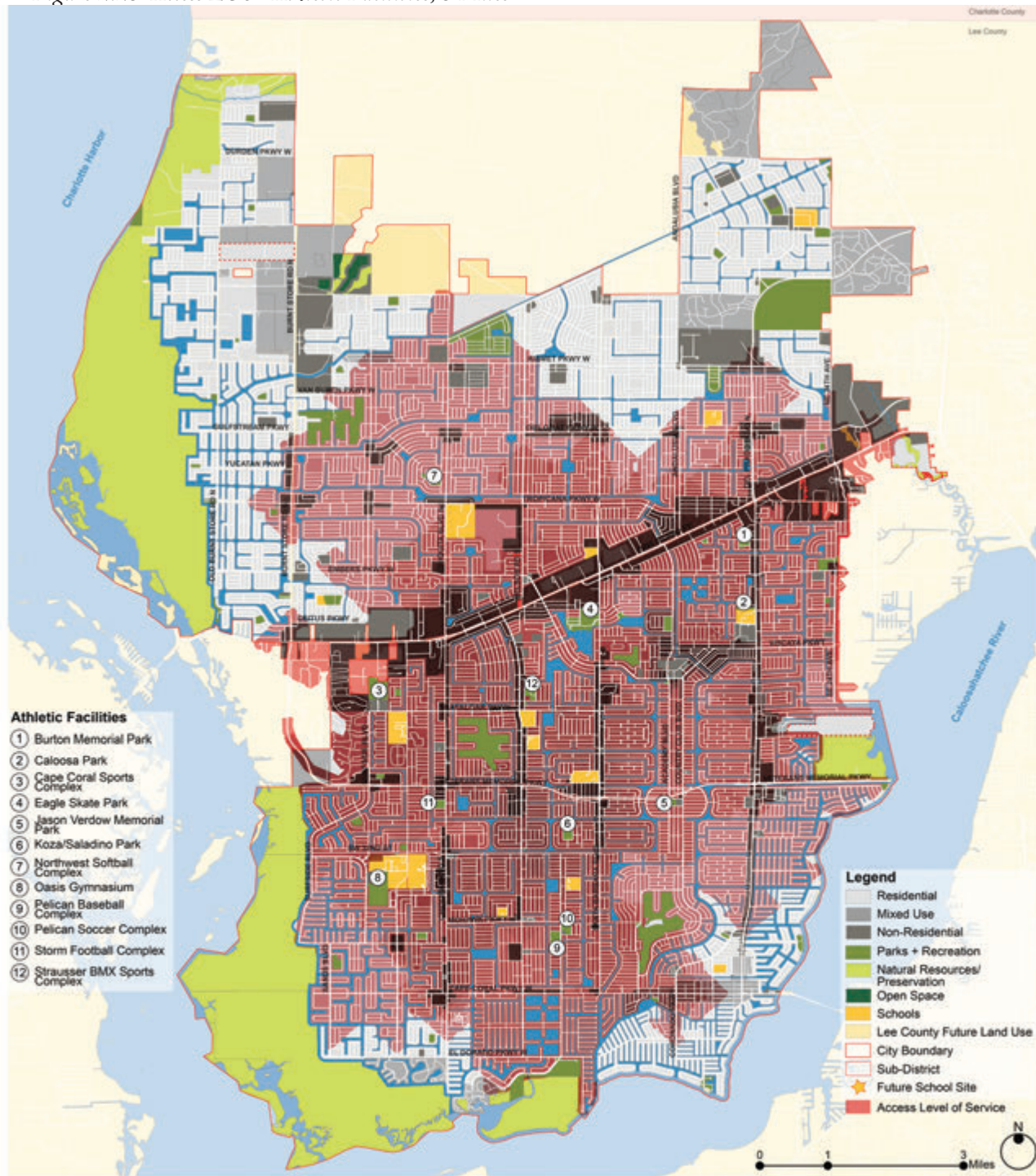


Figure 2.24 Access LOS - Athletic Facilities, 5 Miles

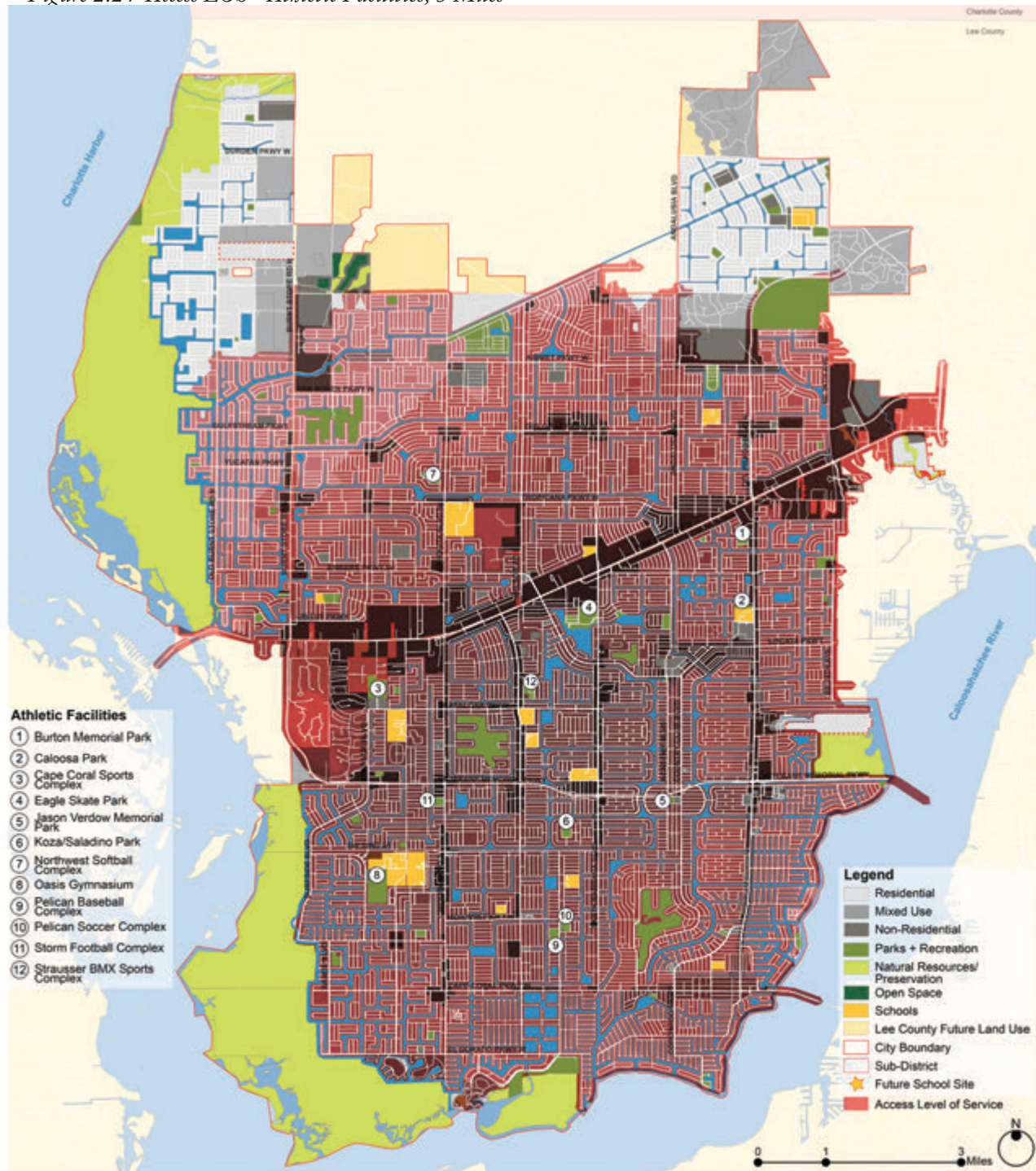


Figure 2.25 Access LOS - Playgrounds, 1 Mile

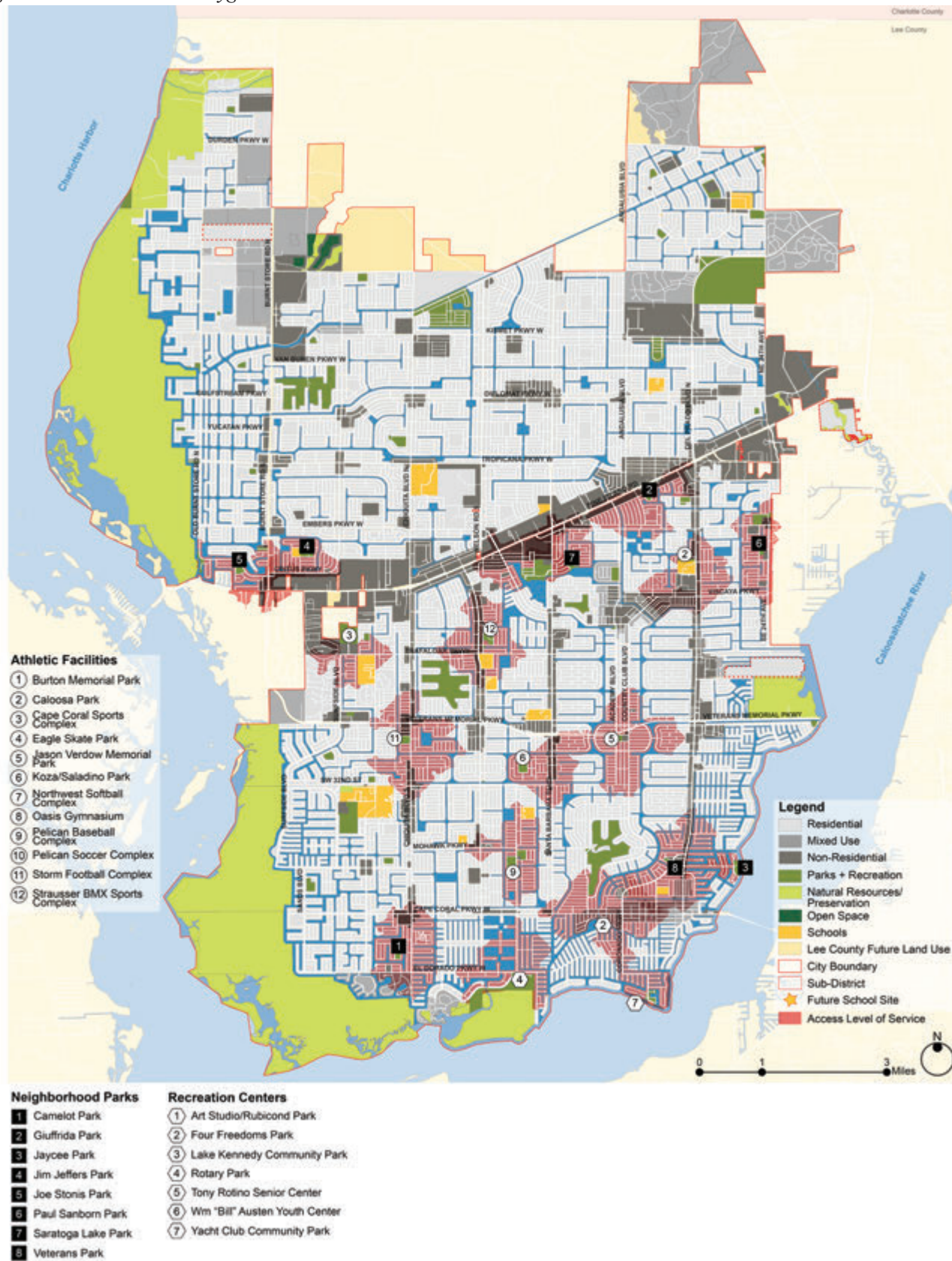
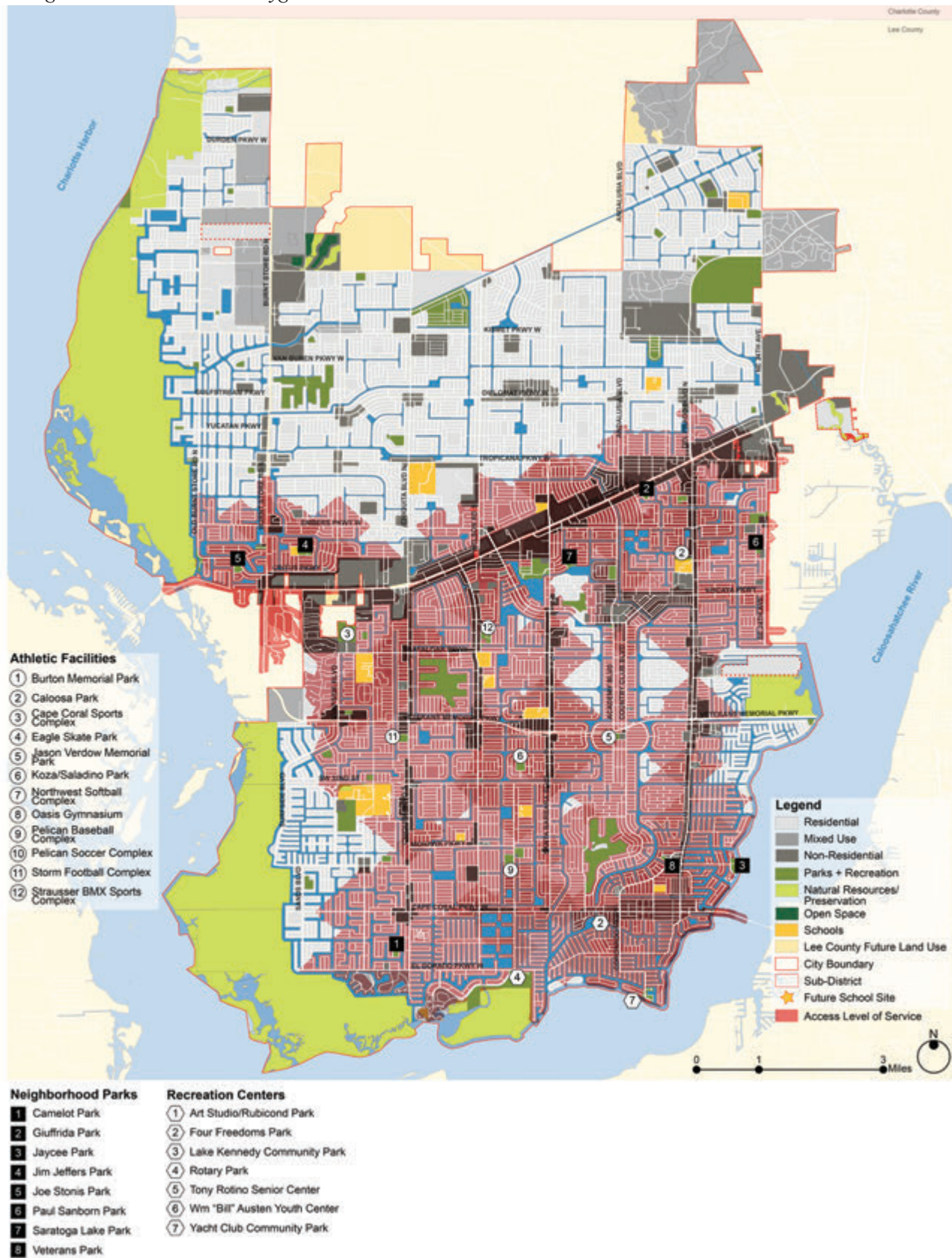


Figure 2.26 Access LOS - Playgrounds, 2 Miles



Implications for the Parks Master Plan

All the LOS analysis techniques completed suggest that the City of Cape Coral is in need of additional parks and recreation facilities. Specifically, these facilities include:

- Park land, particularly for regional, neighborhood, and community parks
- Indoor recreation center space
- Boat ramps lanes
- Diamond field sports
- Golf courses
- Gridiron soccer fields
- Gridiron football fields
- Horseshoe pits
- Playgrounds
- Racquetball courts
- Senior centers
- Shuffle board courts
- Swimming pools
- Tennis courts
- Volleyball courts
- Nature trails
- Bicycle/Jogging paths

Additionally, the City should use the Parks Master Plan process to review and revise its facilities LOS standards to ensure that these standards are consistent with the parks and recreation vision desired by City residents. Similarly, the City should look to establish access LOS standards for parkland and facilities.

2.5 Benchmarking

Although each community should establish its own standards for LOS, it is sometimes useful to compare standards to state and national averages.

Figure 2.27 compares the national median LOS of agencies with similar population density as the City of Cape Coral to the City's acreage LOS target, 2015 acreage LOS, and buildout Acreage LOS.

This comparison suggests that the City's target acreage LOS of 8.5 is lower than the 12.1 national median acreage LOS of agencies with similar population densities. Based on the City's 2015 population, it appears that the City's acreage LOS is almost half of the City's target and if the City does not acquire any more parkland by buildout, the acreage LOS will fall to one-fourth of the City's target.

Figure 2.28 compares available NRPA PRORAGIS database national median facilities LOS standards to the City of Cape Coral's facilities LOS standards. When compared to NRPA's PRORAGIS database, it appears that the City's existing facilities LOS standards are lower than the national median for every compared facility type except basketball courts, senior centers, and golf courses.

Figure 2.29 benchmarks the City of Cape Coral's outdoor facilities to available Florida SCORP facilities LOS for agencies in Florida's southwest region.

Figure 2.27 National Median LOS Comparison

National acreage LOS median for agencies with population density's between 500 to 1,500 per square mile (acres per 1,000 residents)	12.1
City of Cape Coral acreage LOS target (acres per 1,000 residents)	8.5
City of Cape Coral 2015 acreage LOS (acres per 1,000 residents)	4.7
City of Cape Coral buildout acreage LOS (acres per 1,000 residents)	2.1

Figure 2.28 NRPA PRORAGIS Facilities LOS Benchmarking

Facilities	National median LOS (1 per X persons)	City of Cape Coral Comprehensive Plan LOS (1 per X persons)
Diamond fields	3,333	4,000
Rectangle fields	8,124	
Soccer fields		10,000
Football fields		20,000
Playgrounds	3,899	10,000
Dog parks	53,915	-
Tennis courts	4,413	7,500
Basketball courts	7,526	5,000
Indoor recreation center	24,804	-
Swimming pools	33,660	50,000
Senior center	50,000	50,000
Golf course (population per 9 holes)	26,288	200,000



Joe Stonis Park Exercise Path

Figure 2.29 Florida SCORP Facilities LOS Benchmarking

Outdoor facility type	Southwest region LOS (X/1000 participants)	City of Cape Coral facilities	Need based on participants in 2015	Need/Surplus to meet Southwest region LOS in 2015	Need based on participants at city buildout	Need/Surplus to meet Southwest region LOS at buildout
Baseball fields	0.85	15	16.38	(1.38)	37.40	(22.40)
Outdoor basketball courts	0.86	8	13.56	(5.56)	30.96	(22.96)
Football fields	0.48	6	7.57	(1.57)	17.28	(11.28)
Golf (# of holes)	1.94	18	67.99	(49.99)	155.20	(137.20)
Tennis courts	1.46	10	33.26	(23.26)	75.92	(65.92)
Soccer fields	0.45	13	7.89	5.11	18.00	(5.00)
Outdoor swimming pools	0.09	1	4.42	(3.42)	10.08	(9.08)
Paved trails (miles)	0.11	17	8.67	8.33	19.80	(2.80)
Saltwater boat ramps (lanes)	0.16	7	7.01	0.01	16.00	(9.00)
Picnicking (tables)	3.95	347	269.94	77.06	616.20	(269.20)

Implications for the Parks Master Plan

The benchmarking analysis suggests that the City's existing parks and recreation LOS standards are low compared to national benchmarks. Specific standards that appear to be low include:

- Parkland
- Diamond field sports
- Rectangle fields - soccer
- Rectangle fields - football
- Playgrounds
- Swimming pools
- Tennis courts

When compared to regional standards, it appears that the City of Cape Coral likely needs additional baseball fields, outdoor basketball courts, football fields, golf holes, tennis courts, and outdoor swimming pools.



Eagle Skate Park

2.6 Park Visits

Barth Associates and City staff visited the City's parks to evaluate existing conditions during a two-day period in February 2016. Parks were evaluated using the following criteria:

Access: Proximity, Access and Linkages

- *Visibility from a distance.* Can one easily see into the park?
- *Ease of walking to the park.* Can someone walk directly into the park safely and easily?
- *Transit access.* Is there a public transit stop nearby?
- *Clarity of information/signage.* Is there signage that identifies the park, and/or signage that provides additional information for users?
- *ADA compliance.* Does the site generally appear to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) laws for accessibility?
- *Lighting.* Is the park lighted appropriately for use at night? (if applicable)

Comfort: Comfort and Image

- *First impression/overall attractiveness.* Is the park attractive at first glance?
- *Feeling of safety.* Does the park feel safe at the time of the visit?
- *Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance.* Is the park clean and free of litter?
- *Comfort of places to sit.* Are there comfortable places to sit?
- *Protection from bad weather.* Is there shelter in case of bad weather?
- *Evidence of management/stewardship (interior and exterior).* Is there visual evidence of site management both in the exterior of the site and interior of a building if there is one present?
- *Ability to easily supervise and manage the park or facility (interior)* Are staff able to visually see and supervise the entrance and major program areas of a recreation center?
- *Condition and effectiveness of any equipment or operation systems.* Is the equipment and/or operating system in good condition?

Use: Uses, Activities, and Sociability

- *Mix of uses/things to do.* Is there a variety of things to do given the type of park?
- *Level of activity.* How active is the park with visitors?
- *Sense of pride/ownership.* Is there evidence of community pride in the park?
- *Programming flexibility.* How flexible is the park in accommodating multiple uses?
- *Ability of facility to effectively support current organized programming.* Is the site meeting the needs of organized programs?

Sustainability: Environmental Sustainability

- *Stormwater management.* Is green infrastructure present to help manage stormwater?
- *Multi-modal capacity.* Is the park accessible by many modes of transportation?
- *Facility energy efficiency.* Has the site been updated with energy-efficient components?

Buildings: Buildings and Architecture (If a building is present on the site)

- *Image and aesthetics.* Is the building attractive?
- *Clarity of entry and connection to the park.* Is the building integrated into its surroundings?
- *Interior finishes, furniture, and equipment.* Are the furnishings and equipment inside the building of good condition and quality?
- *Building enclosure.* Is there any obvious need for repairs to the building shell?
- *Building systems.* Are all mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in working order?

Each of the sites was scored on the above questions using a scale of 1 to 5 (Figure 2.30):

- 1.0 – 2.9 = Not Meeting Expectations (red)
- 3.0 – 3.9 = Meets Expectations (orange)
- 4.0 – 4.9 = Exceeds Expectations (light green)
- 5.0 = Far Exceeds Expectations (dark green)

Scores were assigned based on an evaluation of the site and the buildings compared to other sites in the City. Although the process of scoring is inherently subjective, multiple evaluators were present to discuss each score and reach consensus. The purpose of the scoring was to establish an understanding of how the park system rates in terms of quality and its ability to serve users. Figure 1.30 provides a summary chart of the park system's average scores.

Implications for the Parks Master Plan

Almost all of the City's parks scored in the range of 3.0 – 3.9 (meeting expectations) with a system-wide average score of 3.5. The highest scoring parks were Jaycee Park, Joe Stonis Park, and Lake Kennedy Community Park and Senior Center. These parks scored particularly well in the category of Uses, Activities, and Sociability. They all contained a mix of things to do, enjoy high levels of activity, and display a high sense of pride and ownership from residents who use the facilities. They also provide flexibility in programming while effectively supporting organized programs taking place on the site. Lake Kennedy Senior Center was one of the few parks that was located immediately adjacent to a bus stop, which increased the multi-modal access to the park.

The lowest scoring park was Storm Football Complex. This park scored lower than the rest of the parks in all the categories with particularly low scores in the sub-categories of comfort of places to sit, mix of uses/ things to do, and stormwater management. Besides

the bleachers, the park had limited seating areas throughout the park and had few activities and uses other than the football fields. The fields in the park have drainage issues and during rain events pond easily which limit use of the fields.

The lowest scoring criteria for the system included Proximity, Access and Linkages and Buildings/ Architecture, both with an average score 3.2. Low scores in Proximity, Access, and Linkages are typical of suburban parks and recreation systems that have traditionally focused on vehicular access rather than bicycle, pedestrian, and/or transit access. Many of Cape Coral's park buildings are older, and while the City does a decent job of using limited existing resources to maintain them, their appearance is dated and not as attractive as other civic buildings in the City.

The highest scoring criteria for the systems included Comfort and Image and Environmental Sustainability, both with an average score of 3.6. Overall, the City is maintaining the parks and ensuring that they are clean and managed properly. Although many of the parks and buildings are older and dated, the City has done a good job of looking for ways to enhance the sustainability and efficiency of the operating systems in the parks. One particular example is the energy savings captured in the William "Bill" Austen Youth Center through the use of energy management provisions. These measures helped reduce the Center's energy consumption even though events and programs in the center increased.

Figure 2.30 Site Evaluation Matrix

	Burton Memorial Park	Cape Coral Sports Complex	Eagle Skate Park	Jason Verdon Memorial Park	Koza/Saladino Park	Northwest Softball Complex	Pelican Baseball Complex	Pelican Soccer Complex	Storm Football Complex	Strausser BMX Sports Complex	BMX Park Boat Ramp	Camelot Park	Jaycee Park	Jim Jeffers Park	Joe Stonis Park	Veterans Park	Art Studio/Rubicond Park	Four Freedoms Park	Freida Smith Special Pop. Center	Lake Kennedy Community Park	Lake Kennedy Senior Center	Rotary Park	William "Bill" Austen Youth Center	Del Prado Linear Park	Horton Park	TOTAL
Proximity, access, and linkages (max 5.0)	3.0	2.3	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.5	2.5	3.5	2.6	3.3	3.7	2.8	3.2
Visibility from a distance	5	2	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	2	4	5	3	4.4
Ease in walking to the park	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	-	1	4	2	2	2.1
Transit access	1	1	3	4	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	2	1	3	4	1	1.8
Clarity of information/signage	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3.1
ADA compliance	4	3	4	3	5	5	5	5	2	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	2	5	4	4	2	5	4.1
Lighting	3	3	5	4	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	-	3	5	5	3	3	3	5	1	5	3	5	3	3	3.6
Comfort and image (max 5.0)	3.7	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.7	3.8	3.5	4.0	3.0	3.8	3.0	3.7	3.7	3.8	4.2	3.3	3.6	4.1	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.5	3.2	3.6
First impression/overall attractiveness	3	4	1	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	2	2	4	3	4	3	2	3	4	4	3.4
Feeling of safety	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4.1
Cleanliness/Overall quality of maintenance (exterior)	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3.6
Cleanliness/Overall quality of maintenance (interior)	-	-	4	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	4	-	4	4	4	-	-	3.7
Comfort of places to sit	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	2	4	4	3	4	2	3.0
Protection from bad weather	4	2	5	3	3	4	2	4	3	4	1	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	1	1	3.6
Evidence of management/stewardship (exterior)	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	4	3.8
Evidence of management/stewardship (interior)	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	4	-	4	4	4	-	-	3.7
Uses, activities, and sociability (max 5.0)	3.6	3.6	4.2	2.8	3.8	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.6	2.2	4.0	4.0	3.2	4.0	3.7	3.8	3.2	3.6	3.0	4.2	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.4
Mix of uses/things to do	3	3	5	2	4	2	2	4	2	3	1	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	4	2	4	4	3	3	1	3.2
Level of activity	4	4	4	-	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	2	5	4	3	3	5	3.8
Sense of pride/ownership	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	2	4	4	4	4	-	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.8
Programming flexibility	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	2	3.2
Ability to support programming	4	4	4	3	4	2	2	2	3	4	4	-	-	2	-	-	2	2	2	-	4	2	2	3	4	3.0
Environmental sustainability (max 5.0)	3.5	3.5	3.7	2.5	3.5	3.5	4.0	4.5	2.5	3.5	3.5	2.0	4.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.3	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.5	3.6
Stormwater management	5	4	5	2	5	5	5	5	2	5	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	-	5	4.6
Multi-modal capacity	2	3	1	3	2	2	3	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	-	1	4	2	2.5
Facility energy efficiency	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	4	-	4	3	5	-	-	3.9
Buildings/Architecture (max 5.0)	-	-	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.4	3.6	3.2	-	3.6	4.2	4.0	-	-	3.2
Image and aesthetics	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	2	-	3	4	3	-	-	2.9
Clarity of entry and connections to park	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	3	-	3	4	4	-	-	3.1
Interior furniture, finishes, and equipment	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	3	-	4	4	3	-	-	3.0
Building enclosure	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	4	-	4	5	5	-	-	3.7
Building systems	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	4	-	4	4	5	-	-	3.4
Average scores without buildings/architecture	3.4	3.2	3.6	3.0	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.8	2.9	3.5	3.0	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.9	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.2	3.5
Average scores with buildings/architecture			3.2														3.2	3.5	3.7		3.9	3.6	3.6			OVERALL AVERAGE



Jaycee Park



Joe Stonis Park



Lake Kennedy Center



Storm Football Complex



Eagle Skate Park Building



Transit Stop by Lake Kennedy Community Park

2.7 Parks Operations and Maintenance

This maintenance operations assessment is based on a site visit to Cape Coral in January 2016, information provided by the Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department, and interviews with Department staff.

Staff Interviews included:

- Stephen Pohlman – Director of Parks and Recreation
- Kerry Runyon – Superintendent Parks Division
- Art Avellino – Superintendent Athletics/Special Facilities Division
- Mike Webster – Parks Maintenance Manager
- Toby Sheaf – Parks Maintenance Supervisor

Current Operations

The Parks Maintenance Division is responsible for the maintenance of 37 parks and 56 athletic fields. There are 35 full-time staff in the division and 17 part-time staff that work 28 hours a week. All staff are union. In addition, there is a park ranger program that has six full-time staff. During the Great Recession, the Parks Maintenance Division endured significant budget and staff reductions, and is just now returning to an adequate level of resources.

The Parks Maintenance Division focuses the vast majority of its time on maintaining the athletic fields in the City. This includes 37 diamond fields, 14 soccer fields, and 5 football fields. All of the fields are natural turf and lighted. Staff is directly responsible for almost every aspect of maintenance including infield dragging and field lining (with the exception of soccer leagues which line their own fields). Maintenance staff is assigned to a geographic area with only mowing and irrigation having specialized citywide staff. Staff work primarily out of the main maintenance yard for the City and the yard at the Cape Coral Sports Complex. The division is also responsible for maintaining the small beach near the Yacht Club, and supports a large number of athletic tournaments and citywide special events. In addition, staff also completes small construction projects in the parks and other areas.

General park maintenance is primarily completed by contract vendors who take care of the green environment while the Parks Maintenance Division cleans the restrooms and empties trash seven days a week. The City is divided into six districts that are each bid out for maintenance. As a result, the division spends a great deal of time managing contracts.

Indoor facilities are primarily maintained by the Facilities Maintenance Division of Public Works. Custodial tasks are handled by a contract that is managed by the Recreation Division while Public Works itself is responsible for right-of-way maintenance (mostly contracted) and all fleet maintenance. The golf course has its own course maintenance division.

The Parks Maintenance Division has its own budget and it tracks its own expenses. There is a long-term capital improvement budget in place, as well as a lifecycle assessment for most equipment. The Parks Maintenance Division is able to track maintenance expenses by park/facility and by special event. The division uses a work order system for tracking specific tasks, and staff estimates that there needs to be one full-time staff for every acre of park maintained. Parks equipment is inventoried on a quarterly basis. Athletic field lighting is controlled from one central location, as is irrigation.

Maintenance Challenges

The Parks Maintenance Division faces a significant number of challenges in its operation, including:

- *Limited Resources.* With a smaller staff and budget limitations in the past, it has been difficult to keep up with the maintenance demands.
- *Anticipated Additional Demands.* The City is likely to add a significant number of new parks and recreation amenities in the northern portion of the community in the coming years, which will require additional manpower and equipment to maintain
- *Athletic Field Maintenance Performance.* The current level of maintenance on most athletic fields—especially the rectangular fields—is not what it should be. This is not only caused by overuse and the inability to rest fields, but also the lack of a detailed and definitive plan for how they will be maintained.

- *Multiple Groups Responsible for Maintenance.* In addition to the Parks Maintenance Division being responsible for parks and recreation facility maintenance, Public Works is also responsible for right-of-ways, Facilities Maintenance Division for buildings, and contractors for park maintenance and custodial services. With four different entities having a role in maintenance, coordinating these efforts is a challenge.
- *Inadequate Maintenance Yards.* The main maintenance yard is too small for the amount of equipment that is staged out of it and the number of staff that report to this location. The other main maintenance yard at the Cape Coral Sports Complex is also inadequate.
- *Maintenance Demands of Tournaments/Special Events.* The Parks Maintenance Division has to support a significant number of tournaments on athletic fields and also a large number of special events in the community. This requires a considerable number of staff and resources.
- *Watering Restrictions.* The division is only permitted to water parks and athletic fields two days a week.

Implications for the Parks Master Plan

In order for the Parks Maintenance Division to meet the challenges noted above, the following steps are recommended:

Develop a Comprehensive Maintenance Management Plan

The Division needs to develop a comprehensive maintenance management plan for parks as a whole as well as for athletic fields in particular. This needs to include specific maintenance functions that need to occur, their frequency, method(s) for delivery, required resources, and tracking of work and budget. This plan should also have a specific focus on preventative maintenance and should include not only the grounds but also buildings and structures as well. Ideally each major park, athletic field complex, or recreation facility should have its own maintenance plan that is specific to that location.

Institute Automated Record Keeping

Staff schedules, maintenance plans, tracking of inventories, facility inspections, actual maintenance time, and materials records need to be fully automated with the ability to make entries from the field on tablets or other handheld devices.

Improve Budget Tracking

Staff should strongly consider developing a series of sub-budget areas within the existing overall Parks Maintenance budget based on either geographic areas within the community or by types of parks and recreation facilities (athletic fields, regional parks, etc.). This will make it easier to identify and track budget expenditures more accurately and should ultimately lead to the tracking of maintenance costs by individual parks and facilities.

Hire Additional Staff

Even without growth in the number of parks facilities, the Parks Maintenance Division has a need for the following staff to cover existing demands:

- A small engine mechanic (could be added to Public Works)
- 1-2 trades workers– to support maintenance of built structures in parks and athletic field complexes
- Full-time grounds maintenance workers; consider exchanging two part-time workers for one full-time worker, thereby increasing the number of full-time staff available for maintenance
- A Park Planner/Project Manager to handle new park projects
- A Parks Supervisor to manage the process of new parks and facilities coming on-line

Create a Succession Plan

With a number of Parks Maintenance Division staff reaching retirement, it is recommended that the division develop a succession plan to ensure a smooth transition to new staff.

Improve Maintenance Yards

Plan to make improvements to the main parks maintenance yard and more importantly expand and fully secure the maintenance yard at the Cape Coral Sports Complex. There should also be long-range plans to add another yard in the northern portion of the community to support new parks in this area.

Expand Contracting

Parks staff should consider contracting out restroom cleaning and trash pick-up in the parks.

Improve Communications

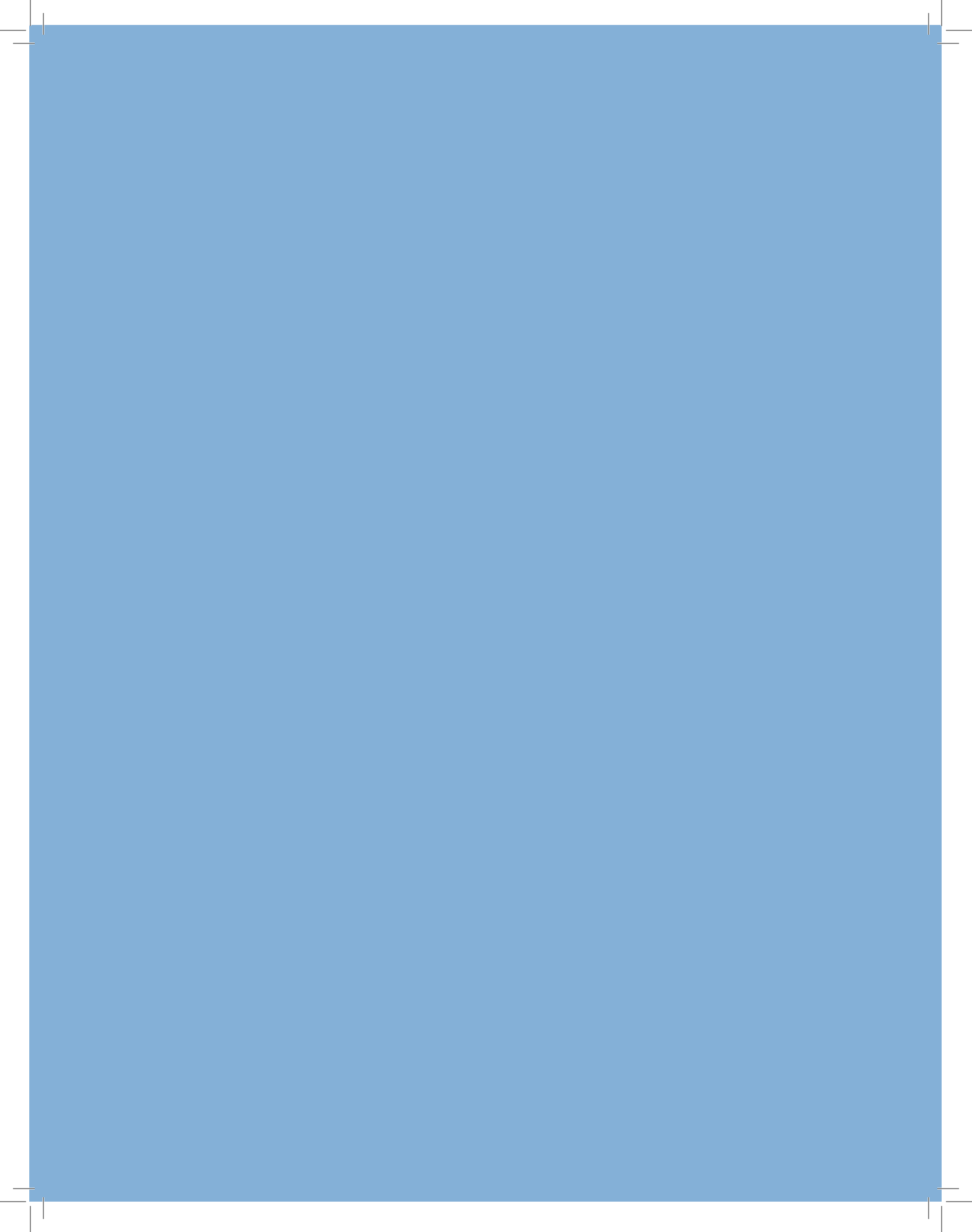
With the number of different entities that are involved in maintaining parks and recreation facilities, improving communications protocols between these groups is very important. There should also be improved communications with the recreation and athletic staff who are the primary users of the parks and facilities that are being maintained.

Expand Training and Certification

Critical to the long-term improvement in parks maintenance is a renewed commitment to staff training and certification. Training on turf management and athletic field maintenance are particularly important. Certifications need to include more staff with playground inspector (CPSI) designation as well as chemical applicators licensure. Developing a formal annual training program is essential.

Track Special Event and Tournament Maintenance

Parks Maintenance Division staff spends a great deal of time supporting special events and sports tournaments. There should be a strong effort made to track Division expenditures for each event, and compare this with any revenues that are paid to the City for these services.



NEEDS AND PRIORITIES ASSESSMENT 3

3.0 Needs and Priorities Assessment

The purpose of a needs and priorities assessment is to determine the gaps between existing and desired conditions. The City of Cape Coral Needs and Priorities Assessment incorporated a “triangulated” approach to identifying needs, meaning that various types of qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to identify top priorities from different perspectives. Qualitative needs assessment techniques included interviews, workshops, focus group meetings, and an on-line survey. Quantitative needs assessment techniques included the Level of Service (LOS) analysis (discussed in Section 1) and a statistically valid survey. Findings from these different techniques were combined to determine top priority parks and recreation needs in Cape Coral. Following are the findings from the various techniques.

3.1 Public Outreach Meetings

Public outreach meetings were conducted in four different areas of the city to solicit residents’ opinions regarding parks and recreation needs and priorities:

- *Southeast:* Tuesday January 26th, Cape Coral Yacht Club
- *Northwest:* Thursday January 28th, Christa McAuliffe Elementary School
- *Northeast:* Monday, March 7th, King’s Way Christian Center
- *Southwest:* Tuesday, March 8th, Oasis Elementary School

Each meeting began with a brief overview of the Parks Master Plan project and process, followed by a series of participant exercises:

- *Exercise #1 – City-wide Need.* Barth Associates placed two charts on easels that listed recreation facilities, and recreation programs. Attendees were asked to place a dot besides those facilities or programs that they believe are important, but are not being met adequately in Cape Coral.

- *Exercise #2 – Improvements to Existing Facilities.* Aerial photographs of the City’s most-used parks and recreation facilities were also placed around the meeting space. Attendees were asked to use post-it notes to suggest improvements that should be made to each park and/or recreation facility.
- *Exercise #3 – Priority Actions.* On a series of boards, Barth Associates listed potential actions that the City of Cape Coral could take to improve the parks and recreation system. Attendees were asked to place a dot beside each of the top four actions that they believe are a top priority.
- *Exercise #4 – Other Comments.* If attendees had any other comments, they had an opportunity to note them on a flip chart.

Based on the sign-in sheets, a total of 191 people attended the workshops. Following is a summary findings from the exercises; complete meeting notes can be found in Appendix A.

Exercise #1 Citywide Needs

Citywide needs were divided between facilities and programs, as outlined above. Full meeting notes are included in the Appendix.

Top priority facility needs included (in order of priority):

- Trails (62 “votes”)
- Nature parks (61)
- Pickleball courts (61)
- Large nature preserves (48)
- Golf course (46)
- Boating and kayaking parks (41)
- Beach (especially in the north) (34)
- Gymnasiums (34)

Top priority program needs included (in order of priority):

- Nature/Environmental education programs (35 “votes”)
- Special events (21)
- Sailing/Boating programs (17)

Exercise #2 Improvements to Existing Facilities

Attendees provided a number of ideas for improving existing parks and recreation facilities; a complete list of comments can be found in Appendix A.

- *Burnt Store Boat Ramp*: most comments about the Burnt Store Boat Ramp suggested additional passive recreation facilities, such as a sand beach area, more boat ramps and kayak launches, a nature trail, and tables and benches. Some attendees want more intensive uses such as an interactive environmental center or a Fisherman’s Village with stores and a café.
- *Burton Memorial Park*: attendees suggested mostly passive recreation amenities and improvements at Burton Memorial Park, such as more trees, bike paths, native plants, picnic areas, and transitioning the existing single-purpose athletic fields into multi-purpose fields.
- *Camelot Park*: at Camelot Park, attendees suggested a variety of improvements ranging from nature trails to a new recreation center. Multiple people mentioned a need for more pickleball courts.
- *Cape Coral Sports Complex*: attendees noted a desire for many new facilities at Cape Coral Sports Complex. Many of the ideas were related to accessibility, such as free facilities (such as dog park and skate park), and not locking facilities. New facility ideas ranged from more trees and green space to a swimming pool, splash pads, and a recreation center.
- *Seahawk Park (Festival Park)*: Most ideas for Seahawk Park/the future Festival Park are rooted in keeping the area natural with wildlife paths, nature trails, and bird habitat areas. Desired amenities included a paved parking lot, bathrooms, and electricity at the flying field.
- *Four Freedoms Park*: Ideas for Four Freedoms Park tended toward more intense uses, such as an event venue/music stage, splash pads, and multiple pickleball courts. Multiple attendees also noted a desire for nearby blight to be cleaned up.
- *Jaycee Park*: There was a difference of opinion about Jaycee Park. Some attendees suggested more passive facilities and amenities, such as a beach and replanting native trees. Others want more active facilities such as beach volleyball courts, pickleball courts, and a splash pad. There were also a number of requests to improve existing facilities, such as upgrading the bathroom and shading the playground area.
- *Lake Kennedy Community Park*: most suggestions for Lake Kennedy Community Park were to intensifying the number and types of facilities. Multiple people noted a desire for pickleball courts and an indoor recreation center with a gym.
- *Rotary Park*: The majority of ideas for Rotary Park focused on capitalizing on natural features, such as expanding nature trails, improving the gardens, and building a boardwalk in the wetlands. Others also noted a desire for more big trails, and improvements to the dog park.



- *Saratoga Lake Park*: With the exception of pickleball courts and a splash pad, most ideas for Saratoga Lake Park suggested passive recreation facilities, such as nature trails, kayak ramps, a beach, and a green passive area.
- *Seahawk Air Park/Festival Park*: Ideas for Seahawk Air Park mostly pertain to improvements, such as paving the entry road and parking lot, adding electricity and lighting, and paving the boat ramp.
- *Sirenia Vista Park*: Suggestions for Sirenia Vista Park were resoundingly for natural and passive features, such as additional trees, covered picnic tables, native plants, and kayaking improvements. Signage improvements were also noted multiple times, as well as the desire for an education center.
- *Yacht Club Community Park*: Yacht Club Community Park received the most comments of any park. Although there were dissenting opinions, attendees who made suggestions generally agreed that the priority should be on boating and other water-based activities. Attendees also wanted improved amenities and better maintenance, and fewer negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

Exercise #3 Priority Actions

Workshop participants indicated that their top priority actions included:

- Acquire the 160-acre Cape Coral Golf Club (167 “votes”)
- Develop new walking and biking trails (72)
- Develop a new indoor community center (39)
- Improve existing boating/kayaking areas (33)
- Acquire the Christ Lutheran Church (28)

Exercise #4 Other Comments

Workshop participants also had an opportunity to share general comments. A full record of these comments is included in Appendix A.

- *Public Workshop # 1*: attendees who provided general comments at Public Workshop #1 primarily emphasized their desire for specific facilities such as pickleball, splash pads, and places to fish from shore, and examples of recreation facilities in the region that they like. Other common comments included a need to improve amenities at specific parks, and upgrades to canal access.
- *Public Workshop # 2*: Many of the comments at Workshop #2 focused on particular park sites, with a future park at Crystal Lake receiving three mentions. Other comments emphasized environmental protection, and increasing the direct involvement of citizens in parks.
- *Public Workshop #3*: There were no additional comments posted at Public Workshop #3.
- *Public Workshop #4*: At Public Workshop #4, there were few commonalities among the comments. Attendees used the opportunity to note everything from a need for indoor pools and water safety programs, a desire for tobacco-free facilities, and more parks needed in the northern parts of Cape Coral.

3.2: Interviews

Barth Associates and City staff conducted interviews with the Mayor and seven Council members. Interview notes are included in Appendix A.

The Mayor and Council members' top two priority parks and recreation needs include:

- Renovation of the Yacht Club (5 of 8 interviews)
- Build Festival Park, including an amphitheater (4 of 8)

Other priority needs include:

- Community Center
- Parks in northeast
- More kayak launches
- Pickleball courts
- Dog parks
- Programs for all ages, especially for youth, and promotion of existing programs
- Cultural park
- Dutch Lions
- Upkeep and maintenance of existing parks
- Trails/passive recreation
- Museum
- Something for kids, e.g. an extreme park with a zip line, climbing wall, skate park, etc.
- Funding the Veteran's Museum
- Restoring the golf course

The Mayor and Council members listed Port St. Lucie, Lee County, and Jupiter as benchmark communities. Barth Associates also suggested using the City of Palm Coast, a similar pre-platted community, as a benchmark.

The Mayor and Council were divided regarding how to best fund proposed parks and recreation improvements. Four members supported asking voters to approve a General Obligation Bond (via referendum); three members would support a special tax assessment; and one member was supportive of a millage increase dedicated to parks improvements. There was consensus regarding the use of typical "pay-as-you-go" funding from the general fund, impact fees, grants, and user fees.

3.3: Focus Group Meetings

Barth Associates and City staff conducted focus group meetings with five groups including:

- Water access (six participants)
- Athletics (seven participants)
- Seniors (four participants)
- Arts (four participants)
- Environment (five participants)
- Teens (one participant, in consultation with four to five other teens)

Focus group meeting minutes are included in the Appendix. Top priorities from the focus group meetings include:

Water Access

- Top priority is to acquire lands for access before they are gone. Take advantage of canal system for recreation and recruiting people to come to Cape Coral.
- Need more boat ramps to provide additional water access on existing City-owned sites, particularly in the northwest.
- May need to acquire waterfront land
- Need better enforcement of parking rules and speed limits at Yacht Club
- Expansion of queuing area at the Yacht Club
- Need more freshwater launches/trailheads throughout the city, including signage/ launch/ parking/drop-off; could include on-site storage at one or two central locations
- Need to pave existing ramps
- Need to legitimize existing water access through the purchase, improvement, and/or development of sites

Athletics

Tennis

- Need more tennis courts at the Yacht Club, have five at the moment and membership is growing
- Need to make improvements to existing courts at Yacht Club including awnings, benches, water



fountain, shade, improvements to courts; have water intrusion, cracks

- Need four to five tennis courts for matches
- Ideal competition facility would have eight courts, four hard and four Har-tru, a pro shop, fitness center, shade, bleachers, food (example is Cambier Park)
- Need recreational play courts within 4 to 5 miles of every resident
- Would be nice to have Har-Tru Courts; required by County Leagues

Girls' Softball

- Need practice and play space, and probably two additional fields
- Would be nice to have a complex of six fields to host tournaments; convert Burton?
- Need a complex in northwest as home site, use Burton as overflow
- Currently need shade covers on bleachers at Burton; update concession; one artificial turf field; scoreboards

Football

- Need to upgrade fields at Chiquita, Del Prado; drainage at Chiquita is poor, need lighting on Field 3, shade, parking lot, buildings for lockers/storm protection
- Need another six fields for soccer, football, lacrosse, multi-sport complex

Travel Baseball

- Six fields: two at 60/90, two at 50/70, two at 40/60
- Need to charge admission, food, registration fees, etc.
- Should consider contracting with Sports Authority for tournaments.

Seniors

- County transit does not cover northwest, but City does; transit will be a growing need
- Senior centers focus on keeping seniors active and engaged; want experiences, trips, eco-tours, gambling tours
- Need more outside fitness, Tai Chi, yoga, walking paths, biking, fitness trails; e.g. connected trail at Lake Kennedy Senior Center
- Need more water-related sports (kayak/canoe/paddle board, etc.)
- Need outdoor pickleball/racquetball courts, weight training, indoor pool
- Need more dance programs
- Ideally would no longer deliver services through senior centers; would create shared spaces in community/activity/fitness centers
- At buildout, need three community centers: north, south, central, e.g. Lake Kennedy Center (20,000 square feet) within park, linked by bike/walk paths
- May need two more heated outdoor pools

Arts

- Need to promote existing Cape Coral Arts Studio
- Need better signage, promotion, special events
- Need recreation specialist to help promote, attract new residents
- Need more space at Arts Studio
- Need to upgrade equipment
- Combine facilities at Cultural Park, e.g. Workhouse Arts Center in Lawton, VA, Imperial Art Museum in Rocky Mount
- Would like a history museum
- Need more calls to artists in community for involvement

Environment

- Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife: need environmental garden at old golf course and Oasis Woods
- Need to purchase golf course
- Need funds to build environmental education centers, teach programs
- Involve Lee District schools, Florida Southwestern, FGC University, and City Charter schools to talk about what would be possible at 50 acres at Oasis Woods
- Need to protect existing wildlife including burrowing owls, scrub jays, manatees, eagles; do we need to preserve larger tracts?
- Parks are habitat for a lot of animals
- Need to create more friends' groups, such as Friends of Wildlife, Manatee Cape Connection (Friends of Sirenia Vista Park)

Teens

- Needs: bonfire pits, streets for busking (street performers), amphitheater, ramps and rails, graffiti wall, cafés within parks, pet friendly, greenhouse, nature and paths, ponds, used book and music store, free Wi-Fi, modern play, henna
- Transit for kids under 16
- Basketball courts
- Stages, places to perform
- Open mike nights in parks; jam night at Jaycee Park on Thursdays
- Consider adding things to do at the skate park, including moveable furniture, etc.

3.4: Statistically-Valid Mail/Telephone Survey

Barth Associate's subconsultant ETC Institute conducted a citizen survey to determine residents' parks and recreation needs and priorities. A goal was set to obtain a minimum of 500 completed surveys within the City of Cape Coral boundaries. Surveys were sent out to a random selection of households throughout the City of Cape Coral. Of the households that were requested to participate in the survey, 575 respondents participated. The results for the sample of 575 households have a 95 percent level of confidence with a precision rate of at least +/- 4 percent. The survey results were also stratified into four geographic districts. A full survey report is included in Appendix B.

Key findings from the survey are summarized below.

Usage, Quality, and Importance of Parks and Recreation Facilities

From a list of 22 outdoor and indoor parks and recreation facilities offered in the City of Cape Coral, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they had used the facility. If the respondents indicated yes, they had used the facility, they were then asked to indicate the overall condition of the parks and facilities they had used.

Usage

Sixty-seven (67) percent of respondents indicated that their household has used the beach. Other facilities used include: Yacht Club (61 percent), small neighborhood parks (60 percent), and community parks (53 percent).

Quality

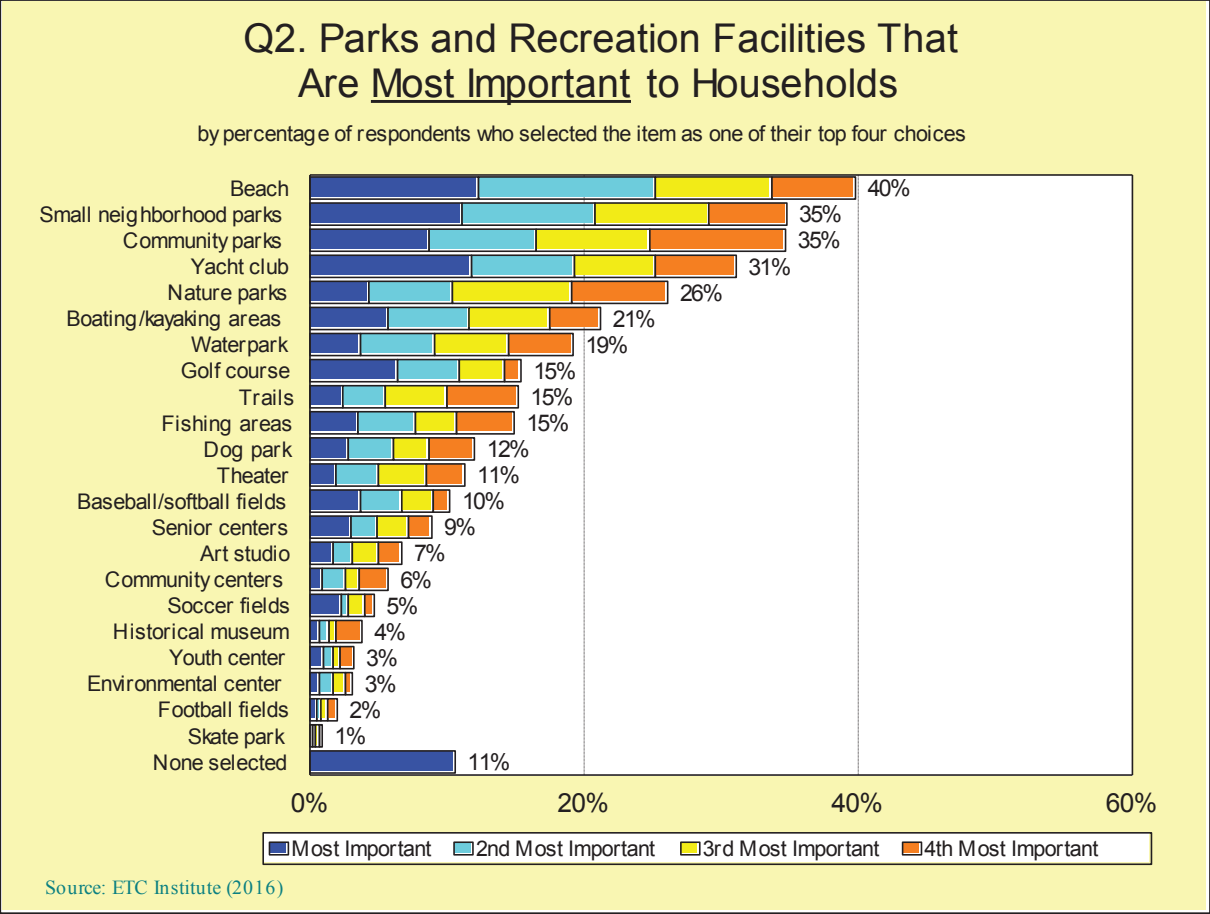
Based on the percent of respondents who visited parks, the top three parks and facilities that had the highest "excellent" ratings include: nature parks (33 percent), historical museum (33 percent), and baseball and softball fields (33 percent).

Importance

Based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, 40 percent indicated the most important facility to their household was the beach. Other most important facilities include: small neighborhood parks (35 percent), community parks (35 percent), Yacht Club (31 percent), nature parks (21 percent), and boating/kayaking areas (19 percent).

When taking into consideration those who indicated the park or facility as their first choice/most important, Yacht Club moves up from the fourth cumulative most important, to tie with beaches for first choice/most important.

Figure 3.1 Most Important Parks and Facilities



Small Neighborhood Park Services

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with 10 services provided by the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department. Respondents were then asked to indicate the top three most important services that should receive the most attention from City leaders over the next two years.

Satisfaction with Small Neighborhood Park Services

Based on the sum of respondents who indicated they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with services, 83 percent were satisfied with mowing and trimming in parks. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: overall condition of trash pickup in parks (78 percent), overall condition of playground equipment (71 percent), and overall condition of landscaping (shrubs and flowers) (71 percent). Respondents were the least satisfied with the overall condition of outdoor restrooms (55 percent).

Most Important Small Neighborhood Park Services

Based on the sum of respondents’ top three choices, 39 percent indicated that the overall condition of outdoor restrooms should receive the most attention. Other services that should receive the most attention include overall condition of playground equipment (28 percent), and the adequacy of park lighting (28 percent).

When taking into consideration only households who indicated the item as their first choice most important, overall condition of playground equipment was the first choice most important service.

Respondents were asked the farthest distance they would be willing to travel to the neighborhood park most important to their household. Fifty-nine (59) percent of respondents indicated they would be willing to travel more than 2 miles. Other distances include: 2 miles (27 percent), 1 miles (9 percent), and ½ mile (5 percent).

Program Participation and Services

Participation in Programs

Respondents were asked if any members of their household had participated in programs offered by the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department over the past 12 months. Thirty-one (31) percent of respondents indicated that they had participated in programs.

Satisfaction with Program Services

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with 10 different program services provided by the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department. Based on the sum of respondents who indicated they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 83 percent indicated they were satisfied with the times programs are offered. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: location of programs (81 percent), quality of instructors (77 percent), and quality of the facility where program is offered (75 percent).

Most Important Program Services

Based on the sum of respondents’ top three choices, 43 percent indicated the most important program feature to their overall satisfaction was fees charged for value received. Other important features include: times programs are offered (42 percent), location of programs (36 percent), and quality of instructors (35 percent).

Facility Needs and Importance

From a list of 25 parks and recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate all of the parks/facilities their household has a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

Facility Needs

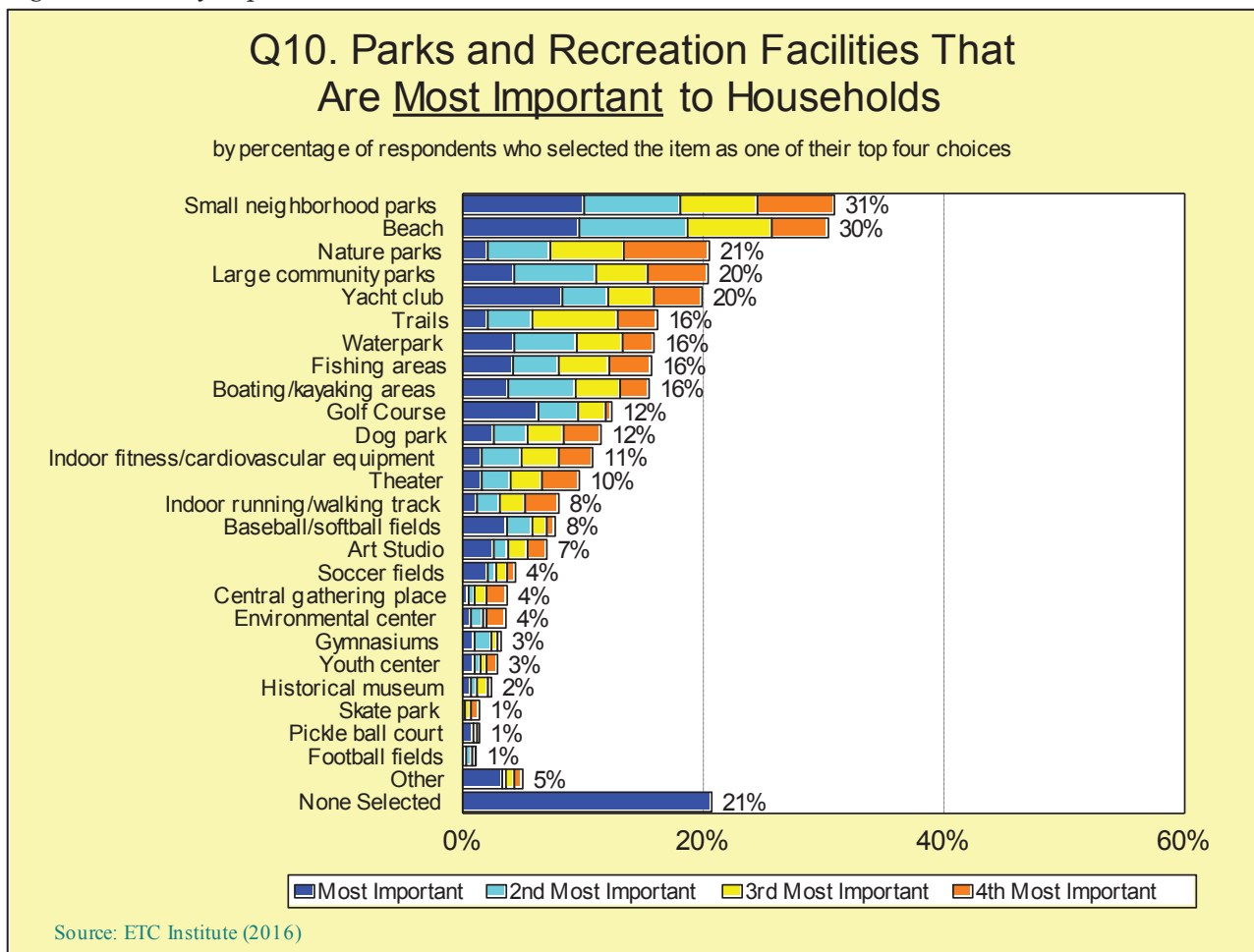
Fifty-seven (57) percent of responders indicated a need for the beach. Other most needed facilities include: small neighborhood parks (55 percent), nature parks (47 percent), large community parks (44 percent), Yacht Club (42 percent), and trails (42 percent).

Facility Importance

Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, 31 percent indicated small neighborhood parks are the most important facility to their household. Other most important facilities included: beach (30 percent), nature parks (21 percent), large community parks (20 percent), and the Yacht Club (20 percent).

When taking into consideration only households who indicated the facility as their first choice most important, the Yacht Club moves from fifth place cumulative importance to the 3rd place first choice/most important. Golf courses moves up from ninth place cumulative importance to fourth place choice first choice/most important.

Figure 3.2 Facility Importance



Program Needs and Importance

From a list of 21 parks and recreation programs, respondents were asked to indicate all of the programs their household has a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

Program Needs

Forty-five (45) percent of responders indicated they had a need for special events. Other most needed programs include: adult fitness and wellness programs (41 percent), adult programs for 50 years and older (35 percent), nature programs and environmental education (28 percent), and adult continuing education programs (28 percent).

Program Importance

Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, 27 percent indicated that special events were the most important to their household. Other most important programs include: adult fitness and wellness programs (26 percent), programs for adult 50 years and older (21 percent), nature programs and environmental education (14 percent), and adult continuing education programs (13 percent).

Most Participated in Programs:

Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, 15 percent participated in special events the most often. Other most participated in programs include: nature programs/environmental education (10 percent), golf lessons and leagues (9 percent), adult fitness and wellness programs (9 percent).

Reasons Preventing the Use of Facilities and Programs

Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of 18 potential reasons which ones prevented their household from using parks, recreation, and sports facilities or programs from the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department more often. Thirty-five (35) percent (35 percent) of households indicated they were prevented from using facilities and programs more often because they do not know what is being offered. Other reasons include: program or facility not offered (20 percent), I do not know locations of facilities (18 percent), and program times are not convenient (18 percent). Figure 3.3 presents these finding.

Figure 3.3 Reasons Preventing Facility and Program Use by Household Type

	Households with children Under 10	Households with children 10-19	Households with adults 20-54 and no children	Households with adults 55+ and no children
First	I do not know what is being offered (41%)	I do not know what is being offered (38%)	I do not know what is being offered (41%)	I do not know what is being offered (29%)
Second	Program times are not convenient (33%)	Program or facility not offered (31%)	I don't know locations of facilities (22%)	I don't know locations of facilities (16%)
Third	Program or facility not offered (31%)	Fees are too high (23%)	Program or facility not offered (19%)	Fees are too high (12%)

Ways Households Learn About Programs, Facilities, and Services

Respondents were asked to indicate the ways their household learns about programs, facilities, and services. Forty-four (44) percent of households indicated they learn through the parks and recreation program guide. Other ways include: newspaper articles (42 percent), from friends and neighbors (42 percent), and from the city website (39 percent).

Support for New or Increased Programming in Neighborhood Parks

Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive,” 95 percent were supportive of the City of Cape Coral to develop or increase levels of special events in neighborhood parks. Other similar levels of support include: after school programs for youth (81 percent), fitness and wellness programs (92 percent), and summer youth day camps (83 percent).

Indoor Program Spaces Households Would Use if Developed

Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of 21 indoor programming spaces which ones their household would use if developed by the City of Cape Coral. Fifty (50) percent of respondents indicated their household would use a walking and jogging track. Other indoor programming spaces include: weight room and cardiovascular equipment areas (38 percent) and aerobics/fitness/dance class space (37 percent).

Respondents were then asked to indicate which indoor programs they would use the most often. Thirty-five (35) percent indicated they would use the walking and jogging track the most often, followed by the weight room and cardiovascular equipment area (25 percent), and the aerobics/fitness/dance class space (19 percent).

Support for Facilities Being Developed at Oasis Boulevard City Park

Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of 13 potential parks and recreation facilities which ones they would support being developed at Oasis Boulevard City Park. Fifty-four (54) percent of respondents indicated their household would support walking trails being developed. Other facilities supported include: nature trails (44 percent), biking trails (44 percent), and picnic areas (43 percent).

Support for Using Tax Dollars to Fund Projects

Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive,” 88 percent support new walking and biking trails to be funded using tax dollars. Other similar levels of support include: improvements to existing community centers (86 percent), new indoor community center with types of program spaces most important to members of household (84 percent), and improvements to the existing senior centers (83 percent).

Satisfaction with the Overall Value Received

Fifty-nine (59) percent of respondents indicated they were satisfied with the overall value their household receives from City of Cape Coral parks and recreation facilities and programs. Twenty-eight (28) percent were neutral and 14 percent were dissatisfied.

Importance for the City to Provide High Quality Parks, Trails, and Facilities

Eighty-eight (88) percent indicated that it was either “very important” (69 percent) or “somewhat important” (19 percent) for the City to provide high quality parks, trails, and facilities. Ten percent (10 percent) were “not sure” and 2 percent indicated that it was not important.

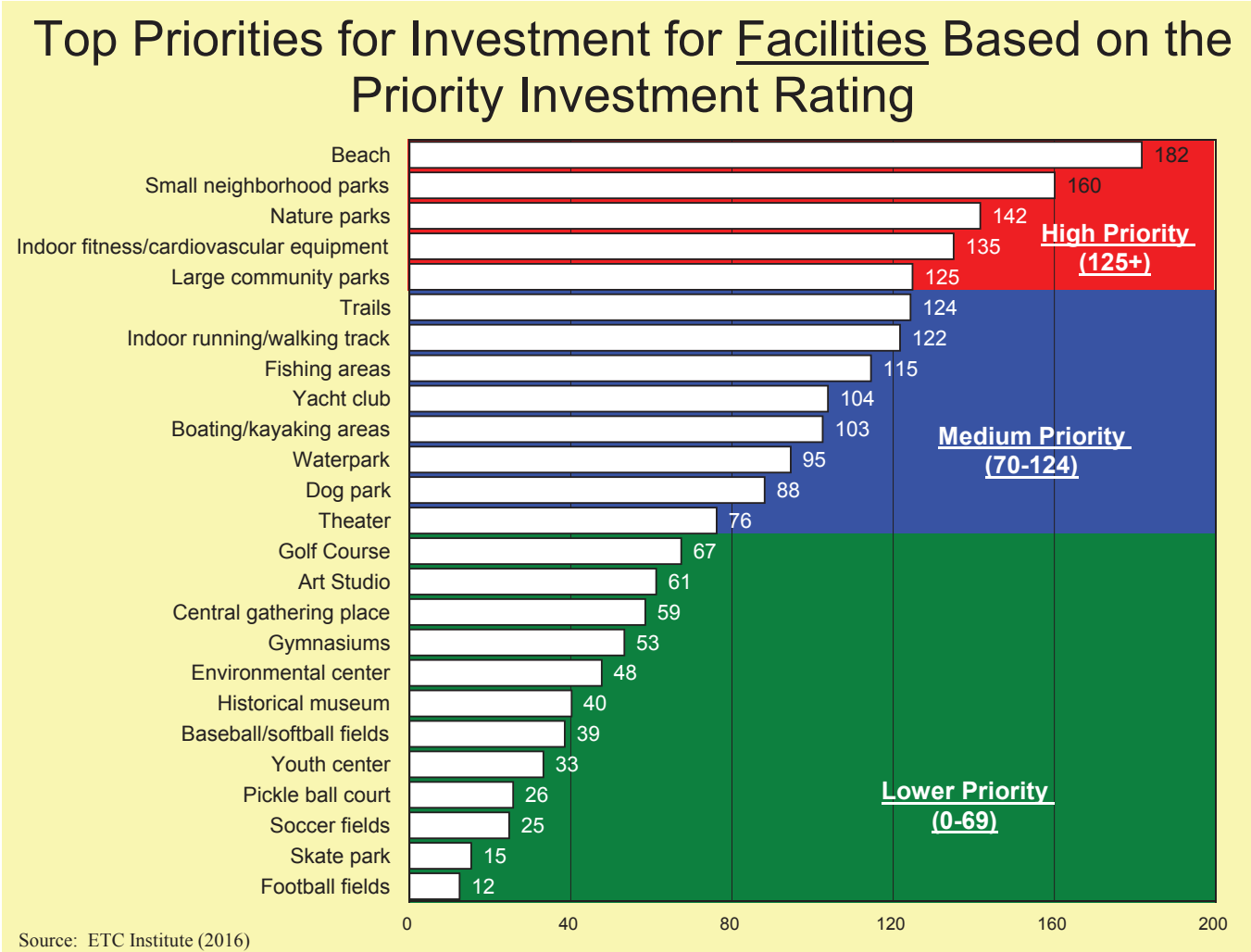
Priority Facility Needs

Top facility priorities for investment include:

- Beaches
- Small neighborhood parks
- Nature parks
- Indoor fitness/cardiovascular equipment
- Large community parks

Figure 3.4 illustrates these findings.

Figure 3.4 Top Priorities for Facilities



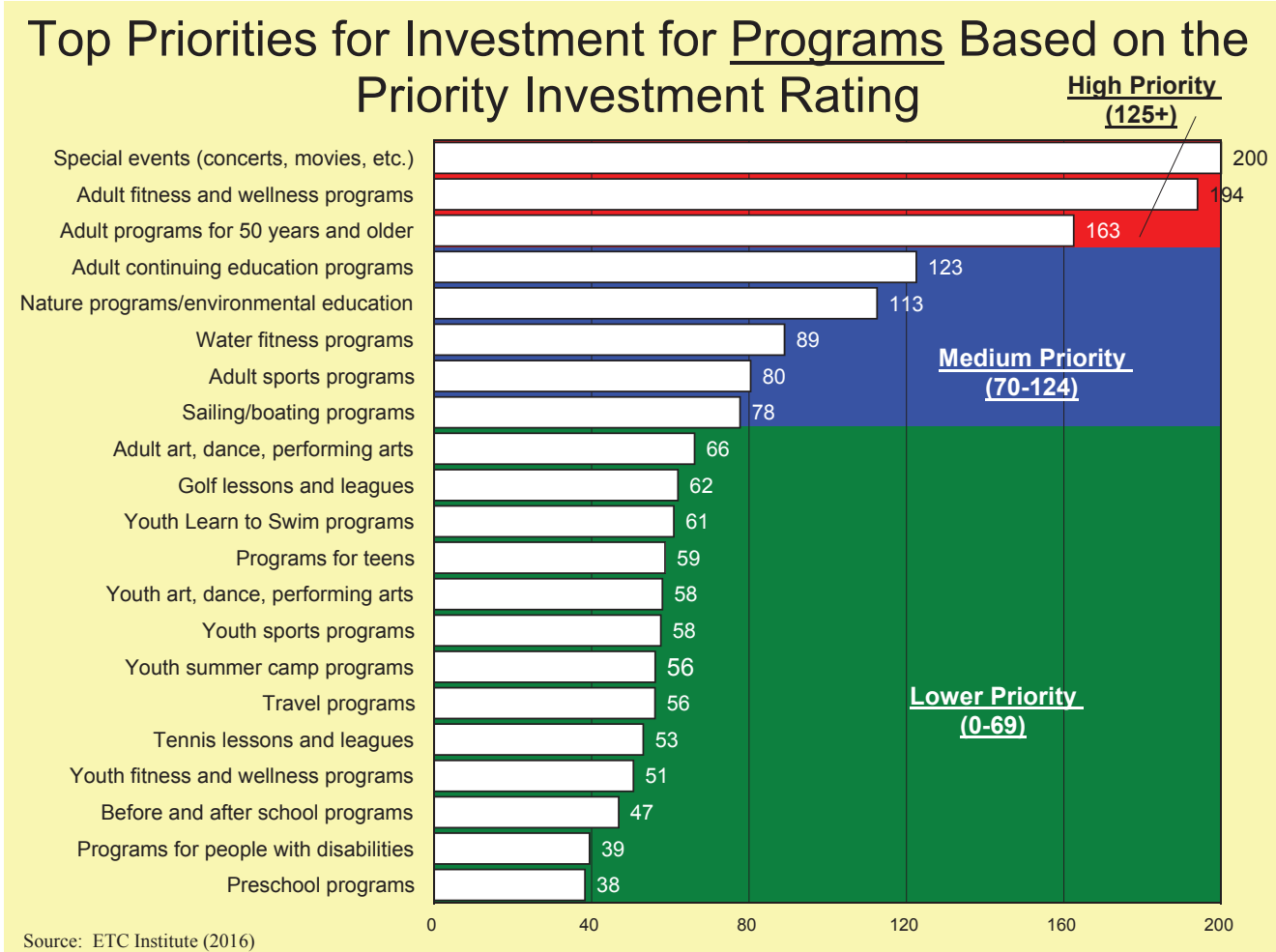
Priority Program Needs

Top program priorities include:

- Special events
- Adult fitness and wellness programs
- Adult programs for 50 years and older

Figure 3.5 illustrates these findings.

Figure 3.5 Top Priorities for Programs



Priority Needs by Quadrant

The statistically valid survey also geocoded responses, which helps identify where facilities and programs are specifically needed in Cape Coral. Figure 3.6 illustrates the top priority needs per quadrant.

Figure 3.6 Priority Needs by Quadrant



3.5 Online Survey

A modified version of the statistically valid survey was placed on-line to provide another opportunity for residents to participate in the needs assessment process. A total of 1,032 responses were received over the course of two months. The full survey results are included in Appendix B. Key findings include:

- 41.2 percent of respondents rate the condition of listed outdoor and indoor parks and facilities as “Good” or “Excellent.” The top three parks and facilities with the most “Excellent” ratings included: the Yacht Club, small neighborhood parks, and baseball/softball fields.
- Small neighborhood parks, community parks, and the beach were listed as the most important facilities to respondent households.
- 77.5 percent of respondents would be willing to travel 2 miles or more to a neighborhood park to use the facilities or participate in activities important to their household.
- 58.9 percent of respondents have participated in programs offered by the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department over the last 12 months.
- Times of programs, location of programs offered, and quality of instructors were identified as the top three most important program features
- Small neighborhood parks, nature parks, trails, and the beach were identified as the top four facilities that are needed in Cape Coral.
- Of the top four facilities needed in the city, small neighborhood parks, beaches, trails, and large community parks were identified as the most important facilities to respondent households.
- Special events, nature programs/environmental education, adult fitness and wellness programs, and programs for teens were identified as the top four programs that are needed more in the city.
- Of the top programs needed in the city, nature programs/environmental education, special events, adult programs for 50 years and older, and adult fitness and wellness programs were identified as the most important programs to respondent households.
- “Program or facilities not offered”, “lack of awareness of what is being offered”, and “distance from residence” were identified as the top three reasons that prevent household members from using parks, recreation, sports facilities, or programs offered by the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department.
- 62.5 percent of respondents identified a walking and jogging track as the top indoor programming facility they would potentially use if new indoor programming space was developed by the City. Aerobic/fitness/dance class space, and weight room/cardiovascular equipment areas were the next top indoor programming spaces identified.
- A walking and jogging track, weight room/ cardiovascular equipment area, aerobic/fitness/ dance class space, and arts and craft room were identified as the top four indoor spaces that respondents would use most often if developed in Cape Coral.
- 53.3 percent of respondents were “Very Supportive” of using tax dollars to fund new walking and biking trails.
- 84 percent of respondents feel that it is “Very Important” for the City of Cape Coral to provide high quality parks, trails, and recreation facilities.

3.6: Summary Findings

Figure 3.5 illustrates the top priority facilities needs and Figure 3.6 illustrates the top priority program needs identified from each of the different needs assessment techniques. Facilities and programs in red indicate top priorities; orange indicates secondary priorities; and green indicates low priorities as identified in the statistically valid survey priority investment ratings. Since the findings from the statistically valid survey are the most scientific and unbiased of all the needs assessment methods, they are given the most weight. The more a specific need is identified in the other assessment methods, the better confirmation there is that it is a high priority need.

An interesting distinction can be made regarding the findings from the surveys and public workshops, and those from the interviews and focus group meetings. The surveys and workshops indicated the need for more amenities, and equitable access to

neighborhood and community parks and facilities throughout the City, particularly in the north. The interviews and focus groups indicated a need for improvements to existing parks, but also emphasized the need for specialized/centralized venues including a festival park/amphitheater, a renovated Yacht Club/waterfront, community centers, a cultural park, an aquatics center, sports complexes, a golf course, and a tennis complex. When looking at the number of times a need was identified through the various needs assessment methods, trails, boating/kayaking areas, pickleball courts, beaches, and improvements to existing parks emerged as the top five. Adult programs for 50 years and older, special events (e.g. concerts, movies, etc.), adult fitness and wellness programs, and nature programs/environmental education emerged as the top four program needs.



Although some residents have a strong need for more pickleball courts, citywide it appears to be a lower priority need

Figure 3.7 Summary Facility Needs

	Facilities	NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES						
		Statistically valid survey	Public outreach meetings	Interviews	Focus group meetings	On-line survey	LOS analysis	Site evaluations
HIGH PRIORITY NEEDS	Beach	X	X			X	X	
	Small neighborhood parks	X				X	X	
	Nature parks	X	X		X			
	Indoor fitness/cardiovascular equipment	X					X	
	Large community parks	X				X	X	
MEDIUM PRIORITY NEEDS	Trails	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Indoor running/walking track	X					X	
	Fishing areas	X			X		X	
	Yacht club	X		X				
	Boating/kayaking areas	X	X	X	X		X	
	Water park	X					X	
	Dog park	X					X	
	Theater	X					X	
LOW PRIORITY NEEDS	Golf Course	X	X				X	
	Art studio	X					X	
	Central gathering place	X					X	
	Gymnasium	X	X				X	
	Environmental center	X			X		X	
	Historical museum	X					X	
	Baseball/softball fields complex	X			X		X	
	Youth center	X					X	
	Pickleball courts	X	X	X	X		X	
	Soccer fields	X					X	
	Skate park	X					X	
	Football fields	X			X		X	
OTHER NEEDS	Improvements to existing parks		X	X	X			X
	Festival park/amphitheater			X	X			
	New indoor community center		X		X			
	Tennis courts/complex				X			
	Football/Soccer/Lacrosse complex				X			

Figure 3.8 Summary Program Needs

		NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES						
Facilities		Statistically valid survey	Public outreach meetings	Interviews	Focus group meetings	On-line survey	LOS analysis	Site evaluations
HIGH PRIORITY NEEDS	Special events (concerts, movies, etc.)	X	X			X		
	Adult fitness and wellness programs	X		X		X		
	Adult programs for 50 years and older	X		X	X	X		
MEDIUM PRIORITY NEEDS	Adult continuing education programs	X			X			
	Nature programs/environmental education	X	X			X		
	Water fitness programs	X						
	Adult sports programs	X						
	Sailing/boating programs	X	X					
LOW PRIORITY NEEDS	Adult art, dance, performing arts	X			X			
	Golf lessons and leagues	X						
	Youth learn to swim programs	X			X			
	Programs for teens	X		X				
	Youth art, dance, performing arts	X						
	Youth sports programs	X						
	Travel programs	X			X			
	Tennis lessons and leagues	X						
	Youth fitness and wellness programs	X						
	Before and after school programs	X						
	Programs for people with disabilities	X						
	Preschool programs	X						



LONG-
RANGE
VISION

4

4.0 Long-Range Vision

City of Cape Coral staff, stakeholders, and consultants met over a two-day period (May 4, 5, 2016) to review the findings from the Needs Assessment, and discuss the most appropriate response to the top priority needs. The resultant long-range vision is to “Celebrate the Cape!” by connecting residents and visitors to the City’s incredible natural resources, and to enhance the visitor experience.

This vision can be accomplished by pursuing six overarching strategies:

Improve Access through improved/ additional sidewalks, bike lanes, bike paths and trails, pedestrian/ bicycle bridges, and trolley/ bus service as proposed in the City’s updated Bicycle/ Pedestrian Plan.

Create Great Places through improvements to existing parks, including additional, exciting facilities and amenities that meet the changing needs of existing and future residents and visitors

Acquire Land to improve the City’s existing deficiency in parkland level-of-service, and provide adequate capacity to meet future needs

Maximize Existing Resources such as historic parks, cultural facilities, water access, wildlife habitat, and other unique City assets to sustain the City’s high quality of life and attract new residents and businesses

Plan and Design existing and proposed parks to make the best use of taxpayer dollars, and provide a basis for future decision-making

Brand the Cape through colorful and exciting signage, banners, graphics, media, and other formats to communicate the City’s unique assets and resources to residents and visitors

These strategies can all be applied to the following Cape Coral parks and recreation “subsystems”:

- Neighborhood, Community, and nature parks
- Special venues
- Beach and water access
- Trails and bikeways
- Signage and wayfinding
- Programs and special events

Each subsystem uses a different Service Delivery Model (SDM) to provide services to residents and visitors. For example, the Neighborhood, Community, and nature parks subsystem and the beach and water access subsystem both use a “Decentralized SDM” (Figure 4.1), focusing on the equitable distribution of services throughout the City as measured in terms of distance (access LOS) or population served (facility or acreage LOS).

The special venues subsystem uses a “Centralized Venues SDM” (Figure 4.2) to deliver services. This model is comprised of specialized facilities that will serve the entire community, regardless of access distance or population densities. The existing Yacht Club, Cultural Park, and Cape Coral Sports Complex are examples of existing centralized venues.

Following is the long-range vision for each subsystem, as well as a list of projects to be considered for implementation.

Figure 4.1 Decentralized Models for SDM

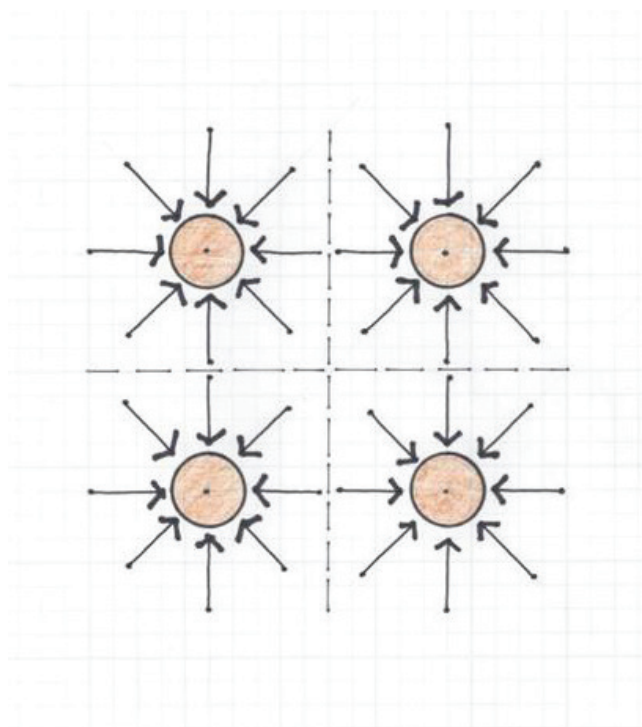
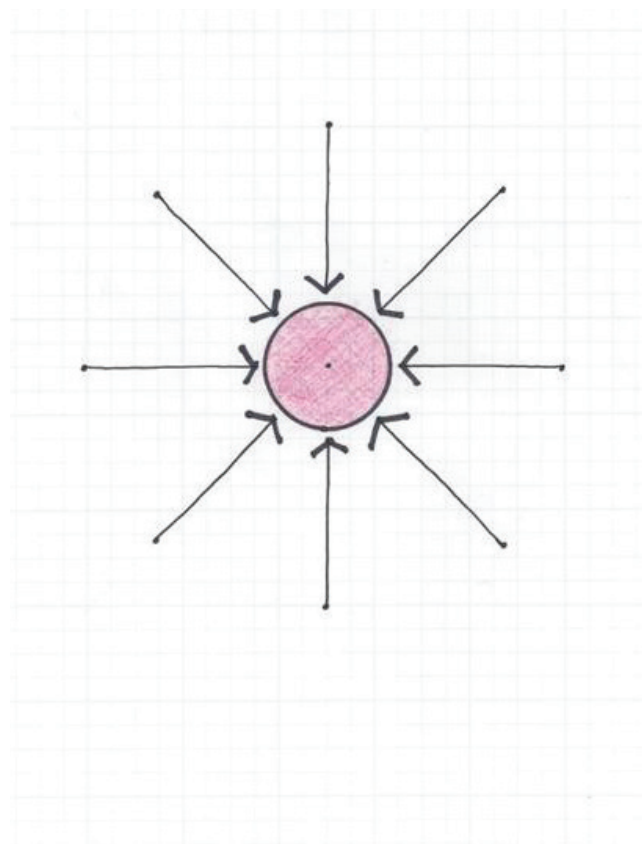


Figure 4.2 Centralized Models for SDM



4.1 Neighborhood, Community, and Nature Parks

The vision for the neighborhood, community, and nature parks subsystem is “to provide residents with equitable access to high quality recreational and educational opportunities throughout the city.” Following is a discussion of the long-range vision for each park type.

Most of the needs assessment techniques indicate the need for additional park land. The City’s Comprehensive Plan includes a traditional suburban classification for parks including regional, community, neighborhood, and specialty parks. The long-range vision proposes a new classification system that better reflects the size and function of the City’s parks, including:

- Neighborhood parks
- Small community parks
- Large community parks
- Nature parks

Neighborhood Parks

The most common park type will be the neighborhood park, patterned after Joe Stonis Park and Saratoga Park. The purpose of a neighborhood park is to meet residents’ basic recreation, fitness, and social needs—in a warm, inviting environment—within walking or bicycling distance from their homes. Residents indicated a willingness to travel 2 or more miles to reach a neighborhood park, but a 1-mile service area is more desirable and walkable as an “aspirational” goal.

The typical neighborhood park will be 5 to 10 acres in size, with the following “basic” facilities and amenities:

- 10-foot wide, paved, multi-purpose path
- Shaded playground
- Shade trees
- Small group picnic pavilion(s) for family gatherings, birthday parties, family reunions, etc.
- Picnic tables and site furnishings
- Multi-purpose lawn areas for pick-up games, special events
- Restrooms

Additionally, neighborhood parks should also include the following “desired” facilities and amenities when possible:

- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Spray pad
- Multi-purpose tennis/pickleball courts

- Multi-purpose basketball courts
- Dog friendly amenities (on-leash) including dog drinking fountains and poop stations
- Shuffleboard, horseshoes, and/or other games as desired by local residents
- Equipment storage
- Fire pit(s), grills
- Wi-Fi
- Canoe/kayak access if the site borders a canal or lake
- Shade trees
- Native plantings, butterfly gardens
- Hammocks
- Adirondack chairs

Approximately 13 new neighborhood park sites will need to be acquired to provide access to a neighborhood park within 1 mile of every resident. Elementary Schools such as Skyline Elementary and Cape Elementary could potentially be enhanced to function as neighborhood parks through an interlocal agreement with the School Board.

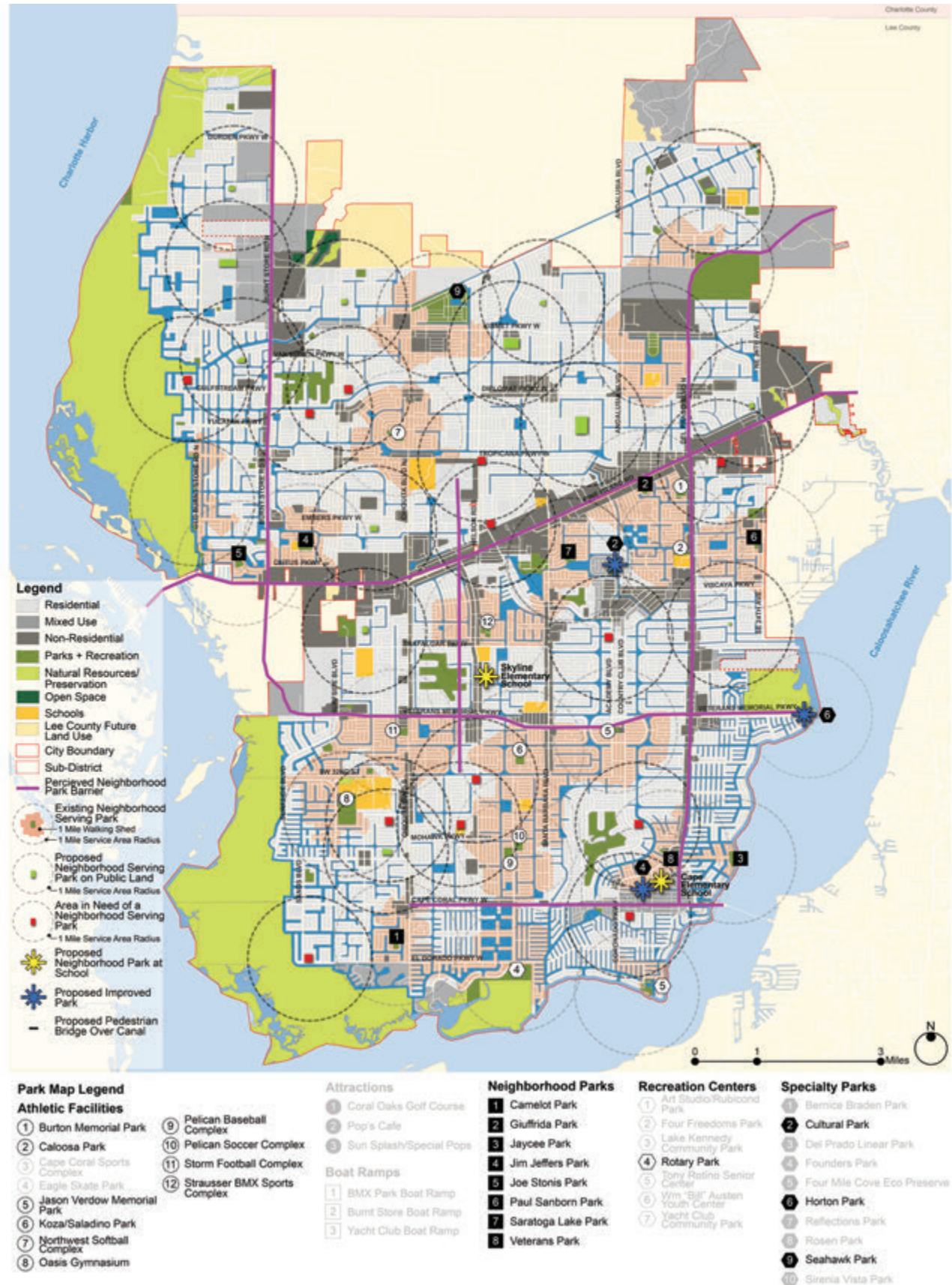


Joe Stonis Park Paved Multi-Purpose Path



Jim Jeffers Park + Christa McAuliffe Charter Elementary School

Figure 4.3 Neighborhood Parks Vision



Small Community Parks

Small community parks are generally larger than neighborhood parks, and serve residents' needs citywide. Small community parks provide the same amenities as neighborhood parks plus additional facilities such as tennis courts, pickleball courts, athletic fields (e.g. baseball, softball, football, soccer, and lacrosse fields), and/or other amenities desired by residents such as concessions, trails, and canoe/kayak access. Ideally, small community parks would be located within 2 to 3 miles of every resident.

Several of the City's single-dimensional athletics complexes have the potential to become small community parks by adding additional facilities and amenities, such as the Northwest Softball Complex and the Storm Football Complex.

These multi-use conversions may save the City land costs, capital costs, and/or operations costs. When evaluating the conversion of a single-purpose facility to a small community park, the City should consider the following

- Is there space to accommodate the desired community park facilities and amenities?
- Will the proposed community park provide a quality experience for both existing and anticipated users?
- Can any potential conflicts between uses (e.g. playground and baseball field) be resolved adequately to provide a safe and enjoyable park experience for all users?



Storm Football Complex

Large Community Parks

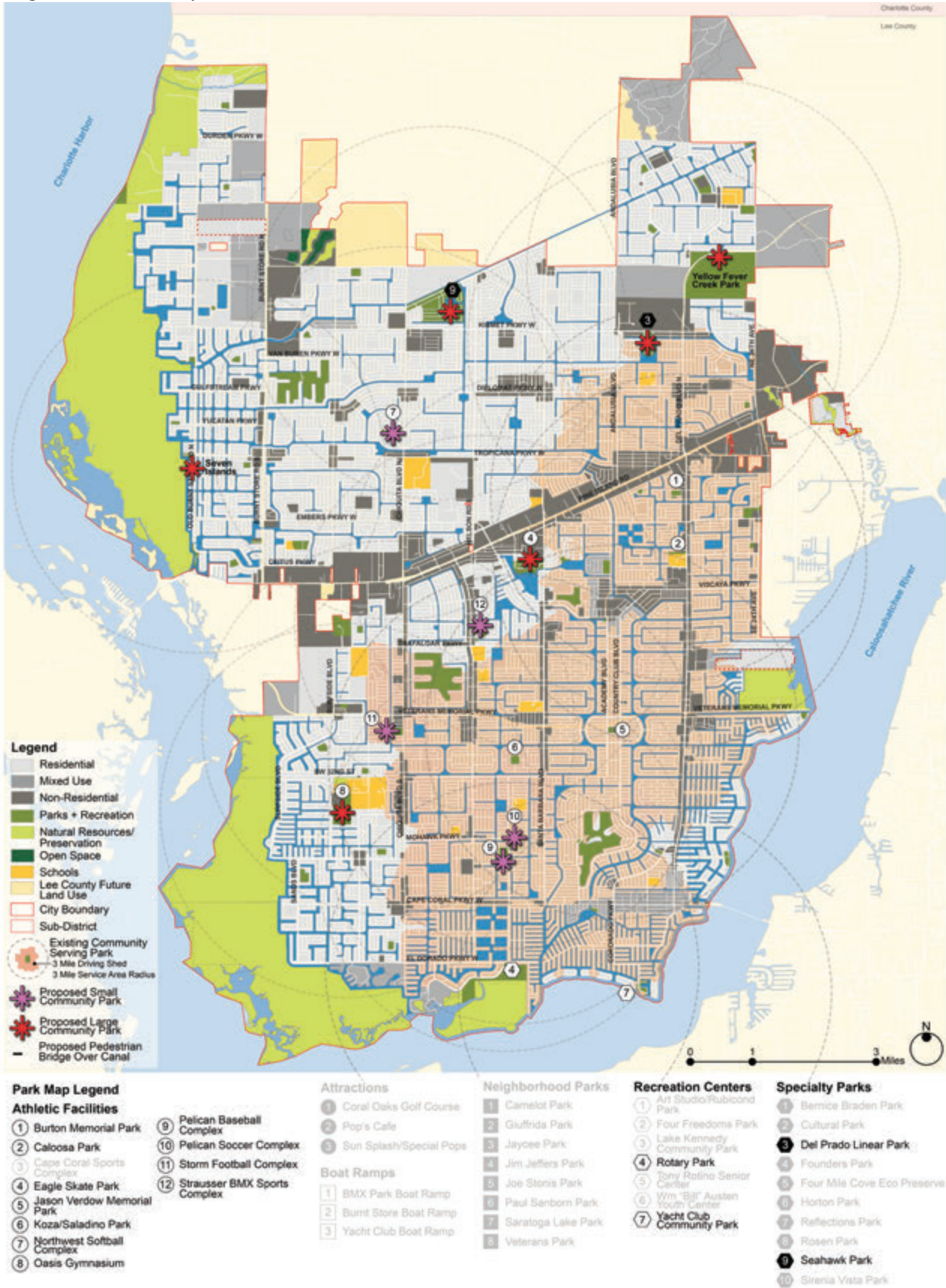
Currently the City is lacking traditional, multi-purpose, large community parks that offer “something for everyone.” In addition to the facilities and amenities provided by the neighborhood and small community parks, large community parks may also provide:

- Indoor recreation centers
- Food truck staging areas
- Dog parks (one in each quadrant of the city)
- Outdoor cafes
- Skate parks
- Tennis or pickleball complexes
- Trails system
- Moveable outdoor seating and hammocks
- Equipment rentals for bicycles, kayaks, paddleboards, fishing rods, and/or other recreation equipment

Indoor recreation centers are the proposed “anchors” of large community parks, providing a variety of fitness, wellness, recreation, and social activities and programs. Ultimately, approximately three to four new centers may need to be constructed to meet residents' needs. Each center would be approximately 50,000 square feet in size, including a gymnasium.

Existing park sites with the most potential to become large community parks include Lake Kennedy Park (including Sun Splash Family Waterpark), Seahawk Park/Festival Park, Oasis Woods Park, Yellow Fever Creek Park, and the undeveloped Lake Mead Park. The old golf course property is now under contract for a residential development, so the potential of this site to serve as a large community park no longer appears to be a viable option. Development of these sites would ensure that every resident has access to a large community park within 3 miles of their home. Several of the proposed large community park sites have been developed in a “piece-meal” fashion through the years without the benefit of an overall site master plan. A master plan should be developed for each site to facilitate phased budgeting, design, and construction; and to make sure that the completed park functions efficiently as a multi-purpose large community park.

Figure 4.4 Community Parks Vision



Nature Parks

Nature parks include lands acquired primarily for natural resource protection. Recreational access is generally limited to passive, resource-based activities such as hiking, picnicking, environmental education, outdoor fitness, and non-motorized boat (canoe, kayak, paddle board) access. Existing nature parks include Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve, Rotary Park, Sirenia Vista Park, Yellow Fever Creek Park, and an unnamed 19-acre site in Charlotte Harbor. Potential nature parks also include Oasis Woods, a natural area west of Festival Park, and additional lands adjacent to Rotary Park.

The vision for the Cape Coral's nature parks is to protect and enhance existing wildlife habitat, particularly for threatened and endangered species such as gopher tortoises, scrub jays, burrowing owls, and manatees; provide appropriate, low-impact recreational access; and promote environmental stewardship of the Cape's natural resources through environmental education classes and programs throughout the city. Nature parks can play a leading role in establishing a greener, more environmentally friendly culture in Cape Coral.

Based on site reviews, communication with City staff, and input from public meetings, following are recommendations for the City's nature parks:



Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve

Citywide

- Create or update management plans for nature parks. Include recreation objectives and programming goals for each park.
- Evaluate the suitability of large tracts of City owned land as nature parks with program elements that include access, nature trails, environmental kiosks, and exotic species removal.
- Create an outdoor recreation guide that includes Cape Coral nature parks, Calusa Blueway access points, and county and state natural lands in the vicinity. The natural resource recreation opportunities within the extensive area of publicly-owned conservation lands north of the City should be communicated to residents and tourists of Cape Coral.
- Develop sustainability objectives for all nature parks.
- Assess the quality and quantity of strategic access points to major water features
- Create design guidelines for boat launches that address motorized and non-motorized launches, user types, and intensity.
- Seek funding opportunities for water quality improvement, habitat restoration, exotic species removal, etc. that could facilitate natural resource protection, such as RESTORE Act funding.
- Leverage the Calusa Blueway network (including the festival) to provide more opportunities for aquatic recreation opportunities in the region.
- Develop a more formal partnership with Cape Coral schools for environmental education at nature parks.
- Consider hiring a recreation coordinator who would also manage a volunteer program for resource-based recreation, environmental education, and natural resource monitoring.
- Beyond nature parks, identify opportunities for environmental education and interpretation in all City parks.
- Work with State agencies to improve access to state lands for resource-based recreation such as camping and hiking.

Figure 4.5 Nature Parks Vision



Site-Specific

- Update and implement the Land Stewardship and Master Plan for Yellow Fever Creek Park.
- Expand environmental education and recreation programs at Rotary Park and dedicate staff to run the programs.
- Expand parking at Rotary Park.
- Collaborate with Lee County to reconsider acquisition of the natural lands (primarily mangrove swamp) that currently buffer Rotary Park.
- Create a master plan and /management plan for Crystal Lake.
- Construct additional paths at the Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve, in particular the missing link of boardwalk that would lead to Lost Pond.
- Upgrade the kayak launch (racks, AstroTurf, etc.) at the most active launch sites and label the blueway course at Sirenia Vista Park.
- Consider trading an already-altered site to Lee County for the future school property so that the City could sustain the native communities on the relatively undisturbed tract west of the area proposed for Festival Park.
- Consider acquiring and managing the natural lands adjacent to Alligator Slough for conservation, either as native habitat or as filter marshes to improve water quality.
- Consider sustaining much of the natural resource value of the Oasis Woods parcel.

System-wide Amenities and Improvements

In addition to acquiring more park land to develop new parks, the vision for Cape Coral also includes elevating the number and quality of amenities parks and facilities. Depending on the park and user demands, the following amenities should be considered in existing and proposed parks:

- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Spray pads
- Multi-purpose tennis/pickleball courts
- Multi-purpose basketball courts
- Dog friendly (on-leash) facilities, including dog drinking fountains, poop stations
- Shuffleboard, horseshoes, and/or other games
- Equipment storage
- Fire pit(s), grills
- Wi-Fi
- Canoe/ kayak access
- Shade trees
- Native plantings, butterfly gardens
- Hammocks
- Adirondack chairs
- Performers
- Amphitheater
- Ramps and rails
- Cafes
- Transit stops
- Stages, amphitheaters
- Open mic, jam nights
- Moveable furniture
- Water quality improvements (where applicable)
- Habitat restoration (where applicable)
- Environmental educational/interpretation

These amenities, as well as capitalizing on existing characteristics that make each park unique, will



Existing Northwest Softball Complex



Proposed Northwest Softball Complex with Added Amenities and Activities

4.2: Special Venues

The vision for the special venues is “to provide first-class recreational, social, and cultural venues for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.”

Special venues are unique, specialized park sites that serve the entire community. The City’s special venues include the Yacht Club, Cultural Park, Festival Park, a new tennis and pickleball complex, sports complexes, and the Coral Oaks Golf Course.

Yacht Club

The Cape Coral Yacht Club is one of the most historically significant sites in the City. It served as the amenity area for early residents, and the City’s web site notes it “is where the City started. The facility was built in 1958 and boasts beautiful landscaping, a sandy beach, a fishing pier, and community pool. Previously there was a Teen Club where each teen that belonged got a key to the building and no adults were.

Today the Yacht Club also includes a marina, boat ramps, tennis courts, restaurants, a picnic pavilion, a restaurant, a historic ballroom, the senior center, and a parking lot. As the city’s population has grown, the Yacht Club has regularly exceeded capacity for parking, the beach, the marina, and other facilities. Previous concepts have been developed to renovate the Yacht Club, but no consensus has been reached regarding how to proceed.

The vision for the Yacht Club is to “return to its roots” as the City’s premier waterfront venue. A resort-like atmosphere should be created that builds on the site’s unique attributes, including the:

- Views to the Caloosahatchee River
- Historic ballroom and fountain
- Swimming pool
- Waterfront restaurant
- Marina
- Beach

Facilities that do not require a waterfront location—including the tennis courts, pavilion, and Senior Center—should be relocated to other sites to increase capacity for water-related uses.

Vehicular circulation should be reconfigured to provide a pedestrian-oriented, walkable environment, enhancing the resort-like character. A parking structure, perhaps with a rooftop restaurant/bar with views to the river, should be constructed on the site of the existing tennis courts to reduce vehicular intrusion into the site, increase parking capacity, and generate additional revenue.

Additional amenities proposed to enhance the Yacht Club experience include:

- Additional boat docks and finger piers along the canal
- A ship’s store, snack bar, bar, and ice cream shop
- A splash pad, water slide, and/or other amenities to convert the pool into a small water park
- New dock master facility and restrooms



The Yacht Club in 1966

Figure 4.6 Special Venues Vision



Cultural Park

The 16-acre Cape Coral Cultural Park is home to the Cape Coral Historical Society and Museum, a theatre, the Cape Coral Art League, a rose garden, and a large open multi-purpose field. Each “venue” in the park functions independently, with very little interaction between sites.

The vision for the Cultural Park is to create a unified cultural campus within a garden-like setting. Buildings should be expanded and renovated using similar architectural styles to create a common theme. The park should be master planned to include a variety of outdoor spaces suitable for weddings, classes, special events, art shows, exhibits, receptions, meetings, summer camps, performances, and/or other small-to-mid-size gatherings. The site should be unified through the design of botanical gardens, paths, trellises, fountains, and outdoor sculpture. Finally, a café and indoor/outdoor seating area should provide a central gathering space for snacks and beverages, lunch, Wi-Fi, rest, and relaxation.

In addition to being designed as a unified campus, the Cultural Park should also be programmed as a single venue. Cultural Park events, programs, activities, and performances should be promoted through common websites, brochures, flyers, and social media. To the greatest extent possible, Cultural Park staff in each venue should share resources and help promote each other’s events.



Cultural Park

Festival Park

Currently Seahawk Park, the future Festival Park is envisioned as the City’s premier community park and special events site, meeting many of the top priority needs identified in the Needs Assessment including an amphitheater, recreation center with indoor fitness/ cardiovascular equipment, freshwater beach, trails, and restored natural areas. Other existing/ proposed facilities include the Sea Hawks model aircraft park and buffer zone, North Cape Sports Complex, and other typical large community park amenities. Examples of similar facilities include Lee County Lakes Park and Estero Community Park, and Broward County’s Markham Park.

It is anticipated that the Festival Park will host events that may attract as many as 30,000- 50,000 people, so traffic management will be essential. The park will need to be designed with multiple access points, on-site and off-site parking, and bus and trolley service from off-site lots. The 53-acre on-site Seahawks buffer zone, and the Coral Oaks Golf Course, are potential sites for festival parking. For some events, Wilmington Parkway may also be used as a parade route.



Sea Hawk Park

In addition to parking and traffic management, other infrastructure needs for special events include restrooms (permanent and portable), food establishments, power for vendors, lighting, a fixed stage, and a large open lawn.

The Lee County Sports Committee is currently conducting a facility needs study for both residents and sports tourism, which may suggest additional facilities and amenities for Festival Park. It is anticipated that multiple public and private partners will be involved in the park's construction, maintenance, and programming.

Tennis and Pickleball Complex

A new, centralized tennis complex (at a site to be determined) is proposed to replace the existing tennis complex at the Yacht Club. The new complex is envisioned to include 10 to 12 courts, as well as a pro shop, fitness center, shade, bleachers, and concessions. An example is the Arthur Allen Tennis Center at Cambier Park in Naples, FL. Lake Kennedy Community Park has been identified as the potential site for the new Tennis Complex.



Arthur Allen Tennis Center at Cambier Park

Sports Complexes

Sports complexes are single-purpose facilities that focus solely on competition athletic events, such as the Cape Coral Sports Complex. Sports complexes do not provide the other facilities and amenities associated with large community parks. The vision for sports complexes in Cape Coral is to provide an additional complex to serve the north area of the Cape, including athletic fields for football, soccer, lacrosse, baseball, and softball. The vision also includes the use and maintenance of Lee County School District fields (through an inter-local agreement) at Mariner High School, Ida S. Baker High School, Island Coast High School, Cape Coral High School, and the Oasis Charter School.

Coral Oaks Golf Course

The City's Coral Oaks Golf Course meets most residents' needs for a public golf course. The vision for the golf course is to enhance the experience—and generate additional revenues—through the addition of a restaurant, bar, and other amenities that provide more things to do on the golf course property. A new, expanded clubhouse should also be constructed within the next 10 years.



Cape Coral Sports Complex

4.3: Beach and Water Access

The vision for the Beach and Water Access subsystem is “to provide residents and visitors with safe and convenient access to beaches and waterways for sunning, recreation, boating and fishing - including beaches developed on inland canal and lake properties.”

Two of residents’ top priorities are increased beach and water access. Cape Coral is defined by water including Charlotte Harbor, the Caloosahatchee River, and the 400-mile canal system. The City’s website states that the canal system “is a definitive feature of our City and one of our most vital economic assets. Our canals offer waterfront living and recreation, protect our homes from floods, enhance property values, supply us with irrigation water, and attract wildlife to our City”.

Beaches

Currently beach access (within City limits) is limited to the beaches on the Caloosahatchee River (Yacht Club) and the Bimini Basin (Four Freedoms Park). Both beaches are considered “non-swimming beaches” because of the lack of lifeguards.

The vision for beaches includes improvements to both sites, as well as the construction of new beaches at Lake Saratoga, Crystal Lake, and Festival Park (Lake Argosy). These sites may be accessible for swimming as well.

Freshwater Access

The City’s canal system has 18 freshwater storm basins, but they are separated by water control structures that limit water access between canals. According to residents, only 9 of the 18 basins are accessible via public boat ramps on City property. Of the 11 existing public ramps, only 1 ramp has been improved for motorized boat access; all of the ramps are accessible for paddle craft. An additional four basins are accessible via unimproved ramps on private property. These ramps are well-used, especially by the Cape Coral Bass Club.

The vision for the freshwater access system is to provide access to 16 of the 18 basins for maintenance/emergency access and recreational boating. Access will be enhanced through improvements to the existing public ramps, and the acquisition and development of at least seven additional ramps. No ramps are proposed for access to basins 7 or 11, as they offer minimum recreational opportunities for paddle craft or motorized boats.

It is also envisioned that the City will improve water access at other waterfront City parks including:

- Crystal Lake (currently undeveloped)
- Festival Park (currently undeveloped)
- Lake Kennedy Community Park
- Lake Saratoga Park
- Four Freedoms Park
- Jaycee Park
- Yacht Club
- Glover Bight Boardwalk
- Rosen Park and Boat Ramp
- Chiquita Lock
- Horton Park and Boat Ramp

Development of Seven Islands

At approximately 48 acres, the Seven Islands development has the potential to be a catalyst for investment in northwest Cape Coral. The City contracted with a consultant team to develop a number of potential concepts for the property, ranging from high-density residential buildings to low-density cottages interspersed with open spaces. The project’s goal is to spur development in the area, increase parkland, improve public access to water, and protect wetlands and water quality. Regardless of which concept ultimately is implemented, Seven Islands is an opportunity improve access to water and gain additional park land.

Figure 4.7 Beach and Water Access



Saltwater Access

Currently the City provides access to saltwater through six improved motorized-boat ramps (two lanes each) and three paddle craft launches including the Horton, Yacht Club, BMX, Rosen, and Burnt Store ramps. Existing ramps are nearing capacity, and demand is expected to double as population growth continues. Some dry boat storage is provided by private commercial operators such as D & D Matlacha Bait and Tackle (on City-owned property). Potential additional saltwater ramp sites include the Seven Islands and other City-owned properties on the western edge of Cape Coral.

There is a need for additional saltwater paddle craft access, especially on the North Spreader Canal. Seven potential locations have been identified by the focus group

Other Initiatives

Other initiatives to improve water access include the provision of kayak carts at ramp locations (to carry paddle craft to and from the parking lot); site-appropriate signage and information; and a printed/on-line citywide guide (e.g. “Kayak CC!”) to water access locations and amenities.



Kayak Cart

4.4 Trails and Bikeways

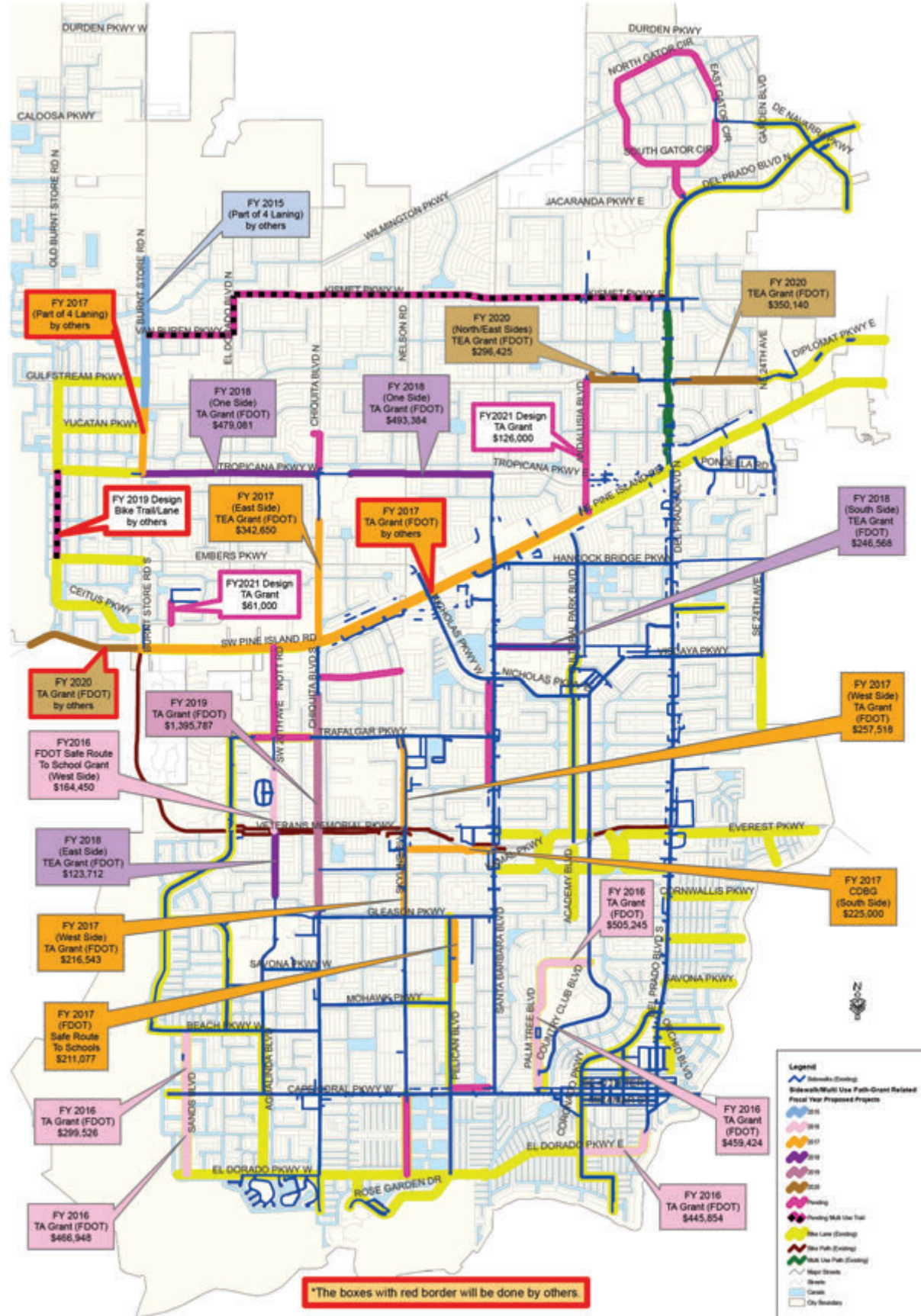
The vision for the City’s trails and bikeways system is “to create a safe, healthy, and more vibrant cycling and walking environment to provide enjoyable and convenient bicycle/ pedestrian access to parks and schools for all residents.”

Elements of the vision include off-road, multi-purpose trails; trailheads (e.g. parks) with parking, restrooms, water fountains, and maps/information kiosks; route signage; and bike racks at parks, schools, and other destinations.

The Cape Coral Bike/Ped volunteer organization is currently developing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in partnership with the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Florida Department of Transportation. When complete, the plan will serve as the trails and bikeways vision for the Parks Master Plan. Figure 4.8 illustrates sidewalk programs currently in the FY2016-FY2021 program.

Additionally, Cape Coral is located along the proposed Southwest Coastal Regional Trail that connects Pinellas County in the north to Collier County in the south. Some segments have already been constructed, but the section that passes through the north section of Cape Coral has been identified as a gap.

Figure 4.8 Sidewalk Program FY2016–2021 Grant Related Projects and Pending Applications



4.5 Signage and Wayfinding

The vision for the signage and wayfinding system is “to improve wayfinding and awareness of the City’s parks and natural areas through a coordinated, graphically compelling system of directional, informational, and entry signs.”

A simple, bold, and colorful sign and wayfinding system can provide several benefits to residents and visitors, including:

- Making it easier to find parks, schools, and other civic sites
- Promoting the City’s extensive parks system, natural areas, and wildlife (particularly protection of threatened and endangered species)
- Helping build a common brand for the City, based on the colorful City logo



Signage using natural materials



City of Portage, Indiana wayfinding signage design (designed by LandPlan Group)

4.6 Programs and Special Events

The vision for programs and special events is to celebrate the Cape and provide a variety of recreational opportunities for all generations.

The City currently provides a wide variety of recreation programs including pre-school/voluntary pre-kindergarten; youth programs; summer camps; adult programs; aquatics programs; youth and adult sports leagues; nature and science programs; fitness classes; kayaking and walking tours; arts programs; senior programs; and special events.

The Needs Assessment indicated that the top priority programs for residents include:

- Special events
- Adult fitness and wellness programs
- Adult programs for 50 years and older

These priorities are consistent with findings from a recent study of neighborhood parks by the RAND Corporation that found that neighborhood parks are typically geared toward younger users and have little to offer adults and seniors.

Special Events

Primary special event venues in Cape Coral include Festival Park, Sunsplash Park, and the downtown area (street festivals, etc.). These include the Friends of Wildlife Burrowing Owl Festival, the Rotary Club Cape Coral Festival of the Arts, and the CRA/South Cape Hospitality and Entertainment Association Craft Beer Festival. Smaller special events are also held in parks throughout the City. Dozens of bicycling and running events such as the Lucky Duck Race, Yacht Club Sprint Triathlon, and the Tour De Cape are also held on local streets throughout the year. The city's canals host one of the most unusual festival's of the year, the Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta, organized by the Rotary Club.

The vision for special events is to “Celebrate the Cape to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to gather to highlight the Cape’s natural and cultural resources, including its people, weather, environment, topography, and waterways”.

Programs

Based on the findings from the Needs Assessment, the City should provide more programs specifically targeted towards adult and senior fitness, women, and teens. Focus groups should be conducted with each of these demographic groups to further define their needs, and to determine the types of programs most in demand.

Many new programs could be provided by local private/non-profit partners. For example, Cape Coral Hospital offers a variety of health and fitness programs including special events; participation in “Healthy Lee” programs such as “5210” and “Million Mile Movement”; and “Park Prescriptions.” Schools and churches could also serve as program venues, providers, and /or partners.



Cape Coral Cardboard Boat Regatta

4.7 Burrowing Owl Habitat Considerations

The vision is for the City of Cape Coral to protect and celebrate the burrowing owl in its parks and open spaces, and raise awareness about the species and the threats to its future.

Even within the city of Cape Coral where virtually all the native habitats have been altered, several state- or federally-listed species of wildlife are known to occur. These include approximately 13 nests of the formerly-listed bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), potential habitat for the federally-listed eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), the federally-endangered Florida manatee (*Trichechus manatus latirostris*) and numerous species of wading birds that commonly forage in shallow waters and wetlands in the City. Most notably, the state-threatened burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia floridana*) and gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*) occur across the city, particularly in parks. The burrowing owl is iconic in Cape Coral – there is an annual burrowing owl festival and photographers are known to travel from across the world to see and photograph the birds.

Background

The Florida burrowing owl is a distinct subspecies, geographically separated from burrowing owls in the western U.S. They construct underground burrows in well-drained upland habitats, and are typically found at treeless sites with sparse or low-growing vegetation (<http://myfwc.com/media/4037021/Draft-Imperiled-Species-Management-Plan.pdf>). In Cape Coral, they are particularly prevalent and can be found in highly altered habitats including City-owned park sites, residential lots, open areas of the golf course, road rights of ways and grassy, undeveloped lots.

Gopher tortoises and burrowing owls both excavate burrows that may be used by dozens of other animals. Data on the distribution and status of burrows used by these species are collected by the Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife, environmental consultants, and the City, and compiled into GIS maps by the City (<http://www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org/burrowing-owl/>). In Cape Coral and across their range, burrowing owls are protected by legislation and through habitat protection. Because they do not require large uninterrupted stretches of habitat, they have persisted in relatively small patches of suitable habitat (https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Burrowing_Owl/lifehistory/ac).

Statewide Initiatives to Protect Burrowing Owls

Florida's Imperiled Species Management Plan includes information on threats and conservation approaches for dozens of listed species (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. 2016. Florida's Imperiled Species Management Plan. 31 Tallahassee, Florida). They are particularly relevant for Cape Coral's burrowing owl. It is important to note that enforcement of regulations for burrowing owls is the responsibility of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

Identified Threats

- Loss of native habitat and the resulting dependence on altered habitat.
- Lack of protected habitat, even for rural burrowing owls.
- Lure of temporary, potentially hazardous habitat.
- Clearing of vegetation in preparation for development results in sites that mimic native habitat of the burrowing owl.
- Urban area threats, including vehicle collision, predation or injury by domestic animals, and burrow destruction by mowers or other equipment.

Conservation Approach

- Protect and manage burrowing owl habitat to support the current population and to accommodate population growth.
- Minimize impacts associated with development and land-use conversion through implementation of conservation guidelines, outreach, and technical assistance.
- Expand awareness about the conservation needs of Florida burrowing owls.
- Ensure adequate protection of burrows through education, enforcement, and management.
- Determine if the Florida burrowing owl exists as one of more populations, and monitor population(s) to assess size and trend.
- Enforcement of regulations for burrowing owls will continue to be the responsibility of the State of Florida FWC.

Local Initiatives to Protect Burrowing Owls

The Cape Coral Friends of Wildlife (<http://www.ccfriendsofwildlife.org/butterfly-stepping-stones/>) provides a summary of the process required for developing in the vicinity of burrowing owl nests. These measures should be evaluated, as applicable, when developing City park sites for recreational uses, activities, or any new structures. The City may wish to consider enhanced protection and aesthetic measures at park sites. These could include the use of split-rail or rustic fencing in lieu of PVC pipes, educational exhibits and signage. Rather than relying on frequent mowing and weed-eating around burrows, the City should also consider the use of a suitable mix of ground cover plants that reflect the historical communities preferred by burrowing owls.

Additional Considerations to Protect Burrowing Owls in Cape Coral

Because of the distinctive ecology of burrowing owls and their need for open habitats (as well as their general tolerance of humans), it is difficult to create a static management plan for the species in an urban environment like Cape Coral. Still, objectives to manage existing and potential habitats on City-owned property should be a part of the natural resource management strategy employed by the City. To this end, the City will continue to work with the Species Management Group for issues related to burrowing owl habitat. In addition to the programs already in place, general and specific considerations for burrowing owls should include:

1. Create management plans for all City-owned natural lands and consider ways to sustain, enhance and connect open spaces suitable for burrowing owls and other species of wildlife. The City will involve the Species Management Group in this process.
2. Evaluate the suitability of large tracts of City-owned land for suitability as Nature Parks with, when appropriate, management of potential burrowing owl and other wildlife habitat.
3. Develop a more formal partnership with Cape Coral schools for environmental education at Nature Parks, and use the iconic burrowing owl as a featured species.
4. Using the database on owl burrow locations as a template, create a plan for management of open habitats on right-of ways, easements, and other lands owned by the City to support a network of burrowing owl habitat over the long-term.
5. Continue to accommodate research on the ecology of Cape Coral burrowing owls.

4.8 Summary of Recommendations

Following is a list of recommendations based on the visions for each of the subsystems. These recommendations are not prioritized for budgeting or phasing. Figure 4.10 illustrates a summary vision of the recommendations.

Figure 4.9 Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quantity	Est. "Unit" Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY, AND NATURE PARKS					
1. Acquire land for new neighborhood parks	13	\$250K	\$3.25M	Assumes an average of 10 acres/park at \$25,000/acre	N/A
2. Design, construct, permit new neighborhood parks	13	\$2.5M	\$32.5M	Based on construction costs of Joe Stonis Park	\$21,500 per acre. A typical park size of 10 acres would be \$215,000.*
3. Acquire land for new small community parks	150 acres	\$25K/acre	\$2.5M	See vision map for potential locations.	N/A
4. "Convert" specialty parks to small community parks	10	\$1.75M	\$17.5M	Average 5 acres each at \$350K/acre. Costs will vary based on the specific facilities and amenities provided	\$21,500 per acre. Assumes repurposing a typical area of 5 acres.*
5. Acquire land for new large community parks	150 acres	\$25K/acre	\$2.5M	Includes land acquisition for Festival Park, Lake Mead Park, other community parks (see vision map)	N/A
6. Design, permit, construct new recreation centers at large community parks	4	\$20M	\$80M	50,000 SF each, including a gymnasium; does not include land acquisition. O&M includes estimated revenue offset.	Per Center** Cost - \$1.5M to \$1.7M Revenues: 50% to 75% of costs Net Cost: - \$375K - \$850K Total Net Cost for 4 centers: - \$1.5M to \$3.4M
7. Develop master plans for neighborhood and community parks	+/- 5	\$25 - 50K	\$125 - 250K	Cost will vary based on available data; number of public meetings and workshops; and desired level of detail	N/A; staff time only.
8. Design, permit, construct environmental education center at Sirenia Vista Park	1	\$3M	\$3M	7.5K – 10K SF + exhibits	\$350 - 450K^

General Note: All preliminary estimates are based on acreage or comparable projects.

* Based on 2015 NRPA PRORAGIS cost per acre for Florida communities.

** Based on recent cost/revenue estimates by B*K for similar planned centers in Florida.

^ Based on operational cost estimates for other communities.

Figure 4.10 City of Cape Coral Parks Master Plan Summary Vision



Figure 4.9 Summary of Recommendations, continued

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quantity	Est. "Unit" Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY, AND NATURE PARKS (continued)					
9. Design, permit, construct improvements at Yellow Fever Creek Park	1	\$7.5M	\$7.5M	Limited development: welcome center (chamber), dog park, disc golf, primitive camping, cracker farm, trails; O&M based on \$5,375 per acre for 170 acres of limited developed park area	\$5,375 per acre for 170 acres of limited developed park area. \$913,750 Total
10. Prepare management plans for natural parks	5	\$50K	\$250K		
11. Burrowing owl/ wildlife habitat education	Allow.	\$250K	\$250K		
SPECIAL VENUES					
12. Develop a master plan for expansion/ renovation of the Yacht Club	1	\$50-100K	\$50 -100K	Cost will vary	N/A, staff time only
13. Design, permit, construct Yacht Club improvements	1	\$13–26M	\$13–26M	13 acres AT \$1-2M/acre; O&M accounts for estimated revenue offset	^{^1} Cost: \$350K - \$750K Revenues: \$150K - \$200K Net Cost: \$150K - \$650K
14. Develop a master plan for expansion/renovation of the Cultural Park	1	\$50 - 100K	\$50 -100K	Cost will vary	N/A, staff time only
15. Expand/Renovate the Cultural Park	1	\$8M	\$8M	16 acres at \$500K/acre; O&M accounts for estimated revenue offset	^{^2} Cost: \$250K - \$750K Revenues: \$100K - \$200K Net Cost: \$150K \$650K
16. Develop a master plan for Festival Park	1	\$50 - 100K	\$50 -100K	Cost will vary	N/A, staff time only
17. Design, permit, construct amphitheater at Festival Park	1	\$500K - \$1M	\$500K - \$1M	Depends on size and focus of amphitheater; O&M accounts for estimated revenue offset	^{^3} Cost: \$200K - \$350K including special events Revenues: \$50K - \$100K Net Cost: \$100K - \$300K

^{^1}Note: The budget requirements depend on the exact improvements that are made and which services are going to be contracted. This assumes that the ship's store and other food service operations are contracted.

^{^2}Note: The budget requirements depend on the exact improvements that are made and which services are going to be contracted.

^{^3}Note: The budget requirements depend on the size and focus of the amphitheater and which services are going to be contracted. This assumes that most events and their bookings are contracted.

Figure 4.9 Summary of Recommendations, continued

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quantity	Est. "Unit" Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
SPECIAL VENUES (continued)					
18. Design, permit, construct remainder of Festival Park	1	\$20–40M, phased	\$20–40M, phased	Multiple levels of development, e.g. 10 acres at \$1M+, 10 acres at \$500K+, 25 acres at \$250K+, 170 acres at 100K; The budget requirements are based on much of the park having a low level of development. The budget depends on the amenities that are included and who will operate these. Many of the events would have contracted staff. O&M accounts for estimated revenue offset.	^{^4} Park Only: \$21,500 per acre x 20 acres; \$10,750 x 25 acres; \$5,375 x 170 acres Cost: \$1.6M - \$2.0M Revenues: \$250K - \$1M Net Cost: \$600K - \$1.75M Recreation Center: Cost - \$1.5M - \$1.7M Revenues: 50% - 75% of costs Net Cost: \$375K - \$850K
19. Designate/acquire land for a new tennis and pickleball complex	10 acres	\$0	\$0	To be located at Lake Kennedy Community Park	TBD
20. Develop a master plan for the tennis and pickleball complex	1	\$25 - 50K		Cost will vary	
21. Design, permit, construct the tennis and pickleball complex	1	\$2–3 M	\$2–3 M	10 courts; O&M accounts for estimated revenue offset	^{^5} Cost: \$150K - \$300K Revenues: \$150K - \$200K Net Cost: \$0 to \$150K
22. Designate/ acquire land for a new sports complex	25 acres.	\$0	\$0	To be located at Festival Park	N/A
23. Develop a master plan for the new sports complex	1	\$50-100K	\$50 -100K	Cost will vary	N/A

^{^4}Note: The budget requirements are based on much of the park having a low level of development. The budget depends on the amenities that are included and who will operate these. Many of the events would have contracted staff.

^{^5}Note: This is shown as a City run center. The exact budget requirements depend on the size and focus of the complex and any services that are going to be contracted.

Figure 4.9 Summary of Recommendations, continued

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quantity	Est. "Unit" Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
SPECIAL VENUES, continued					
24. Design, permit, construct the new sports complex	1	\$7-10M	\$7-10M	Assumes at least 25 acres at \$265K/acre; the exact budget requirements depend on the size and number/type of fields in the complex and fees that will be charged for field use. O&M includes estimated revenue offset.	^{^6} \$21,500 per acre. Assumes a complex that is at least 25 acres. Cost: \$537K - \$750K Revenues: \$150K - \$300K Net Cost: \$237K - \$600K
25. Design, permit, construct the Coral Oaks Golf Course improvements	1	\$2-5M + club -house	\$2-5M + club -house	It is assumed that any new food service operations will be contracted. O&M includes estimated revenue offset.	^{^7} Cost: \$100K - \$200K Revenues: \$100K - \$200K Net Cost: \$0 to \$100K
26. Upgrade athletic field lighting	1	\$1.5M	\$1.5M	Cape Coral Sports Complex Baseball - \$560K; CCSC Soccer - \$440K; Caloosa Football - \$275K; may have small cost savings (\$10-20K/year) because of more efficient lights.	There might be a small cost savings of \$10,000 to \$20,000 a year due to more efficient lighting systems.
BEACH AND WATER ACCESS					
27. Improve and expand existing beaches	2	\$250K	\$500K	Yacht Club, Four Freedoms Parks; O&M will depend on the improvements made and the extent of the expansion	^{^8} \$100-200K
28. Design, permit, construct new beaches	3	\$250K	\$750K	Lake Saratoga, Crystal Lake, and Festival Park (Lake Argosy). Cost based on 3 new beaches but O&M cost will vary based on the length of the beaches that are added and if they are lifeguarded.	^{^9} \$300-800K

^{^6}Note: The exact budget requirements depend on the size and number/type of fields in the complex and fees that will be charged for field use.

^{^7}Note: The exact budget requirements depend on the improvements that are made. It is assumed that any new food service operations will be contracted.

^{^8}Note: Cost will depend on the improvements made and the extent of the expansion.

^{^9}Note: Cost based on 3 new beaches but cost will vary based on the length of the beaches that are added and if they are lifeguarded.

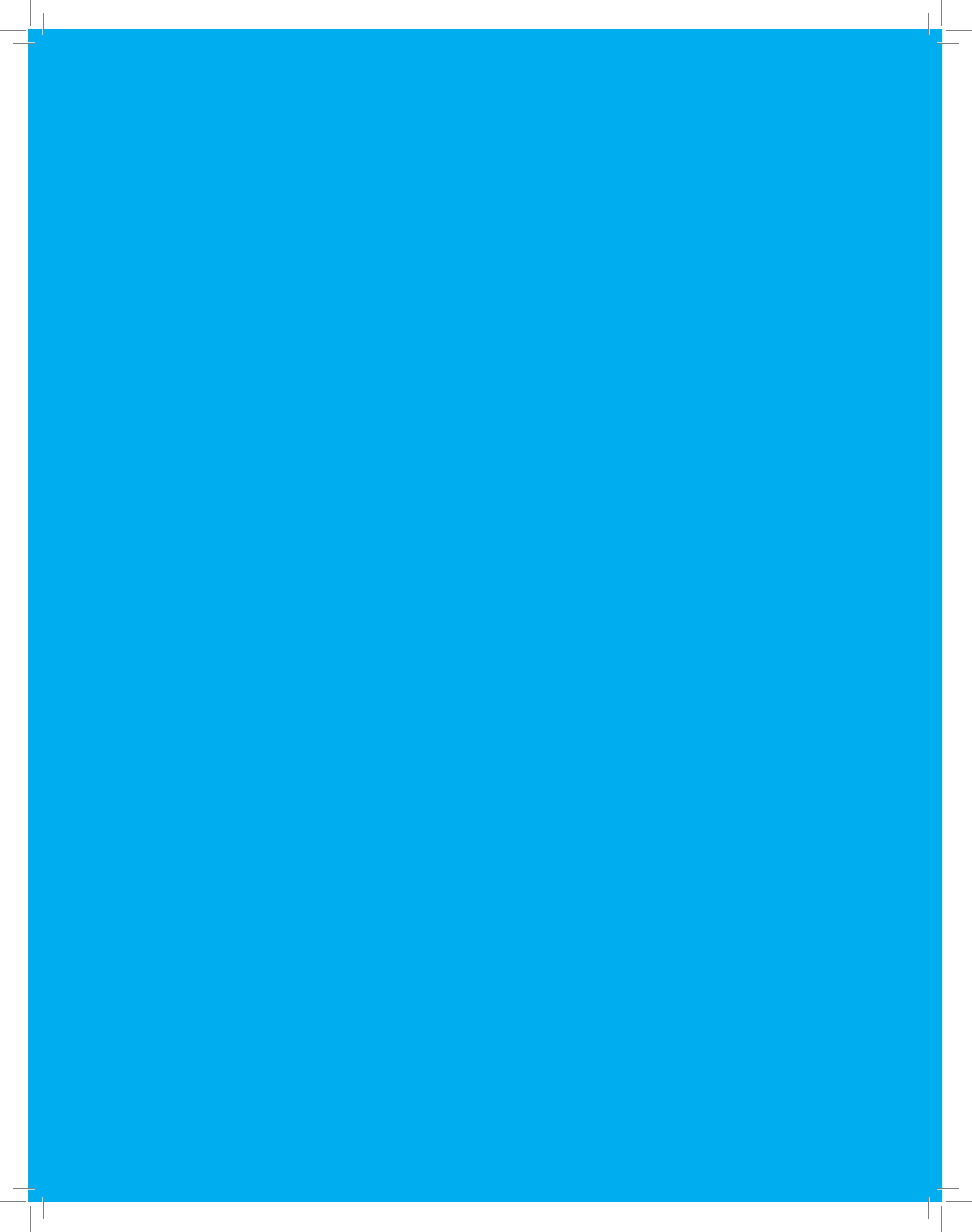
Figure 4.9 Summary of Recommendations, continued

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quantity	Est. "Unit" Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
BEACH AND WATER ACCESS, continued					
29. Improve existing freshwater boat ramps	11	\$500k	\$5.5M	None	Minimal \$10- 20K
30. Acquire land for new freshwater boat ramps	7	\$50K	\$350K	1 acre each	N/A
31. Design, permit, construct new freshwater boat ramps	7	\$1M	\$7M	Will vary based on number of lanes, parking, amenities, etc.	\$21- 35K
32. Improve water access at other City parks	11	\$250K	\$2.75M		Minimal \$10- 20K
33. Acquire land for new motorized saltwater boat ramps	2	\$500K	\$1M	10 acres each	N/A
34. Design, permit, construct new motorized saltwater boat ramps	2	\$3–4M	\$6-8M		\$6-10K
35. Acquire land for new paddle-craft saltwater boat ramps	7	\$50K	\$350K	1 acre each	N/A
36. Design, permit, construct new paddle- craft saltwater boat ramps	7	\$250K	\$1.75M	None	\$14-21K
TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS					
37. Design, permit, construct new trails and bikeways			See City of Cape Coral Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan		
SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING					
38. Design a City-wide signage and wayfinding system	1	\$100K	\$100K	None	N/A
39. Design, permit, construct new directional, information, and entry signs	TBD	\$1-2M	\$1-2M	None	\$3-5K

Figure 4.9 Summary of Recommendations, continued

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quantity	Est. "Unit" Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
PROGRAMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS					
40. Conduct senior, women, and teen program focus groups		Staff		None	N/A staff time only
41. Identify potential partners to develop additional programs and special events		Staff		None	N/A staff time only
MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS					
42. Develop a comprehensive maintenance management plan	1	\$25-50K		None	N/A
43. Develop an emergency action plan	1	Staff		None	N/A
44. Create a succession plan	1	Staff		None	N/A
45. Improve maintenance yards	1	\$50K	\$50K	Improve main parks maintenance yard and fully secure the maintenance yard at the Cape Coral Sports Complex	
46. Acquire land and develop northern maintenance yard	1	\$100K	\$100K	Yard will serve maintenance needs of parks in norther part of Cape Coral	

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5

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

5.0 Implementation Strategies

Residents' top priority needs (see Section 2, Needs Assessment) include beaches; new neighborhood and community parks (particularly in the north); improvements to existing parks, trails; development of Festival Park; boating/kayaking access; and renovations to the Yacht Club. Recently, the Committee of the Whole indicated that their priorities include construction of Festival Park; retrofit of athletic field lighting; upgrade of Cultural Park; and construction of new neighborhood parks.

5.1 Priority Projects

Following is a potential first phase of improvements incorporating these top priorities. Estimated costs are very preliminary, based on comparable projects and published, typical costs-per-acre. The City will need to prepare preliminary feasibility/design studies, master plans, and/or site plans in order to establish actual construction budgets for any of these projects.



Yacht Club Beach

Figure 5.1 Proposed “Phase 1” Projects (5 to 10-year buildout based on available funding)

Recommendation/ Improvement	Quant.	Est. “Unit” Cost	Subtotal	Comments/Caveats	Est. annual O&M costs*
1. Festival Park master plan and amphitheater	1	\$1M	\$1M		Net \$300K
2. Retrofit athletic field lighting	1	\$1.5M	\$1.5M		+\$20K
3. Upgrade Cultural Park - Phase I	1	\$4M	\$4M	16 acres at \$500K/acre	Net \$650K
4. Develop master plans for new neighborhood parks	5	\$35K	\$175K	Cost will vary based on data and number of public meetings	N/A
5. Design, permit, and construct new neighborhood parks	5	\$2.5M	\$12.5M	Assumes construction on City-owned sites	\$200K/park, \$1M total
6. Improvements to existing parks	5	\$1M	\$5M		\$100K/park, \$500K total
7. New, improved beaches	5	\$250K	\$1.25M	Assumes construction on City-owned sites	\$200K for 2 improved beaches, \$800K on other three; \$1M total
8. Construct new trails	5 miles	\$1M	\$5M	Based on outcome of bike/pedestrian plan	\$3K per mile, total \$15K
9. New saltwater ramp (motorized craft)	1	\$3-4M	\$3.5M	D&D site	\$5K
10. New saltwater access (paddle craft)	3	\$250K	\$750K	Assumes construction on City-owned sites	\$3K per access, total \$9K
11. New freshwater access	3	\$250K	\$750K	Assumes construction on City-owned sites	\$3K per access, total \$9K
12. Develop a master plan for the Yacht Club	1	\$75K	\$75K	Cost will vary	N/A
13. Design, permit, and construct Yacht Club	1	\$30M	\$20M	12 acres at \$1-2M per acre	Net \$650K
14. Design, permit, and construct Yellow Fever Creek Park	1	\$7.5M	\$7.5M	Based on existing master plan	\$900K
15. Develop a master plan for the tennis and pickleball complex	1	\$75K	\$75K	Cost will vary	N/A
16. Design, permit, and construct the tennis and pickleball complex (prior to Yacht Club renovations)	1	\$2.5M	\$2.5M	10 courts	Net \$150K
17. New park land acquisition	TBD	\$5M	\$5M		N/A
SUBTOTAL			\$70.575M		\$5.168M



5.2 Funding and Phasing Strategy

City staff met on August 4, 2016 to determine a funding and phasing strategy to implement top priority projects.

Funding Projections – Capital Improvements

Staff projected the following potential revenues for parks and recreation capital improvements, based on available information:

Figure 5.2 Project Funding for Capital Improvements

Funding Source:	Ten Year Projected Revenues:	Comments:
1. General obligation bonds	\$40M	0.45 mills over 10 years, requires voter referendum
2. Grants	\$5M	\$500k per year including FRDAP, arts grants, Lee County Transportation, Boating Improvement Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, small local grants such as Home Depot, Lowe's, etc.
3. Partnerships, donations	\$2M	\$200k per year including Rotary Club, Special POPS Guardian Angels, Cape Coral Community Foundation, others
4. Capital Improvements Program (CIP)	\$6M	\$600k per year; currently the City has an unfunded parks and recreation CIP of \$451M, including many of the high priority projects listed above
5. Concessions	\$3.5M	\$350k/ year, including \$250k from Yacht Club Boat House restaurant; \$100k per year from boat ramps
TOTAL PROJECTED FUNDING:	\$56.5 M	

Other potential sources of funding for capital improvements include:

- Revised land development regulations that require developers to provide both neighborhood parks in new communities to meet residents' local recreation needs and impact fees to offset the costs of meeting residents' community park needs, such as athletic fields and recreation centers. Current regulations permit developers to provide neighborhood parks in lieu of impact fees. It is estimated that 10-15 new neighborhood parks could be created through this change in regulations, at no cost to the City.
- Fundraising campaigns for special venues such as the Festival Park, the tennis and pickleball complex, the Cultural Park, and the Yacht Club. For example, previously the City received \$850,000 in donations for the skate park, and \$600,000 for the youth center.
- Private investment, parking fees for Sunsplash Family Waterpark, the future Yacht Club parking structure, and/or other special venues.
- Although impact fee revenues are currently being used to pay off previous investments, the fees could eventually be used to fund new capital improvements once the debts have been paid off.

Funding Projections – Operations and Maintenance

In addition to funding for capital improvements, the City will also need to generate additional funding for continued operations and maintenance of new facilities. If the City does not reduce the current millage from 6.957 mills to 6.75 mills, it has been suggested that the 0.2 mil difference be dedicated to fund increased operations and maintenance costs.

Phasing Strategy

Based on funding projections for both capital and operations, following is a preliminary 10-year, approximately \$57-million program of improvements. As stated above, estimated costs are very preliminary, based on comparable projects and typical costs. The City will need to develop more detailed planning, design, and/or feasibility studies in order to establish actual construction budgets for any of these projects.

Figure 5.3 Phase I (FY 2016–2018) Projects

Project	Est. Costs	Notes	O&M
1. Develop master plans for 7 parks	\$210k (Average \$35k each)	Sands Park, Tropicana Park, Cultural Park, Lake Mead, Gator Circle, Oasis Woods, Crystal Lake	N/A
2. Initiate master plans for key venues	\$450k (Average \$150k each, including conceptual architecture and engineering)	Yacht Club, Festival Park and Sports Complex, Lake Kennedy Community Park (including Sun Splash Family Waterpark)	N/A
3. Initiate remaining land acquisition for Festival Park, Lake Mead Park, park land in the northeast, and other sites	\$5M	It is very important to inform the Utilities Dept. of intent to acquire City-owned parcels for park use	N/A
4. Develop citywide park design standards for amenities and improvements	\$50k	To guide the design and construction of future improvements	N/A
5. Improve aesthetics, add amenities to existing parks, based on new design standards	\$5M	Specific improvements to be determined based on community priorities	N/A
SUBTOTAL	\$10.71M		

Figure 5.4 Phase II (FY 2018–2020) Projects

Project	Est. Costs	Notes	O&M
1. Develop permitting and construction documents for 6 parks	\$1.2M (8% of estimated construction costs)	Sands Park, Tropicana Park, Cultural Park, Lake Mead, Gator Circle, Oasis Woods, Crystal Lake	N/A
2. Develop permitting and construction documents for key venues	\$2.4M (10% of estimated construction costs)	Yacht Club, Festival Park and Sports Complex, Lake Kennedy Community Park (including Sun Splash Family Waterpark)	N/A
3. Develop permitting and construction documents for Yellow Fever Creek Park, based on existing master plan	\$400K (8% of estimated construction costs)		N/A
SUBTOTAL	\$4M		

Figure 5.5 Phase III (FY 2020–2025) Projects

Project	Estimated Costs	Notes	O&M
1. Construct 7 parks	\$17.5M (average \$2.5M each)	Sands Park, Tropicana Park, Cultural Park, Lake Mead, Gator Circle, Oasis Woods, Crystal Lake (priorities and phasing TBD)	\$1M
2. Construct key venues	\$17.5M \$1M (ph. 1) \$2.5M	Yacht Club Festival Park amphitheater Lake Kennedy Community Park tennis and pickleball complex, Sun Splash Family Water Park (priorities and phasing TBD)	Net \$650K Net \$300K Net \$150K
3. Construct improvements to Yellow Fever Creek Park	\$3.5M		\$900K
SUBTOTAL	\$42M		Net \$3M
PHASE I-III GRAND TOTAL	\$56.71M		NET \$3M

5.3 Potential Grant Funding Sources

Following is a list of potential grant funding sources that the City may consider pursuing for the implementation of the following venue parks:

- Cultural Park
- Yacht Club
- Festival Park
- Lake Kennedy Community Park
- Sports Complex Park

Figure 5.6 Potential Funding Sources for the Proposed Cultural Park Venue

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Construction, renovation of Educational, nature, art facilities	June
Special Category Historic Funding	\$500,000	100%	Renovation/Restoration of Historic Facilities and museum projects	July
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, fields, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	September
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor cultural or recreational elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	July
Urban & Community Forestry	\$15,000-\$40,000	100%	Tree Planting Projects	April
Section 319(h) Grants	\$750,000	40%	Stormwater, water quality projects	March
Our Town Grant	\$200,000	100%	Innovative public cultural projects	October
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Trails, Support Facilities such as parking and lighting	February

Figure 5.7 Potential Funding Sources for the Proposed Yacht Club Venue

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Grant (LWCF)	\$200,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	March
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	September
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor public boating/kayak elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	August
Small Matching Grant Program	\$50,000	100%	Historic Restoration and planning	May
Special Category Historic Funding	\$500,000	100%	Renovation/Restoration of Historic Facilities.	July
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Cultural, nature, art elements	June
Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP)	\$200,000	5%	Boating ramps, day docks, other boat facilities	April
Boating Infrastructure Program (BIGP)	\$1,500,000	25%	Boat Facilities for vessels larger than 26 ft. Marina Facilities	August
Recreational Trail Program (RTP)	\$200,000	25%	Waterway Trails, kayak/canoe trailhead facilities	April
Urban & Community Forestry	\$15,000-\$40,000	100%	Tree Planting Projects	April
Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI)	\$30,000	100%	Waterfront facilities, vegetation removal, signage , boardwalks	October

Figure 5.8 Potential Funding Sources for the Proposed Festival Park Venue

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Construction of Educational, nature, art facilities	June
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	September
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor cultural or recreational elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	July
Section 319(h) Grants	\$750,000	40%	Stormwater, water quality projects	March
Our Town Grant	\$200,000	100%	Innovative public cultural projects	October
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Trails, Support Facilities such as parking and lighting	February

Figure 5.9 Potential Funding Sources for the Proposed Lake Kennedy Community Park Venue

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Great Urban Parks Campaign Grant	\$575,000	0%	Active and Passive Facilities, Stormwater, Environmental	April
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	March
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	September
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor recreation elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	July
Urban & Community Forestry	\$15,000-\$40,000	100%	Tree Planting Projects	April
USTA Public Facilities Grant	\$50,000	80%	Renovation and/or construction of public tennis fac.	Rolling
American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)	\$8,000	0%	Shade Structures	September
Recreational Trail Program (RTP)	\$200,000	25%	Trails, trailside, trailhead facilities	April

Figure 5.10 Potential Funding Sources for the Proposed Sports Complex Venue

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Great Urban Parks Campaign Grant	\$575,000	0%	Active and Passive Facilities, Stormwater, Environmental	April
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	March
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program(FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	September
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor recreation elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	July
USTA Public Facilities Grant	\$50,000	80%	Renovation and/or construction of public tennis fac.	Rolling
U.S. Soccer Foundation Grants	\$50,000	100%	Field turf, lighting, irrigation and program equipment	October February June
Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLPP)	\$750,000	\$750,000	Ballfields, Courts, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Playground, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	May
American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)	\$8,000	0%	Shade Structures	September
Recreational Trail Program (RTP)	\$200,000	25%	Trails, trailside, trailhead facilities	April

Following is a list of potential grant funding sources that the City may consider pursuing for the implementation of the following general park facility elements:

- Park Land Acquisition
- Greenways and Trails
- Nature/Interpretive Centers
- Stormwater/Emergency Management
- Recreation/Community Centers
- Art, History, Culture Facilities
- Boat and Water Access

Figure 5.11 Potential Funding Sources for Park Land Acquisition

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Land Acquisition of passive and active recreational facilities	March
Florida Communities Trust (FCT)	\$5,000,000	25%	Land Acquisition of passive and active recreational facilities including those for unique and disabled persons	August
Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program	\$200,000	100%	Land Acquisition of passive and active recreational facilities	September
Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLPP)	\$750,000	\$750,000	Land Acquisition for outdoor recreation facilities	May
OGT Land Acquisition Program	\$1,000,000	0%	Acquisition of trails/greenways that enhance the state system.	October

Figure 5.12 Potential Funding Sources for Greenways and Trails

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Complete Streets and Local Initiatives (TAP)	\$1,500,000	0%	Pedestrian & Bicycle Trails and Greenways	January
Recreational Trails Program	\$200,000	20%	Construction of trails and support facilities.	April
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor trail and greenway elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	July
Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	\$200,000	100%	Kayak/Canoe facilities, blueway facilities	April
Urban Waters Grant	\$60,000	5%	Signage, Innovative Water Quality Projects	November
Preserve America	\$200,000	100%	Signage, Wayfinding	TBD
Pre-Disaster Mitigation	\$3,000,000	25%	Stormwater including open space and trails	October
Section 319(h) Grants	\$750,000	40%	Stormwater/water quality projects	March
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Trails, Parking, Landscaping and other support facilities.	March
American Academy of Dermatology (AAD)	\$8,000	0%	Shade Structures	September
OGT Land Acquisition Program	\$1,000,000	0%	Acquisition of trails/greenways that enhance the state system.	October

Figure 5.13 Potential Funding Sources for Nature/Interpretive Centers

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Environmental Education Grants	\$91,000	25%	Educational Elements, signage, nature trails, internet applications	April
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Educational, nature, art elements	June
Urban Waters Grant	\$60,000	5%	Signage, Public Education, Innovative Water Quality Projects	November
Section 319(h) Grants	\$750,000	40%	Stormwater, water quality, education projects	March
Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI)	\$30,000	100%	Education facilities, signage, water access	October
Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	\$200,000	100%	Waterfront educational facilities	April
Energy Efficiency Retrofits for Public Facilities	\$75,000	0%	Lighting, HVAC, windows and other efficient technologies	TBD
National Leadership Grants for Museums	\$500,000	100%	Nature Centers, Museums, botanical gardens, children museums	December
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Trails, Support Facilities	March

Figure 5.14 Potential Funding Sources for Stormwater/Emergency Management

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Pre-Disaster Mitigation	\$3,000,000	25%	Stormwater including open space, Hardening	May
Section 319(h) Grants	\$750,000	40%	Stormwater, water quality, education projects	March
Urban Waters Grant	\$60,000	5%	Signage, Public Education, Water Quality Projects	January
Water Project Funding	\$3,000,000	100%	Stormwater, Water Quality, Alternative Water	November

It is important to note that the integration of stormwater and other emergency management features into projects such as a recreation center or recreation trail can significantly increase the grant funding opportunities available to the County. Examples of design features that would introduce additional grant opportunities would include the construction of parking areas to act as drainage basins for severe weather events, stormwater retention ponds that alleviate localized flooding as part of park or trail project and the hardening of an indoor facility such as a recreation center to act as a shelter and/or public outreach center before and after a disaster.

Figure 5.15 Potential Funding Sources for Recreation/Community Centers

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Educational, nature, art elements	June
Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program	\$3,000,000	25%	Structure Hardening, flood protection	May
Energy Efficiency Retrofits for Public Facilities	\$75,000	0%	Lighting, HVAC, windows and other efficient technologies	TBD
National Leadership Grants for Museums	\$500,000	100%	Nature Centers, Museums, botanical gardens,	December
National Leadership Grants for Museums	\$500,000	100%	Nature Centers, Museums, botanical gardens, children museums	December
Land and Water Conservation Grant	\$200,000	100%	Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Trails, Support Facilities such as parking and lighting	February

Figure 5.16 Potential Funding Sources for Art, History, Culture Facilities

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Grant (LWCF)	\$200,000	100%	Historic/Cultural Facilities, Signage, Trails,	June
Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping, parking	February	25%	Structure Hardening, flood protection	May
Cultural Facilities Grant Program	\$500,000	200%	Educational, amphitheater nature, art elements	June
Public Art Challenge	\$1,000,000	25%	Art in public spaces	December
Our Town Grant	\$200,000	100%	Innovative public projects including heritage trails	October
Florida Small Matching Grant Program	\$50,000	100%	Restoration of historic structures, education facilities	June
Florida Special Category Grant Program	\$350,000	100%	Acquisition and Development of historic structures	December

Figure 5.17 Potential Funding Sources for Boat/Water Access

Funding Program	Grant Amount	Match Requirement	Types of Eligible Elements	Anticipated Deadline
Land and Water Conservation Grant (LWCF)	\$200,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	March
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)	\$200,000	100%	Boating Facilities, Kayak/Canoe, Trails, Fishing Facilities, Outdoor Classroom, Restrooms, Shade Structures, lighting, and landscaping.	September
FRDAP (Disabled & Unique Abilities)	\$500,000	0%	Any outdoor public boating/kayak elements that enhance opportunities for disabled or person with unique abilities	July
Waterway Assistance Program (FIND)	\$200,000	100%	Boat, Kayak/Canoe facilities.	
Waterfront facilities	April			
Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP)	\$200,000	5%	Boating ramps, day docks, other boat facilities	April
Boating Infrastructure Program (BIGP)	\$1,500,000	25%	Boat Facilities for vessels larger than 26 ft.	August
Recreational Trail Program (RTP)	\$200,000	25%	Waterway Trails, kayak/canoe trailhead facilities	April
Coastal Partnership Initiative (CPI)	\$30,000	100%	Kayak/Canoe facilities, vegetation removal, signage	October

5.4 Comprehensive Plan Review

City staff met on August 4, 2016 to determine a funding and phasing strategy to implement top priority projects.

Barth Associates reviewed the Recreation and Open Space Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan to identify any potential revisions necessary for implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Most of the goals, objectives, and policies within the Recreation and Open Space Element are consistent with the Master Plan. However, it is recommended that the City refine the Level of Service (LOS) metrics outlined in Policy 1.2 to better reflect current conditions, needs and trends as follows:

1. Simplify the park classifications and definitions to Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks (small and large), and Nature Parks, as discussed in Section 4 – Long Range Vision, to better reflect the existing parks system.
2. Eliminate the acreage LOS by park type, since the existing system does not comply. Rather, adopt both “City-wide” and “geographic” (e.g. North Cape and South Cape) Acreage LOS metrics for neighborhood and community (non-specialized) parks.
3. Remove the Facility LOS metrics from the Comprehensive Plan, and recommend the use of national, state, and regional benchmarks for Facility LOS analysis.

In addition to updating Policy 1.2, it is also recommended that the City:

- Add a policy requiring the City to update the Needs Assessment every 5 years to identify residents' needs and priorities,
- Add a policy requiring the City to update the LOS metrics every 5 years in response to the findings from the Needs Assessment, and
- Add a policy requiring the City to update the entire Parks and Recreation Master Plan every 10 years.

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